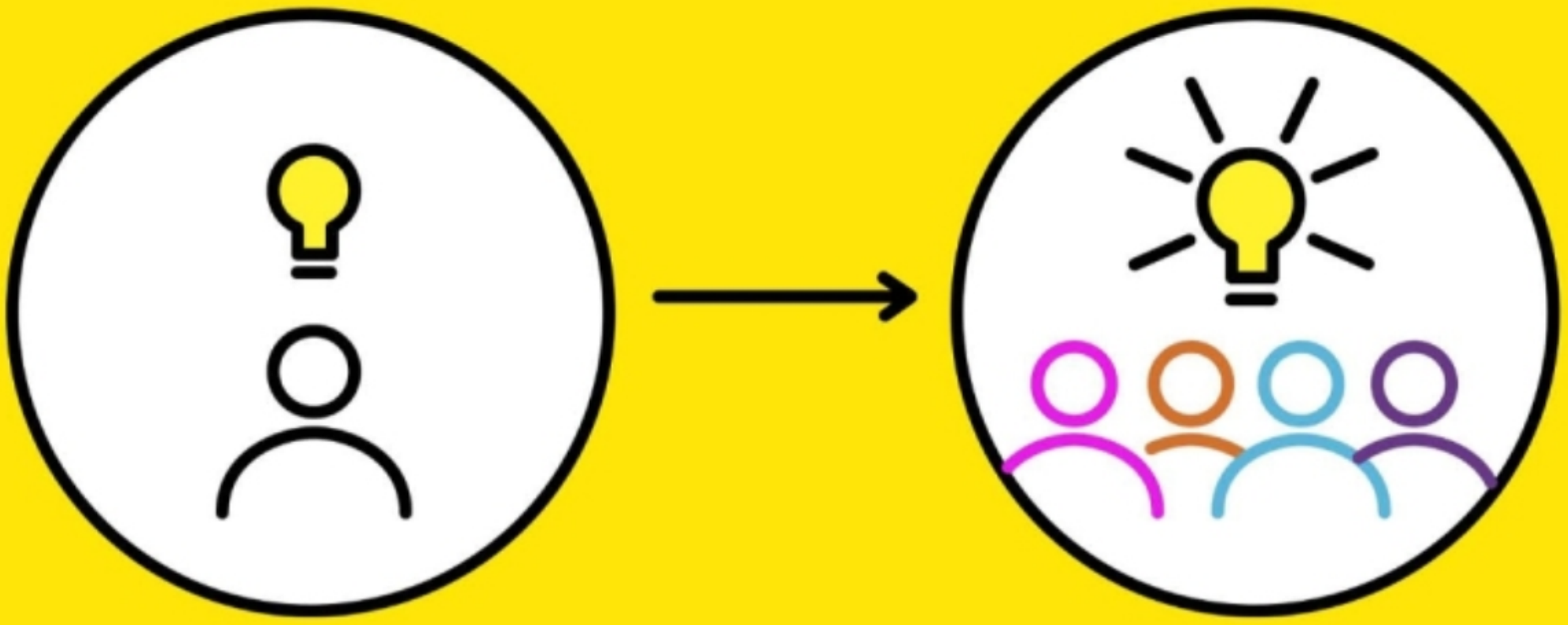

COLLABORATIVE INTELLIGENCE

Thinking with People Who Think Differently

Dawna Markova, Ph.D.

Angie McArthur

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COLLABORATIVE INTELLIGENCE

THINKING WITH PEOPLE WHO THINK DIFFERENTLY

Dawna Markova, Ph.D. | Angie McArthur

SPIEGEL & GRAU
NEW YORK

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This is a work of nonfiction. Some names and
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OUT OF THE DARKNESS

Farmers used to think that it was in the nature of chickens to peck at one another, that they were basically loners, unsocial animals that couldn't mingle without being nasty. On some farms, their beaks were clipped, but this only made it more difficult for the chickens to eat—which made them hungrier, so they pecked at themselves and one another even more. Then a chicken farmer somewhere noticed something exquisitely simple that changed everything: Chicken coops were dark, and the absence of light was what was causing the chickens to peck at themselves and one another. As soon as that farmer introduced a light source into his coops, his chickens stopped pecking—it was as simple as that.

People are not all that different. When we don't know what our minds need to think well together, we are like chickens pecking around in the dark. This isn't as far afield as it might seem: When we are communicating and thinking well together, our faces actually "light up." When our minds don't get enough light, our thinking breaks down and we begin to peck at ourselves and one another.

Humans can no longer afford to think in division and darkness. Collaborative intelligence is the light that is necessary for our individual and collective survival. We have no choice now but to think together.

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INTRODUCTION

GREAT MINDS DON'T THINK ALIKE . . . BUT THEY CAN LEARN TO THINK TOGETHER!

There is a new story waiting for our voice. It is the story of human possibility, of what people are capable of when we come together. Many of us carry this story inside but are afraid to speak it. We tell ourselves we're crazy. But in fact we represent the new sanity—the ideas and practices that can create a future worth living.

—Meg Wheatley

The most significant gift our species brings to the world is our capacity to think. The most significant danger our species brings to the world is our inability to think with those who think differently. I've been writing this book for forty years. It has formed and re-formed itself into thirteen other books. It has moved with me from house to house in manila folders: from the lakeshores of Vermont, to the mountains of Utah, to the foothills of California, and now to the side of a volcano in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. It was in my mind and heart when I was twenty, teaching children who were labeled as having learning disabilities in the migrant labor camps of Florida. It came back when I was in private practice as a psychotherapist in Norwich, Vermont. It resurfaced when I was training psychologists and social workers on the East Coast,

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in the Midwest, and on the West Coast. It nagged at me when I was an adviser to CEOs of global corporations. The need to write this book has been driven by what all of us should have been taught and never were: how to access the full range of the unique intelligence that is within us and between us.

Now that I am seventy-three years old, I can only say it is for this I have come. My life has been, in one way or another, about collaboration. This obsession of mine has taken on new importance as it has become clear that to stay competitive in our global economy, we must learn how to think collaboratively and innovatively. But if you have ever sat through a mind-numbing meeting, or tried to influence a colleague's view on a project, or had a recurring argument with a family member, or struggled to participate in a community project, you have recognized that most of us actually don't know how to think well together. I have attended endless years of education and professional training. Never once did anyone bring up the subject of learning *how* to collaborate.

We habitually misread people and therefore miscommunicate with them. We blame and belittle one another and ourselves because we have not been trained to notice the effect we have on one another or to fluidly shift the ways we communicate to accommodate others. We take for granted that intelligence occurs within our own minds. We don't realize that it also occurs *between* us. What keeps us from communicating effectively is that most of us don't know how to think with people who think differently than we do.

In the past decade, neuroscientists have learned some remarkable things about the human mind and brain, things that can directly increase our capacity to relate to others. As these new understandings emerge, we are realizing how deeply we affect other people. We can grow one another's capacity as well as diminish it. Despite our unending love affair with digital devices, we still crave face-to-face connection with other people. Too often we find ourselves working alone, through our screens, cut off from the regular sources of renewal and inspiration that only collaboration can bring.

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I began my career as a clinical psychologist and educator, with a special fascination with cognitive neuroscience. I was trained to measure intelligence as something static, a noun, a "thing," like a cup. The experts told me that some of us are born smart, with a big cup, and others not so smart, with a little cup. A teacher's job was to fill that cup, or so I was instructed while mine was being filled in school. I paid for my oh-so-expensive graduate school education by teaching the "impossible" children that everyone else had given up on. I never questioned the size of their cups. Each and every one of them taught me that intelligence is a verb, not a noun. As with tending a garden, it requires cultivation. All that mattered to me was discovering how they *were* smart. Only then could I help them bring that capacity to the challenges they faced.

For the past fifty years I have devoted my work and career to helping people discover their unique intelligence, teaching corporate leaders, parents, educators, and children about "intellectual diversity." We are accustomed to considering diversity through the lens of race, gender, and culture, but most of us are unaware that there is also a range of differences in how we think. When I met Angie McArthur, a specialist in multi-dimensional communication (who eventually became my daughter-in-law), I realized how much more this body of work could grow in collaboration with her expertise and experience.

I was raised as an expat in the Middle East, the second of four daughters, and spent my childhood exploring remote corners of the world. I had to learn to build bridges between people, to see the whole of any issue, to inquire and cross-pollinate ideas from one person to the next. Many people think of in-laws as adversaries, but Dawna and I are joined in a shared mission: the constant search for what it takes for people to focus on what connects them rather than what divides them.

We have spent the last thirteen years as professional thinking partners to CEOs and the senior leadership teams of some of the world's largest corporations, exploring all aspects of intellectual di-

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versity. When Dawna and I asked executives from such companies as Royal Dutch Shell, PepsiCo, Frito-Lay, Harley-Davidson, Merck, and Intel what their biggest challenge was, the most common response was "People." They said they needed to learn in real time how to collaborate more effectively, to create a collective goal of excellence in the midst of rapid change, and to foster greater alignment among their employees and colleagues. The most significant work we have done with these clients, therefore, has been to develop strategies and practices that make it possible to unleash each person's potential and to think across habitual divides. We teach them how to maximize the value of their intellectual diversity. We call this collaborative intelligence.

Your collaborative-intelligence quotient, which we will refer to as "CQ" throughout this book, is a measure of your ability to think with others on behalf of what matters to us all. To access that intelligence, we must learn to dignify the differences in how we think and use them to face complex challenges. Given the friction we often experience when we try to think with those who think differently, that task may seem impossible. We celebrate diversity in sports and the arts, but even the relatively recent concept that humans have "multiple intelligences," as articulated by developmental psychologist Howard Gardner of Harvard, is of very limited use, because we haven't been trained to value and utilize those diverse capacities. Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline*, estimates that the IQ of a group can actually drop by more than 30 percent compared to the IQ of individuals in the group. The numbing and dumbing down that happen when we try to think together are astounding. But never have we needed collaboration more.

We are living in an age of complexity, chaos, and collapse. Every significant conversation between us seems to be a tug-of-war between polarities. Black or white. Red or blue. We don't know, or have forgotten, how to think together about the possibility of purple. We tear ourselves apart with the mistaken belief that

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CITIZEN DOG By **Mark O'Hare**

we must decide between two opposing forces: independence or interdependence. We believe we have to either stand on our own two feet as individuals to make a mark and achieve recognition or sacrifice our uniqueness and perspective in order to accommodate a larger whole—a company, a family, a community.

Imagine that you are holding a rope, one end in each hand, pulling it in opposite directions. Who are the adversaries or adversarial forces in your life right now that pull you apart? Most minds, most leaders, and most organizations are stuck in this position. *The harder we pull away from one another, the more tightly stuck we become.* The only way to resolve this, in fact, is to take the pressure off and allow the ends of the rope to bend toward each other by asking the question: "How can the real needs of *each* of these opposing forces be met?" In this way, we free our minds to think together about how to "make ends meet" until we form a circle.

We know intuitively that the only way we get through challenging times is together. During the Second World War, there was a street in London where certain families had not spoken to one another for decades. They held on to resentments of transgressions long past, from one generation to the next. As London was mercilessly bombarded during the Blitz, these families were forced to share the same air-raid shelter. Faced with a common mortal threat, they forgot their grievances in no time at all. Friendships were struck. People who had not spoken for years began to support and help one another, swap jokes, and laugh together.

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Many of the barriers keeping us apart are actually optional, present only in our minds. When our lives depend on it, the barriers dissolve and we draw on the innate hardwiring we have to connect. Remember the first days after September 11? As a society, we experienced a visceral longing to connect, to help, to offer whatever we had—prayers, talents, resources—to those most directly affected. We instantly changed our habitual individuated ways of thinking. What appeared at first glance to be separate and polarized human needs came into balance, if only for a short time.

HINGE TIME: SHIFTING FROM A MARKET-SHARE TO A MIND-SHARE MENTALITY

We are living in a hinge time. We have been educated for a time that no longer exists. Leaders today are confronted with vastly different challenges from the ones of their predecessors, who were taught how to be right but not how to be effective with other people. They had been trained for a "market share" economy. We are now entering a "mind share" world, no longer just dealing with analytic and procedural problems that require rational solutions. We're being asked to think together in ways that are innovative and relational. People who have never met are being forced to come up with breakthrough solutions to complex problems. We must work and think across continents, cultures, time zones, and temperaments.

In the market-share way of thinking, value is determined by shortage—I have it and you don't. Objects are valued according to their scarcity—diamonds, for example. Market-share mentality solves problems by asking our minds to think practically, analytically, and procedurally. We break down challenges into small pieces and arrange them neatly in sequential order, hoping the solution will make itself apparent. A question is asked and our brains shoot back an answer: Ready, aim, fire. We focus our individual and collective attention on deficits—cognitive, emotional, and financial.

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When we think this way, we bifurcate. We get stuck at the ends of the rope: Either I'm right or you are. Select one answer or the other. A leader is a hero who has clawed his way up the ladder of success and accumulated the most power over others. Success is measured in assets accrued.

Former U.S. IKEA CEO Göran Carstedt calls the opposite approach a mind-share mentality. Wealth is created and carried by ideas and relationships more than by transactions. When *things* carry value, if I have one and give it away, I lose something. But when *ideas* carry value, everything is turned upside down. When you have a good idea and I have a good idea and we exchange them, you walk away with two new ideas and I also have two new ideas. *The more we share, the more we have.* Our capacity to generate, share, and enact ideas becomes most valuable.

A mind-share world necessitates that we learn to use influence with others rather than power over them. This is especially crucial now because, in the age of rapidly formed "Velcro teams," where people across continents work together remotely for a short period of time, influence, not power, is needed to get breakthrough work done. Mind share also requires developing the capacity within ourselves to be influenced by others and using skillful collaboration to create forward movement. In this way, leadership becomes a verb, *to host*, rather than a noun, *the hero*. Ultimately, in a mind-share world, those who are most flexible in their thinking will be those who have the most influence.

While market share requires that we answer questions quickly and expertly, mind share requires that we know how to ask the kinds of questions that open our own and others' minds to new possibilities. Market share determines who is right and who is wrong. Mind share asks what is possible. This kind of inquiry encourages the brain to wonder. It is wonder that creates the fertile conditions that generate ideas and build bridges between seemingly opposing thoughts.

In his bestselling book *A Whole New Mind*, Daniel Pink wrote that we can't solve today's and tomorrow's problems with yester-

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day's ways of thinking. Because most of us have only been educated in the market-share mentality, our problem-solving abilities, our communication skills, and our capacity to bend that rope and bridge differences haven't evolved quickly enough to sustain us. We have been taught that the one who pulls hardest wins. We have been trained to use thinking strategies that result in one side or the other losing: needing to be right, resolving differences by eradicating them, controlling the other person, retaliating by getting even, and withdrawing resources. These strategies use power over others: power to provoke, protect, procure, preserve.

Collaborative intelligence (CQ) is a critical component of mind share, because it allows you to recognize what expertise is present and what is missing. Imagine a forty-five-minute phone call with a group of people you have never met from around the world; it begins with everyone announcing their thinking talents, their blind spots, and how you can most effectively communicate with them. This would give you, in effect, an operating manual for one another's minds, and as the meeting progressed you could easily avoid counterproductive assumptions that you would normally attribute to personality. Think of this book as that operating manual which helps you understand the differences in how the people around you think.

In a study on collaborative advantage published in the *Harvard Business Review*, Rosabeth Moss Kanter observed thirty-seven companies and their partners from eleven parts of the world. She and her associates found that North American companies, more than others, "take a narrow, opportunistic view of relationships" and "frequently neglect the political, cultural, organizational, and human aspects of the partnership." She concluded that collaborative alliances "require a dense web of interpersonal connections and internal infrastructures."

It is tempting to make the mistake of thinking that one of these mentalities is good and the other bad. In this hinge time, both market-share and mind-share mentalities are needed to balance each other; we must learn to collaborate as well as compete.

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Alan S. Cohen, an expert on networks who has launched several start-ups, describes this relationship as follows: "In Silicon Valley, 'collaboration' is defined as something you do with another colleague or company to achieve greatness." Silicon Valley continues to thrive by finding new ways to solve bigger problems faster and by employing new strategies that create forward movement. This does not mean competition is absent or that ideas do not sometimes clash. But in addition to the heated competition, meaningful collaboration happens, because these companies share a common goal: to serve the customer the best product or service possible.

Companies may try to best one another in one market *and* work together in another. Microsoft Windows running on Apple's Macs is an example. Another is the way LinkedIn, the leading professional-networking site, at times competes with headhunters and at other times is used by headhunters, as described in an article by Thomas Friedman:

> "Sure, competition here is sharp-elbowed," said Reid Hoffman, co-founder and executive chairman of LinkedIn. "But no one can succeed by themselves. Apple today is totally focused on how it can better work with its [applications] developer community." It cannot thrive without them. "The only way you can achieve something magnificent is by working with other people," said Hoffman. "There is lots of co-opetition." LinkedIn competes with headhunters and is used by headhunters.
>
> With collaboration, one plus one can often turn out to be four, says Jeff Weiner, the CEO of LinkedIn, adding: "I will always work with you—if I know we'll get to four. You can't build great products alone."

RATE YOUR CQ

The following assessment will help you evaluate the quality of collaboration between you and the people you spend the most time with at work. It will serve as a benchmark, because we will

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be asking you to repeat this assessment at the conclusion of the book, to gauge what has grown between you.

Instructions

- Identify the five people with whom you currently spend the most time at work.
- Write their names across the top of the chart below. (This chart and the other tools can be downloaded from our website: CQthebook.com.)
- Next, estimate the approximate percentage of time in any given week that you spend with each person and write it below his or her name.
- Rate the collaboration between you and this person on a scale of 1 to 5 through the lens of each of the four qualities in the far left column (1 being lowest, 5 being highest).
- Tally the columns.

QUALITY	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME	NAME
Respect: How much admiration and sense of each other's value exists between you.					
Aliveness: How much "zest," vitality, and energy there is between you.					
Understanding: How secure you feel in communicating your needs, fears, ideas, and enthusiasm.					
Growth: How much you grow each other's capacity for exploring new possibilities and ideas.					
TOTAL					

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Interpreting the Results

The qualities listed in the left column enrich collaborative thinking. We adapted them from the work of the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute (JBMTI) at the Wellesley Centers for Women. Their research, combined with ours, posits that people can grow in relationships over the course of their entire lives. A low score (10 or below per person) on the chart above indicates where learning and new approaches are needed.

A high overall score (15 or higher per person) indicates a relationship that is both rewarding and collaborative. This assessment offers you a way to begin to compare your relationships and transfer what you learn from one that is high-scoring and fulfilling to one that is depleting.

Each of these people influences the way your brain does or does not grow. You probably know intuitively that spending a lot of time with someone who is frenzied makes you feel anxious. Likewise, when you are with someone who is serene and centered, you most likely feel calmer and more at ease. But we haven't known until recently how profound an effect others have on the way our brains are wired. We either grow or diminish our capacity through those people with whom we spend the most time.

PARTNERING WITH THE POSSIBLE: ACTIVATING THE FOUR STRATEGIES OF CQ

I always laugh when asked if I am a coach, because sports have never been where my gifts lie. I can't throw a ball or handle a racket, and have always been last to be asked to join an athletic team. Some people have perfect pitch; others can analyze financial trends. The only talent I've ever had is the ability to help others think well.

Angie is not a coach either. To survive and thrive in foreign places, she had to become authentically curious and adapt quickly,

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and this became her gift. She often could not use words to create connections, so she learned to use gestures, actions, and multisensory communication as ways to embrace and bridge differences.

Professional Thinking Partners™ is the name of our company and the term Angie and I use to define the work we are passionate about doing. We have used the strategies in this book to help and support sales teams around the world to expand their influence and deepen their relationships with customers. We've helped individuals, teams, companies, and governments to begin to think across habitual divides. Through our work, the Nigerian oil ministry can now think collaboratively with Royal Dutch Shell after decades of being adversaries; the senior leadership team of Frito-Lay now thinks together about how their products can nourish children; the global leaders of GE Capital think innovatively about the market challenges they are facing; the senior leadership team of Bolthouse Farms transformed a ninety-five-year-old business into a market-leading innovator.

Collaborative intelligence is the flow of energy and information within and between us. To help senior leaders gain access to that intelligence, Angie and I, along with our colleagues, have developed four thinking strategies and breakthrough practices that bridge the practical and the possible. In the pages that follow, we will be sharing examples of how we have implemented the CQ program with leaders we fondly call "the Possibilists." Each of them came to understand that collaborative intelligence is unrelated to the smarts and drive that helped them get into the top ten percent of the top ten business schools in the world. After mastering our strategies, the Possibilists recognized that significant changes in their organizations' ability to learn and thrive couldn't begin until deep changes occurred in how individuals were thinking and acting. This book is dedicated to helping you learn to think as a Possibilist.

What is challenging the organization or community that you care deeply about? We each experience a longing to make a differ-

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ence and a longing to belong to a larger whole. Like any other capacity, influence is a powerful force that can lie dormant, but it can also be cultivated to grow. Too many of us turn away from using our influence to create change because we just don't know how to bridge the differences between us.

ARE YOU EFFECTIVE?

What is important about this quiz is not the overall score. Each question will heighten your awareness of a different aspect of CQ that you can grow. We invite you to use the quiz as a benchmark by taking it now and then again at the end of the book to measure how you have expanded your effectiveness with others.

EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR CQ	
Please respond to the following statements on a scale of 0–10 (0 = Not at all; 10 = Great)	**Rating**
1. The ease with which I contribute ideas in meetings	
2. The frequency with which I share my talents and resources with other team members	
3. The frequency with which other members offer their talents and resources to me and one another	
4. From my perspective, the opportunity for a minority opinion in team meetings to be considered and accepted	
5. The frequency with which I think cross-functionally	
6. The options for different participation styles I create in meetings—visual, auditory, kinesthetic, etc.	
7. My knowledge of which talents and resources each person brings to the team and how to leverage them fully	
8. My effectiveness with challenging clients/customers/co-workers	
9. My ability to get people to act together	
10. My ability to get people to think effectively together	

The information in this book will help you understand the specific contribution you can make and teach you the most effective

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way to express it. You will learn to recognize the thinking talents of those around you. You will know how to open your mind to achieve what you want to make possible. Most important, you will know how to make the most of the intellectual diversity that surrounds you in the same way that a conductor, though silent, leads the different instruments of an orchestra to play a symphony.

In the chapters that follow, Angie and I invite you to become a Possibilist by increasing your awareness of how you and those around you are thinking, particularly those who think differently from you. You have to understand how to tune and play the instrument of your own mind first and then expand your awareness so that you can be influenced by the diversity of those around you. As you master this, you develop the capacity to bring out their best, and they yours. The ultimate goal is to recognize and be able to say, "I think better when I think with you."

What is the breakthrough you most want to see happen in the next year? What do you imagine could be possible if you were truly collaborating with those who stand beside you? What effect would that have on those who will follow you?

Angie and I have asked ourselves those same questions. In writing this book, we have thought of ourselves as your "thinking partners," guiding you to explore different ways to relate to the people and the problems in your life as you master the four essential strategies of CQ.

THE FOUR ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES OF CQ

1. **Mind Patterns:** Your mind pattern is the unique way that you process and respond to information. We will teach you to identify and maximize your own mind pattern and to recognize the mind patterns of others.
2. **Thinking Talents:** These are the specific ways of approaching challenges that energize your brain and come naturally to you. Identifying these talents and your blind spots, as

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well as those of your colleagues, is key to more effective collaboration.

3. **Inquiry:** This is the unique way that you frame questions and consider possibilities. By identifying your own preferences, as well as the styles of those around you, you open yourself to widening your perspective and become a better thinking partner.
4. **Mind Share:** Mind share encompasses the mindset shift required to generate alignment within your team. We will show you how to aim your individual and collective attention, intention, and imagination in order to create this.

BREAKTHROUGH PRACTICES

To learn the most difficult things our brains ever have to master—walking and talking—we don't distinguish learning in our bodies from learning in our heads. As we get older, the culture of classrooms, training sessions, and business meetings teaches us that learning involves memorizing facts and digesting abstract theories. We learn to recite the bits and pieces we have accumulated, but we're not actually taught to *do* anything differently, particularly in real-life situations where there is conflict and pressure to perform in the midst of complexity and uncertainty. When we disconnect learning from our bodies, we can't embody what we've learned. If we physically experience the strategy, on the other hand, and practice it deliberately, it will be immediate, effective, and available to us when we most need it. We call these "breakthrough practices."

When we first introduced breakthrough practices in the leadership seminars we facilitated with Peter Senge at the Center for Organizational Learning at MIT's Sloan School of Management, some people thought they were the "exercise" portion of the program and wanted to know when they were going to get to the "real stuff." As they experienced the practices, however, they began to make very interesting discoveries, such as where in their

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bodies they held themselves back from extending their influence or how it felt physically to depend on others and also to have others depend on them. They became aware of how they habitually used power rather than influence to meet challenges. We could almost hear the doors of their minds creaking open. Conflict with colleagues turned into a subject of curiosity rather than a problem to be avoided. It became obvious that physically experiencing a new understanding made the concept readily accessible. "Of all the stuff I learned about systems thinking and mental models," wrote the head of R&D at a large telecommunications company, "nothing was so directly useful to me as the embodiment practice that helped me become aware of what happens to me physically during a meeting."

We are used to seeing what we expect to see, hearing what we expect to hear, and doing what we expect to do. However, these habits can make us numb and limit our potential. They offer comfort without challenge, reassurance without insight, and certainty without imagination.

- Most breakdowns are a result of habitual thinking.
- Most breakups are a result of habitual thinking.
- Most breakthroughs are a result of non-habitual thinking.

Throughout the book, we will present you with a few select breakthrough practices. They will not cause you stress, but they will ask you to stretch. You have been reading about habitual and non-habitual thinking; now let's experience that concept in an embodied way with a practice I first learned from physicist, black-belt martial artist, and founder of psychophysical re-education Moshe Feldenkrais.

BREAKTHROUGH PRACTICE: THINKING ALIVE

Fold your hands by interlacing the fingers as you have done habitually since you were a well-behaved young child.

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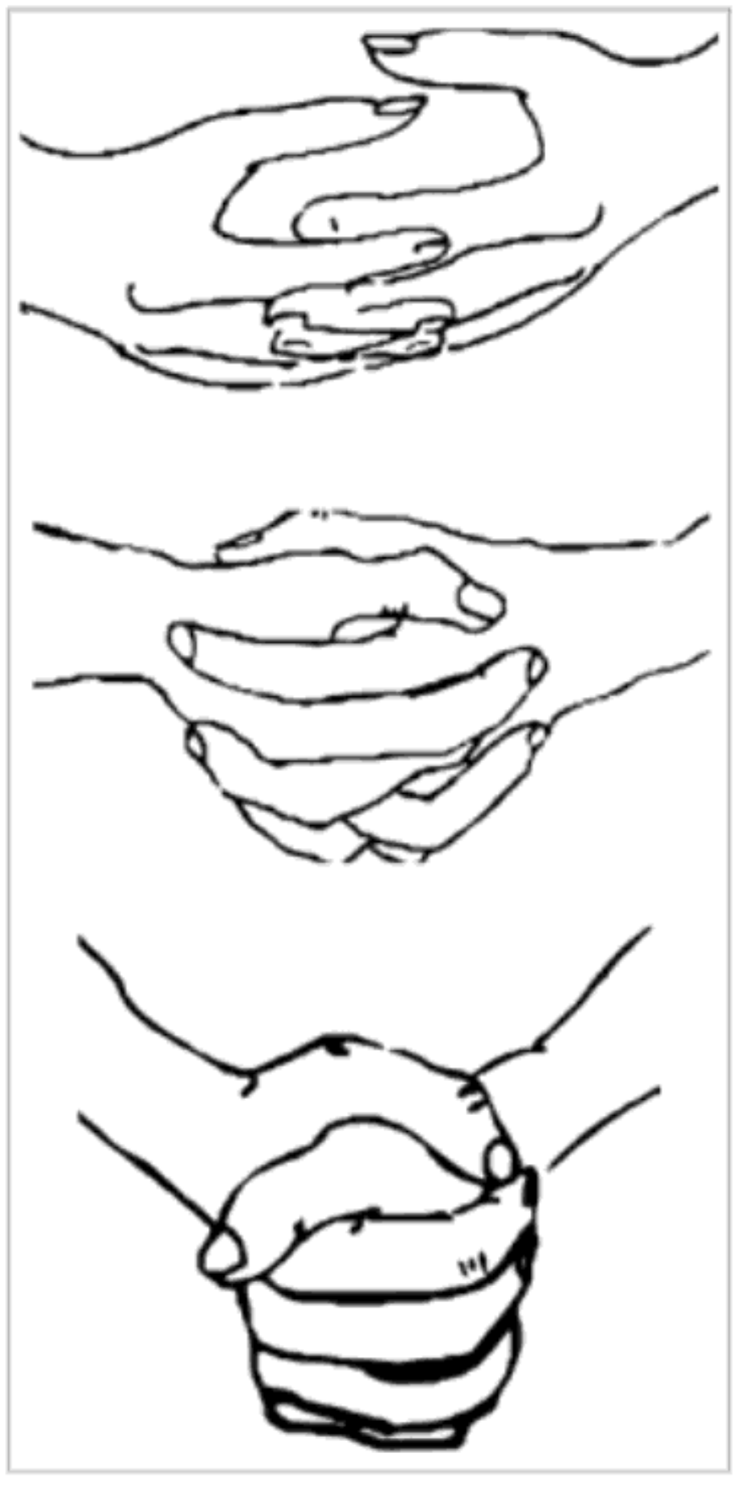
- Now bring your attention to the *way* you are doing this. Is the right thumb on top of the left or the left on top of right?
- Next, unfold your fingers and refold them in the opposite, non-habitual way (i.e., if right was on top of left, put left on top of right, or vice versa).
- Go back and forth between the two ways while asking yourself: Which feels most comfortable? Which feels most awkward? Which feels most secure? Which one helps you be the most aware of the spaces between your fingers? Which helps your hands feel the most alive to you?



When I learned this practice, I was amazed to discover that what was awkward could in fact make me feel more aware and alive. Up until that moment, I had been trained to avoid feeling awkward at all costs. Because I wanted to feel secure and comfortable, I lived within a box of habitual thinking, until I discovered this little practice. I realized that I actually felt safer in the non-habitual position, because I was more aware in the "awkward folding" and I could unlace my hands faster to respond to a challenge. Was this true for you? Use this practice whenever you want to remind yourself to risk thinking in a new way.

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STRATEGY 1

MIND PATTERNS

Thinking about Thinking

THINK **MIND PATTERNS** TALENTS INQUIRY MIND SHARE CQ

Understanding the unique way you think, learn, and communicate

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RECOGNIZING HOW YOUR MIND WORKS

Each mind has its own method.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

I never heard my father say, "I love you." He said many things to me in his lifetime, but never that. My mother collected newspaper clippings that chronicled his journey from inner-city street fighter to CEO of a major Chicago corporation. He often said he regretted never having a son who could inherit the knowledge he'd gathered as he climbed the corporate ladder. My father lacked one skill, however, and it was his greatest secret and most profound shame. Every day after school I would go to his huge office. My feet would leave prints in the plush burgundy carpeting as I approached his immense mahogany desk and pulled myself up onto the leather swivel chair. The only things on the shining desktop were a large reel-to-reel tape recorder and a very thick pile of documents held in place by a crystal paperweight carved with the company insignia. Day after day, I pushed the button on the tape recorder and began to read the papers, one by one, into the microphone. Then, when I had finished, I slipped my hand under the big black-and-green blotter and found the quarter my father had left

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me so I could buy a hot fudge sundae on the way home. No one ever found out about this ritual. It was our secret. No one ever found out that he couldn't read a word.

During the ten years I read and recorded for my father in his office, our conversations grew deeper and more engaging: We actually became thinking partners. He loved my questions, and I loved learning how he managed to inspire so many people. He explained to me that in a leader, no quality was more important than the ability to recognize and develop the capacity of each person, the particular way he or she brings value to the world. As I write this, his words still resonate: "Remember this secret, Dawna: Talent attracts capital far more than capital attracts talent."

I knew my father was intelligent in specific ways. As I became increasingly curious about why my father—a man who could stand before a thousand people and deliver a speech, who could "read" the gifts of all of his employees—couldn't read, I was driven to understand how his mind worked.

The notion that we use different "operating systems" to think has been at the center of my work for the last fifty years. I uncovered it in the 1970s while I was shuttling back and forth from graduate school at Columbia to a classroom in Harlem, where I was teaching forty kids, many with rat bites on their cheeks and folders full of labels about how they were disabled. I adored these children. Each one was a precious riddle that asked, "What can be possible for this child?"

Then I met a lanky researcher at NYU named E. Roy John, who was measuring certain brain-wave frequencies associated with general psychological processes. He originated a field of study called neurometrics, which used a computer and an EEG to monitor what was going on in the brain while a person was thinking. Meanwhile, I was searching for the best reading method to use with my students: the sight method, phonics, or an experiential approach. I brought several children to his lab and connected them to his equipment. What I observed, to put it simply, was that if I gave Johnny written information to look at, his brain produced

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