



*about* **PERFECTION**



## *Do you connect acceptance to perfection?*

Throughout our life, our experiences can cause us to connect acceptance to being the best or being right or doing the right thing. When we're young, we tell ourselves, *If I'm perfect, others will accept me.* But as we age, it evolves to, *If I'm perfect, I will accept me.* In our pursuit of perfection, we set unreasonable expectations for ourselves and others, live not to fail or disappoint, and often pass on this dynamic to others. This is a difficult connection to *disconnect* because we perceive the penalty for failure to be so great. But once we do, we liberate ourselves from the impossible quest to be perfect and become more accepting of ourselves and others.

*using* **LEVERAGE**

1



# 1

## *How do you use leverage?*

In its most rudimentary form, leverage is the use of power to move another party closer to your preferred position. If you typically apply leverage in this manner, you risk alienating others, creating low-level, transactional relationships, and your approach and reputation can trigger other parties to take a more aggressive negotiating stance. When applying leverage in a more enlightened manner, you approach others as true partners. You seek to understand and address their needs, wants, and fears and find alignment and synergies with your own. You build partnerships that result in value creation for both sides rather than maximizing your value each and every time. This form of leverage makes you more attractive to others—enhancing your reputation as someone who builds healthy relationships that create both short-term and long-term value for those involved.





2



*lightening the* **LOAD**

# 2



## *How can you lighten your load?*

Some things are hard, unpleasant, and totally worth doing. Other things are hard, unpleasant, and completely unnecessary. Part of lightening our load is struggling with more of the things that matter and fewer of the things that don't. We can also lighten our load by releasing the expectations of others. The expectations of self. Mistakes we've made in the past. The fear of mistakes we might make in the future. Relationships that no longer serve us. Reluctance in asking for help. Or reluctance to simply tell people we can't do it any longer. Lightening our load not only helps us experience our life in a better way—it helps others experience us in a better way.

3



*navigating* **EXTREMES**

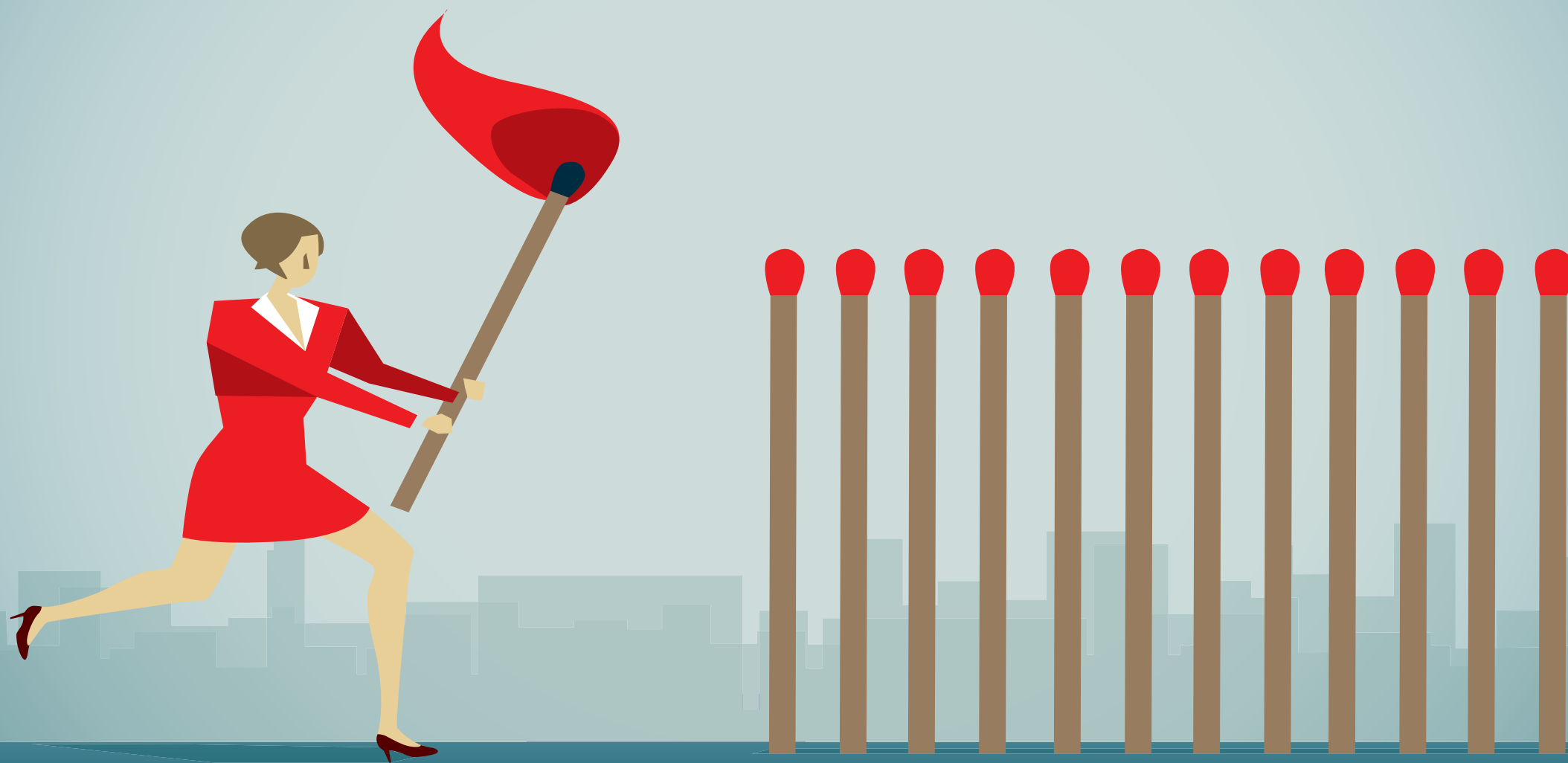
# 3

## *What things—good or bad—show up in me during extreme conditions?*

In extremes, everything disappears except the imperative before us. There is only now and the next right action. Time dissolves. Spaces and separations blur into one interconnected, fluid motion. Even our senses sharpen as we perceive the fine detail of everything. We may feel fear, fatigue, even misery. Yet, running through it, a current of elation. The potential to descend into dysfunction and victimization increases. But peak moments also become more likely as we lift into clarity, belonging, and aliveness.



4



*the* **TRICK CANDLE**

# 4



## *Do you have a trick candle?*

Many of us have a behavior that we wish we could eliminate. We know it exists, and because we don't get the result we want, we try very hard to eliminate it. But like a trick candle, just when we think we've "blown out" the undesirable behavior, it reappears. If this happens to you, it's a sign that you're focusing more on eliminating the behavior than understanding the underlying need that drives the behavior. Once you identify and understand the need you're trying to satisfy, you have a much better chance of replacing the less desirable behavior with one that is more enabling.

5



*getting* **ALONG**

# 5



## *Is your need to get along more important than achieving reconciliation?*

Sometimes you can achieve reconciliation just by focusing on how to get along with another person. This can be an effective approach when you're dealing with a relatively simple or inconsequential issue or relationship. However, if your need to get along with others frequently trumps achieving reconciliation, you inadvertently disable yourself and your relationships with others—resulting in you feeling inadequate or powerless and your relationships left unsettled or paralyzed. Even when it's uncomfortable, if you are courageous and authentic when pursuing reconciliation, you enable yourself and elevate the depth, flexibility, and potential of the relevant relationships in your life.



6



**BELIEF** *and* **FAITH**

# 6

## *Are the agreements in your core relationships rooted more in belief—or faith?*

Belief is how we guide the relationship toward what we assume *should be*. Faith is how we hold space in the relationship for what *could be*. Belief sets the conditions for asserting control. Faith requires a relinquishing of control. Belief is disabling when our insistence about what's best in the relationship gets in the way of something spectacular we never knew was possible. Faith is disabling when our assumption that *everything will work out* takes us out of the center of action. Dynamic and enduring relationships are rooted in belief—and faith.





*the most insidious* **FAILURE**

# 7

## *Where are you protecting against one failure and, in so doing, creating a bigger one?*

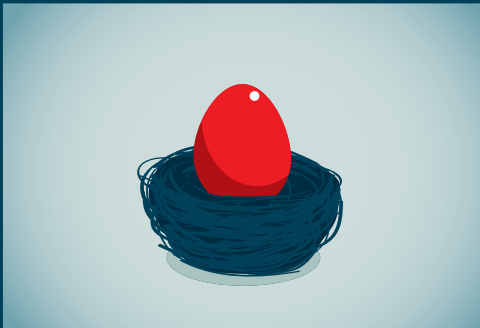
The most insidious failure is not the kind that happens at the moment when you miss the mark, lose the position, or go out on a limb and fall. The most insidious failure occurs slowly. And may initially be invisible or look like success. You arrive, but to the wrong place. You get to where you wanted, but gave up a part of yourself along the way. Getting failure right means becoming clear about what losses matter and which, ultimately, do not.





*essential* **DEVELOPMENT**

# 8



## *How much of your attention is focused on the development of your gifts and the mitigation of your liabilities?*

Too often, those with the greatest gifts work least to evoke them—and those with the greatest liabilities seek least to understand them. Over the course of our lives, it's easy to get distracted by the urgency of tasks and fail to invest in the things that matter most. Embracing development opportunities as one of the highest priorities increases the odds of materializing the most rewarding, exciting, and meaningful futures.



*working* **THROUGH** *people*

# 9



## *When facing an issue, are you more likely to work around or through others?*

When confronted with an issue, it's tempting to take short-cuts that can cause us to withdraw and work around others. Often, we do this to satisfy basic needs— to move quickly, to avoid confrontation, to manage risk, or to pursue perfection. When this happens, we take too little into account and miss opportunities for synergies and co-creation. When we work through others, we take more into account, leverage individual and collective capabilities, and foster relationship building. Most importantly, we increase the likelihood that the issue is effectively resolved and that others support and feel valued by our approach.



10



*getting in* **OVER YOUR HEAD**

# 10



## *How do you respond after getting in over your head?*

Sometimes we enthusiastically take something on and then realize we may not be up to the task. Because we don't want to disappoint the people counting on us, it's easy to go into denial and hope that somehow everything will work out—even if there's little chance of that happening. When we get in over our head, it's essential to address it early instead of going radio silent and getting in deeper. We may simply need to ask for help. Or we may realize what we've offered to do—or been asked to do—is not within reach.

11

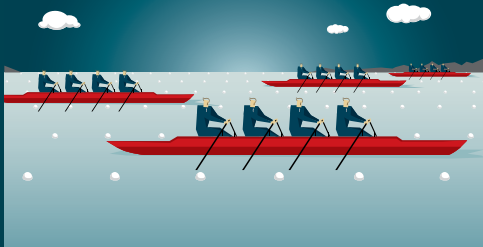
*knowing when to take the* **LOSS**



# 11

## *When is it better to take a loss?*

Most of us hate to lose. When faced with a potential loss, we often respond by exaggerating the implications of both winning and losing. This can cause us to overlook or deemphasize any loss that may come along with the win. Sometimes it's better to take a loss—especially when a win leads to inequities or misaligned relationships.



12



*making your* **CASE**

# 12

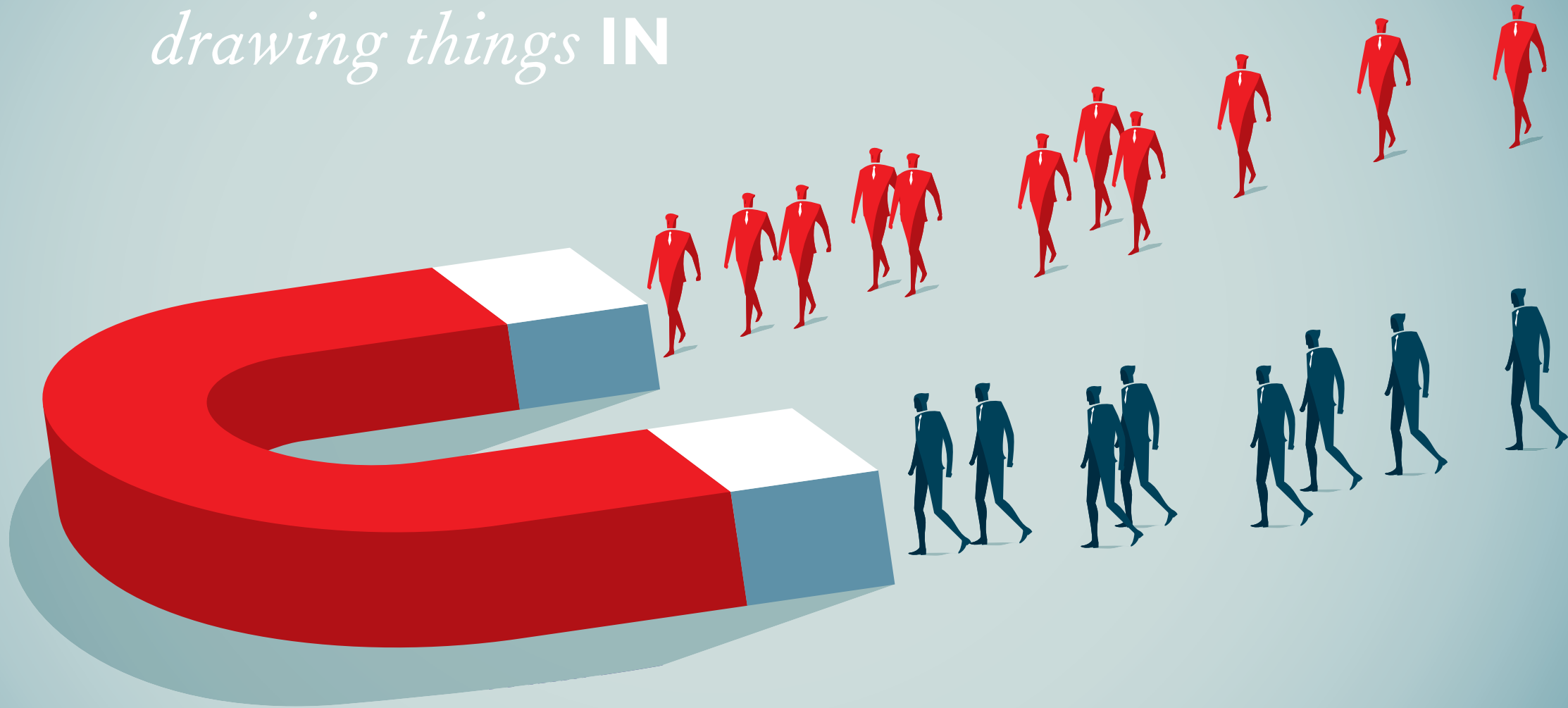


*When faced with a challenging discussion, is your primary focus all about making your case?*

We often approach difficult conversations by focusing on making our case rather than creating a context for mutual understanding. When your attention is on justifying your position or persuading the other person, you remain internally focused rather than building a connection that results in shared insights. Consequently, you limit what you and the other person can take into account, which makes resolution unlikely and achieving reconciliation almost impossible.

13

*drawing things* IN



# 13

*Do you spend more time seeking things out, or setting conditions to attract things in?*

We have access to some opportunities through hard work and effort—what we set our mind to and go out and get. We have access to different opportunities through resonance—the in-kind response connecting us to anything highly similar. This means that who we are limits us—and enables us—as much as what we do. *Things outside of us* can show up simply because they naturally connect to *things inside of us*.





14



*having a clear* **LENS**

# 14



## *What clouds your lens?*

Achieving clarity is critical to sound judgment. However, our needs, history, and learned behaviors can cloud our senses—leading us to misread people and situations, misunderstand the risks/rewards of our options, and mistime our actions. When you understand what clouds your lens, you can adopt coping strategies and behaviors that help you more consistently achieve clarity.

*harnessing your* **SUPERPOWER**

15



# 15

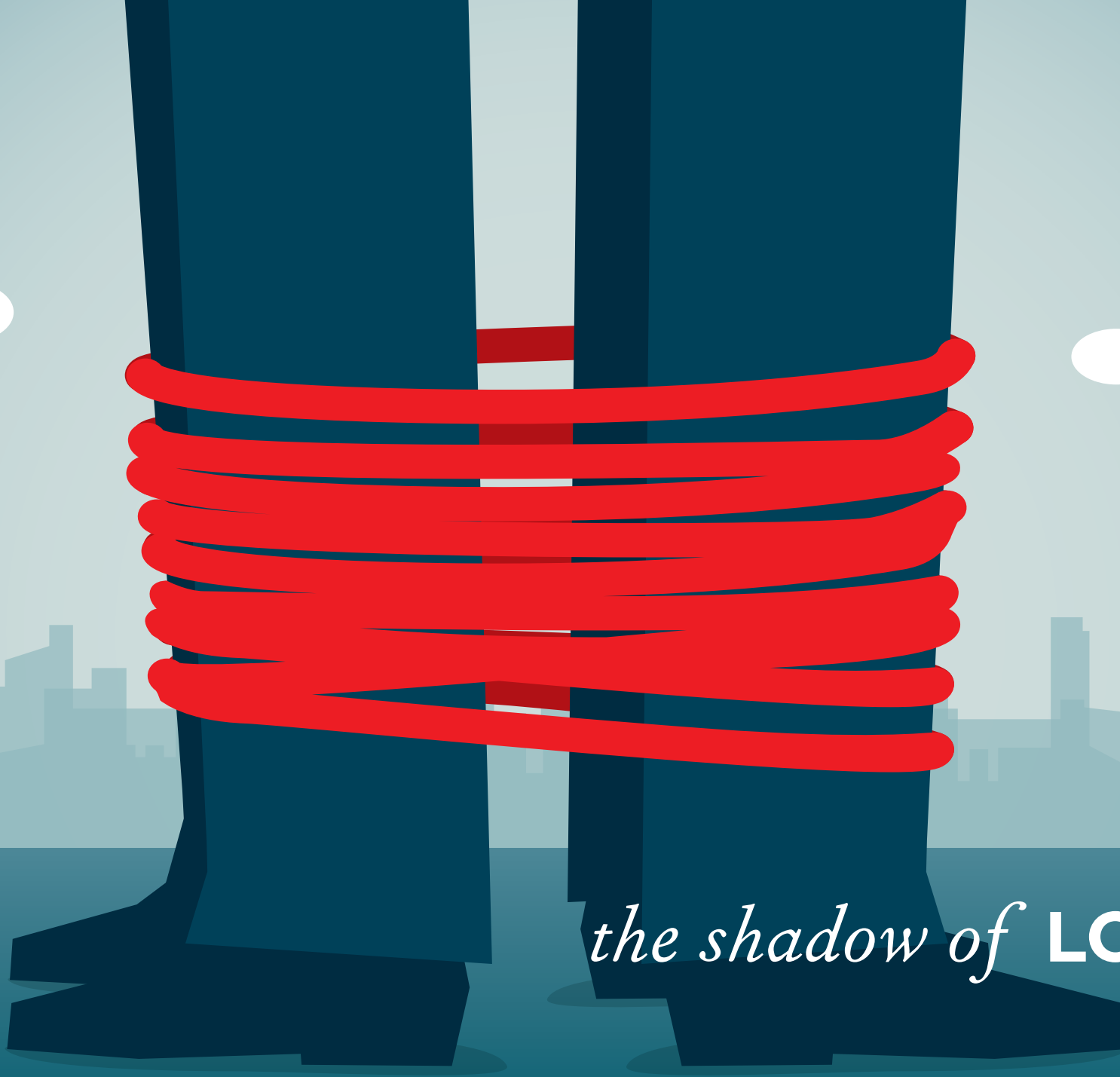


## *Do you have a superpower?*

Your superpower is an inherent talent that is almost effortless for you to use. But like a superhero, you must learn how, where, and when to utilize it. Used appropriately, your superpower inspires, enables, and transforms. When not, it overwhelms, discourages, and stalls.



16



*the shadow of* **LOYALTY**

# 16



## *What is the shadow of loyalty?*

Loyalty is enabling when it fosters trust, commitment, and alignment. But it is disabling when it fosters conformity, cronyism, or turning a blind eye. Ideally, loyalty is not some end state we seek to achieve—like being a loyal person. It's one wise act at a time.



*looking for* **SHORTCUTS**

# 17



## *Do your shortcuts cause you to come up short?*

Taking shortcuts can help you accomplish things quickly and effectively. However, it's important to understand the dynamic between what's created immediately and any longer-term consequences. When taking a shortcut, you are responsible for ensuring that your gain doesn't require someone else to lose.





*experiencing a world that* **WORKS**

# 18



## *Are you more often experiencing a world that's relevant or irrelevant?*

Whether you find a conversation, conference, book, or city relevant says as much about you as the thing you are experiencing. People who are highly relevant in nearly any setting experience nearly any setting as highly relevant to them. There's always something to be learned. Something new to be discovered. And a unique opportunity for growth. Said in a different way, settings you find irrelevant may find you irrelevant too—you may have become inert.

19



*the* **HERO** *and the* **VILLAIN**

# 19



## *Have you ever been the hero only to become the villain?*

People may put us on a pedestal because of our position, power, and influence—or even because they are simply drawn to us. But the inflated image they hold early in the relationship may be shattered down the road when conditions change or things get rough. Because we've not lived up to the expectations of their hero, we may become their villain.

20



*telling a better* **STORY**

# 20



## *What better story can you tell with the same facts?*

Bad events have as much potential to precipitate leaps as good ones, but limiting interpretations materialize the narrowest possibilities. Often a story is wrong not because it contains falsities but because it makes things worse. A better story takes more into account, considers why someone's behavior makes sense within their context, presumes you have what you need, and expands the range of what can happen next.

21



*getting stuck on* **FAIRNESS**

# 21



## *Why is it essential to not get stuck on fairness?*

An instinct for justice is good. But it can also be limiting, even imprisoning, if we insist every way we were wronged be set right—here and now. Often the most powerful thing we can do is release our grievance and go beyond what seems reasonable or fair. This frees us from the limited actions of others and generates a positive imbalance—which has an uncanny way of righting itself later in other times and places.



22

*making things* PERSONAL



# 22



## *Where are you making things too personal?*

When we feel most vulnerable, we are most likely to over-personalize and unnecessarily internalize the emotional intensity of the other person. Just because it's *pointed at you* doesn't mean it has much *to do with you*. And even though the other person insists you are the lead character in their drama doesn't mean the roots of what's going on connect deeply to you. When you don't over-personalize, you stay neutral and have more opportunities to improve the situation.

23



*getting* **SUCKED IN**

# 23



## *Have you ever gotten sucked into something?*

Just like approaching the event horizon of a black hole, we may get sucked into something and have a hard time getting out—like causes, conversations, or conspiracies. Getting sucked in means getting unwisely involved in something. We may even say or do things that seem wildly out of character. It's important to recognize the signs of getting sucked in and adjust course before it's too late.

24



*softening the* **BLOW**

# 24



## *Why does softening the blow often make things harder?*

When faced with difficult conversations, we may seek to soften our message. If our motivation is to manage the feelings of others or protect ourselves, softening the blow makes it difficult for us to maintain integrity, achieve reconciliation, and foster collaboration.

25



*proving* **YOURSELF**

# 25

## *Why does proving yourself rarely result in feeling that you're enough?*

When you focus on proving yourself, you make it about your extrinsic value. When you tie your self-worth to achievement, you become hyper-focused on your needs, your personal brand, and covering for your weaknesses. When you understand and embrace your intrinsic value, you realize you're enough, and you create the conditions for others to be enough, too.





26



*the need for* **SPEED**

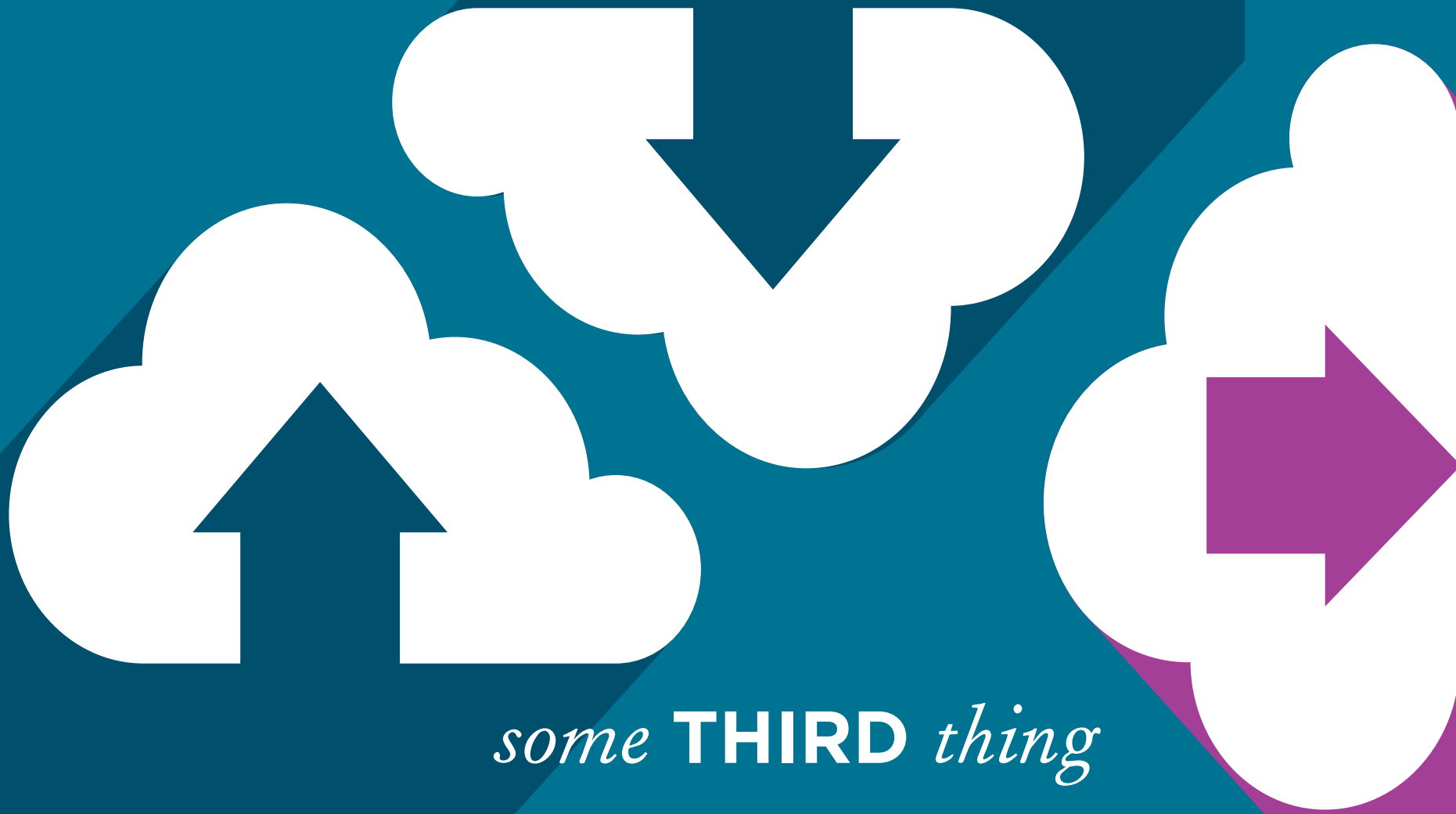
# 26



## *Does your need for speed slow you down?*

Effective leaders move fast with intention. They understand that speed misapplied ultimately slows them and others down. When our default approach is to move with speed, we often miss context, skip details, disempower others, and finish what's not ready.

27



*some* **THIRD** *thing*

# 27

*Have you ever assumed only two possibilities when there was actually a third?*

Sometimes there's a third way *related to*, but *different from*, the two ways we are deciding between. In ancient philosophy, it was called the *tertium quid*. But this third way may not be obvious—it may be mysterious or indeterminate. To see the third way, we must suspend all assumptions and seek a greatly expanded view.



28



*being* **PRESENT**

# 28

## *Are you present?*

When you're present, your physical and emotional selves move in unison. Being present enables you to consistently express your extrinsic value and your intrinsic value becomes evident to you and others.

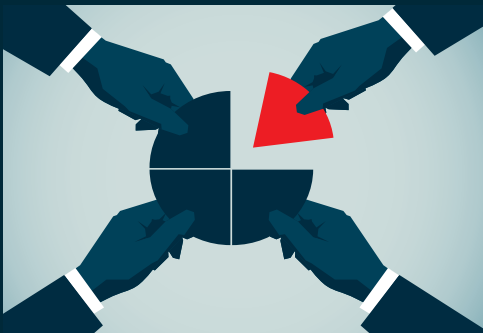


2019



*the missing* **PIECE**

# 29

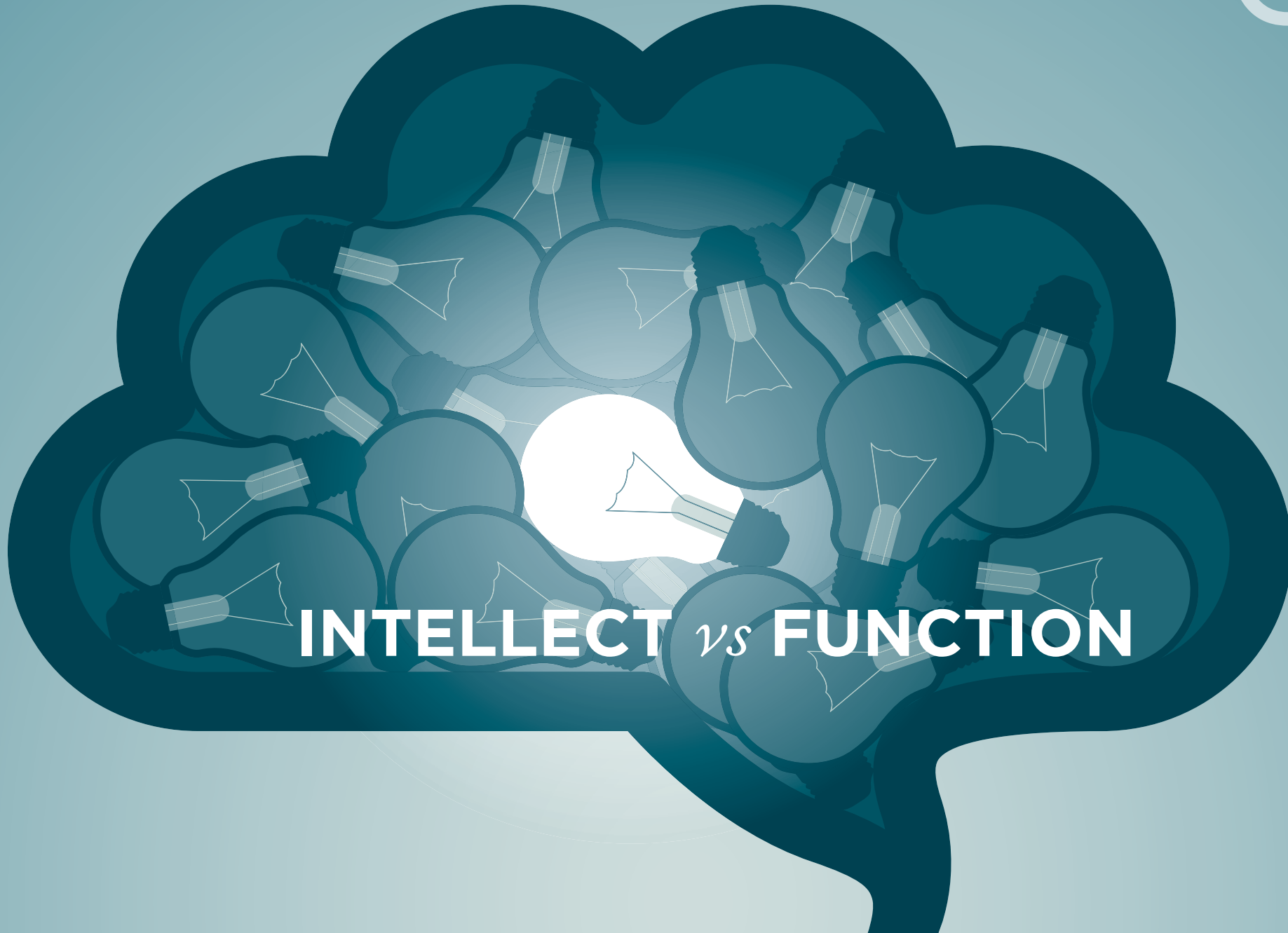


*Do you overvalue a quality someone on your team is missing and undervalue a quality they effortlessly bring?*

When considering whether someone on your team should stay or go, it's easy to idealize something they are missing and overemphasize finding that quality in someone else. But once we've brought someone new on board who provides what was missing, we may discover we've lost something of value that was taken for granted before.



30



**INTELLECT *vs* FUNCTION**

# 30

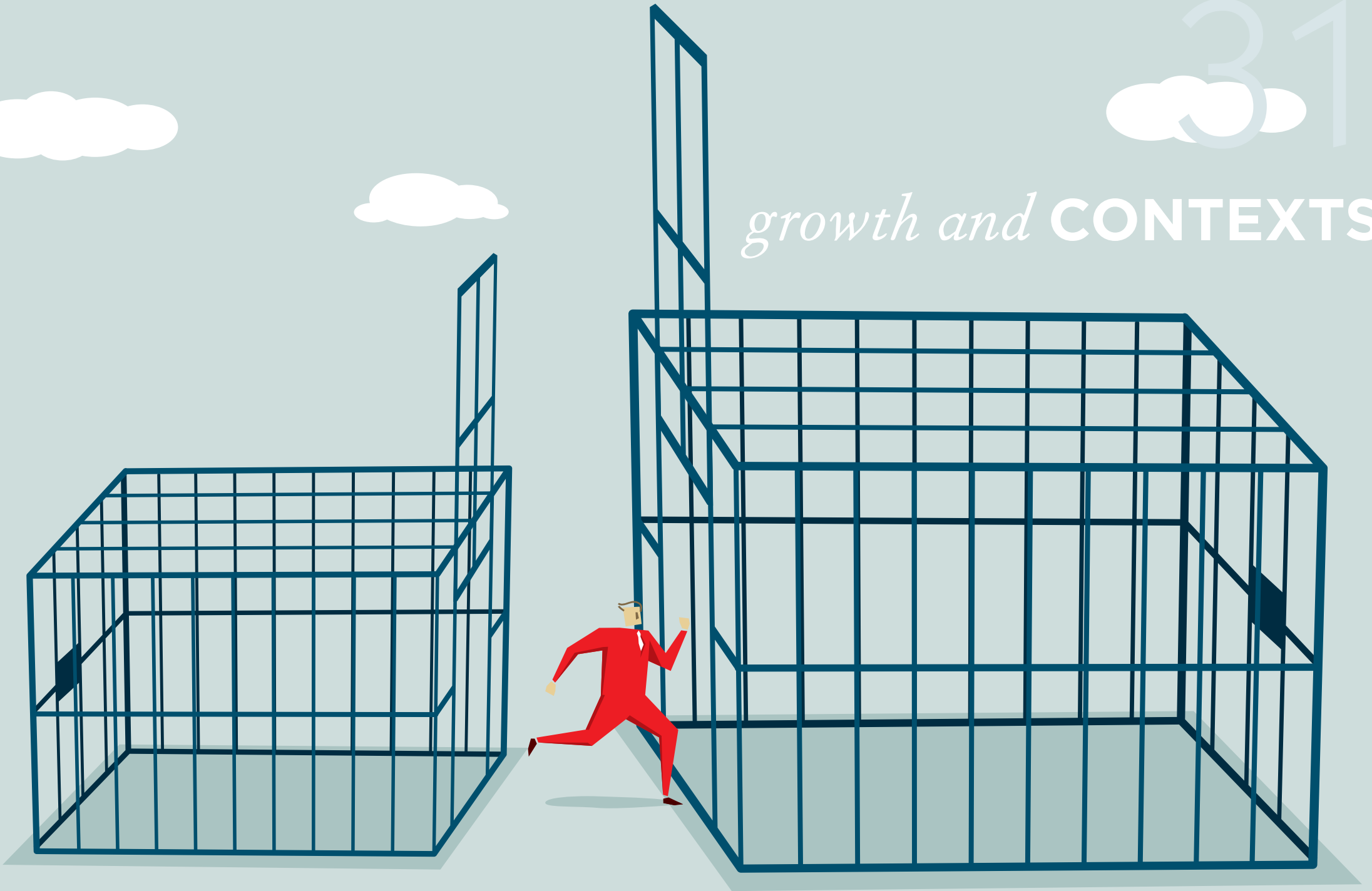


## *What's the difference between high intellect and high function?*

High-intellect people are good at things like amassing knowledge, making rational decisions, and understanding complex systems. High-function people are good at things like staging, reading people, and generating evocative energies. You are more likely to be limited by function than intellect.

31

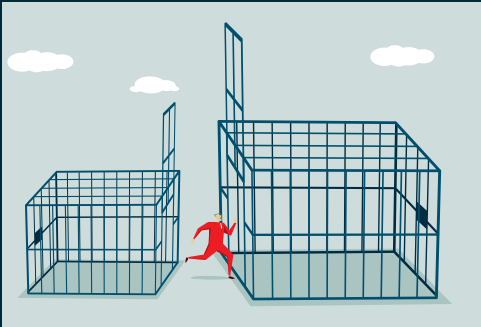
*growth and* **CONTEXTS**



# 31

## *What's the difference between outgrowing your current context, and your current context outgrowing you?*

Sometimes, we grow so much that our current context no longer fits who *we've become*—it can't provide what we need to thrive. Other times, the context we previously succeeded in has grown so much we no longer fit what *it's become*—we can't provide what it needs to thrive. It's easier to know when we've outgrown a context than when a context has outgrown us.



32

*bad* BEHAVIOR



# 32



## *How can you create the conditions where bad behavior doesn't make as much sense?*

Bad actors need a stage—and some stages support bad action more than others. What shows up is not only about the person capable of behaving badly—it's also about designing conditions so a behavior doesn't make as much sense. For example, gossip may flow easily around some people but be acutely awkward around others. It's important to design a theater of expression where the best behaviors make the most sense.



*fussing about* **SMALL STUFF**

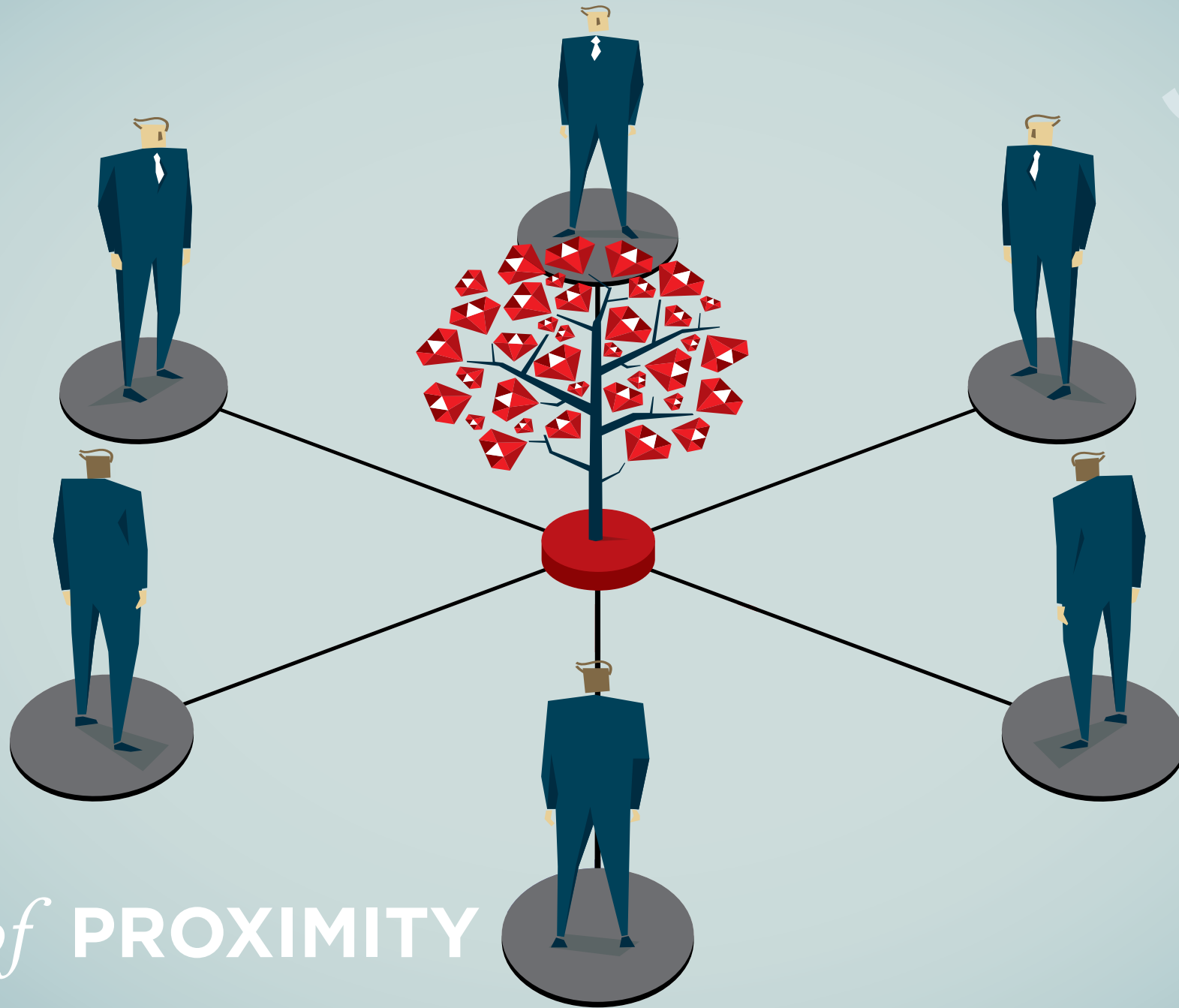
# 33



## *Have you ever sacrificed something larger you care about by fussing about something smaller?*

When something small is awry, in setting it right we may change the conditions for something we care about even more. Pointing out spots on our water glass gets us a new glass, but may come at the cost of changing the conditions of relationship with the server. Setting the record straight may prove our point, but jeopardize our relationship with the people we just called out. It's important to keep the big things we care about in mind before fiddling with the small stuff.



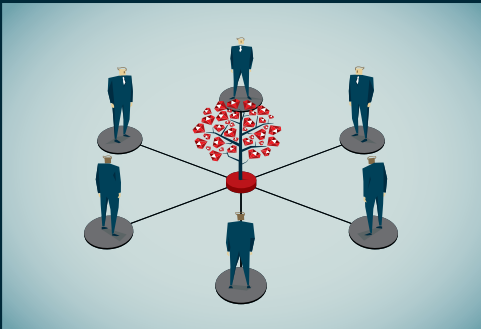


*role of* **PROXIMITY**

# 34

## *Are you sensitive to proximity?*

When sensitive to proximity, you're vulnerable to misjudging the importance and urgency you assign to relationships and issues. You are more likely to exaggerate or diminish your response and less likely to achieve an optimal result.



35



*beauty of* **SERENDIPITY**

# 35



## *How do you view serendipity?*

Viewing serendipity as merely luck or good fortune, you feel there's nothing you can do to prompt it and undeserving when it happens. Viewing serendipity as something that's fostered, you value its potential and create the conditions that increase the likelihood that good will occur.

36



*delegate or* **RELEGATE**

# 36



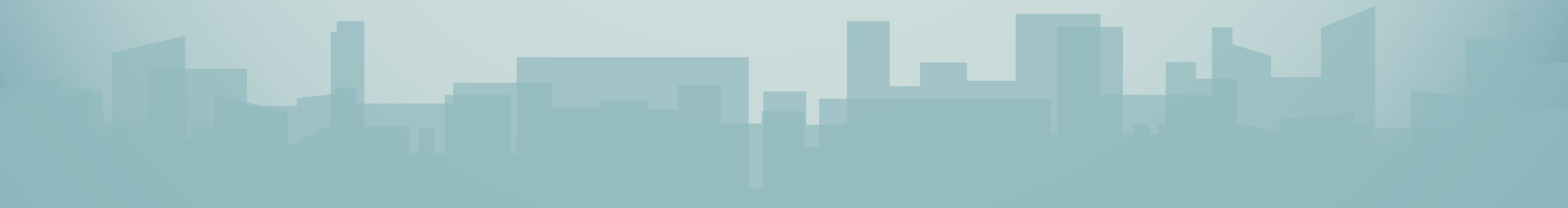
## *Are you more likely to relegate or delegate?*

Due to workload or low interest, leaders relegate responsibilities to others. Frequently, their lack of engagement leads to unwelcome surprises and stress for all involved—especially when outcomes fail to meet expectations. In contrast, effective leaders delegate responsibility to leverage the talents of others. They increase the odds of success by ensuring there is shared clarity regarding what needs to be done, inspecting what they expect, and making appropriate adjustments and decisions along the way.

37



*the easy* **YES**



# 37



## *When is it wise to give an easy yes?*

When someone makes an ask that puts you on the fence between *yes* and *no*, once you've decided to accept, it may be time for an *easy yes*. They may not need to know it was a *barely yes*. An easy yes feels good, generates co-enthusiasm, and creates forward motion. A barely yes may dampen the energy, muddy the waters, and make others feel like they are an imposition. The exception to this is when their request creates conditions they need to know about—or when there's something significant they've not taken into account.



38

*really big* **ASKS**



# 38



## *Do you know when to make a really big ask?*

Some of the most spectacular possibilities for our lives remain unactualized, not because they are out of reach, but because we don't ask for what we could easily have. We may not ask because we don't feel worthy of something big and wonderful—or it doesn't seem like our place. We may not ask because we can't imagine it's possible. Or we may not even know it exists. A big ask may lead to an immediate big yes in response because that possibility has been waiting for you to be ready for it all along.



*having their* **BACK**

# 39

## *What does it mean to have someone's back?*

Having someone's back can be enabling—or disabling. It's enabling when unconditional support encourages, propels growth, anticipates danger, mitigates loss, or thwarts unnecessary catastrophe. It's disabling when it overly insulates, subverts accountability, unhelpfully props up, distorts truth, or favors one at the cost of the whole.



40



*scarcity or* **ABUNDANCE**

# 40



## *Do you have a scarcity or abundance mindset?*

A scarcity mindset is the feeling of not having enough—like resources, connectivity or time. This feeling can make it difficult to move forward, causing you to remain stuck in scarcity. An abundance mindset is the opposite—you feel you have enough. This feeling makes you more likely to extend grace and appreciation, seek new experiences and relationships, and create value for yourself and others.