



McGill

The Learning Organization

Manifesting our full potential



MARCH 29, 2017

WHAT IS A LEARNING ORGANIZATION?



A Definition:

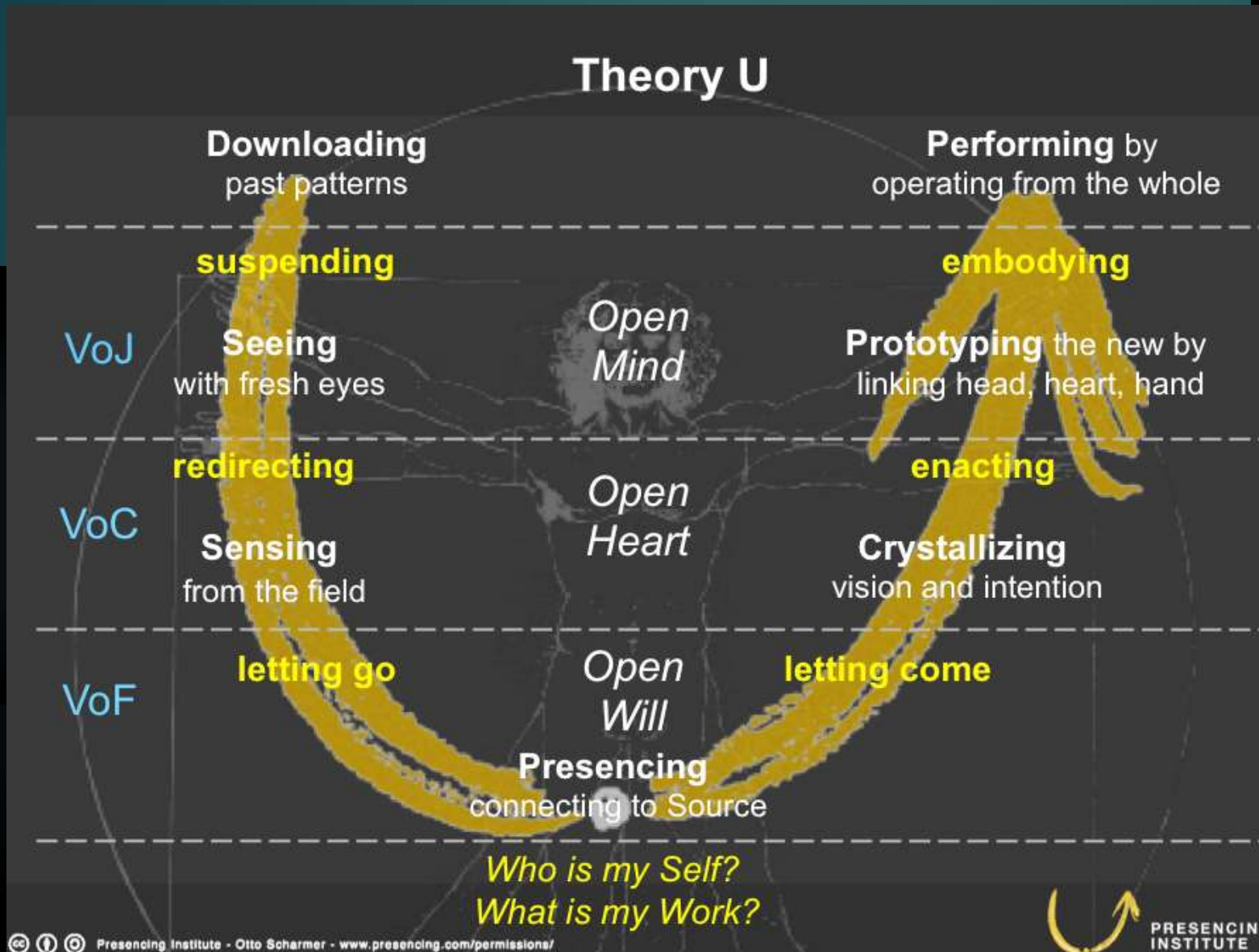
- ▶ “Where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (Peter Senge, Fifth Discipline).

Theory U

- Theory U is a process that emerged in 2006 out of MIT
- Developed by Otto Scharmer and Peter Senge contributed as well
- There are over 160,000 people using it globally
- MOOC course offered, hubs in Montreal and worldwide
- **Most learning methodologies are developed on reflecting on the past. Theory U is based on learning by sensing and actualizing emerging future possibilities.**



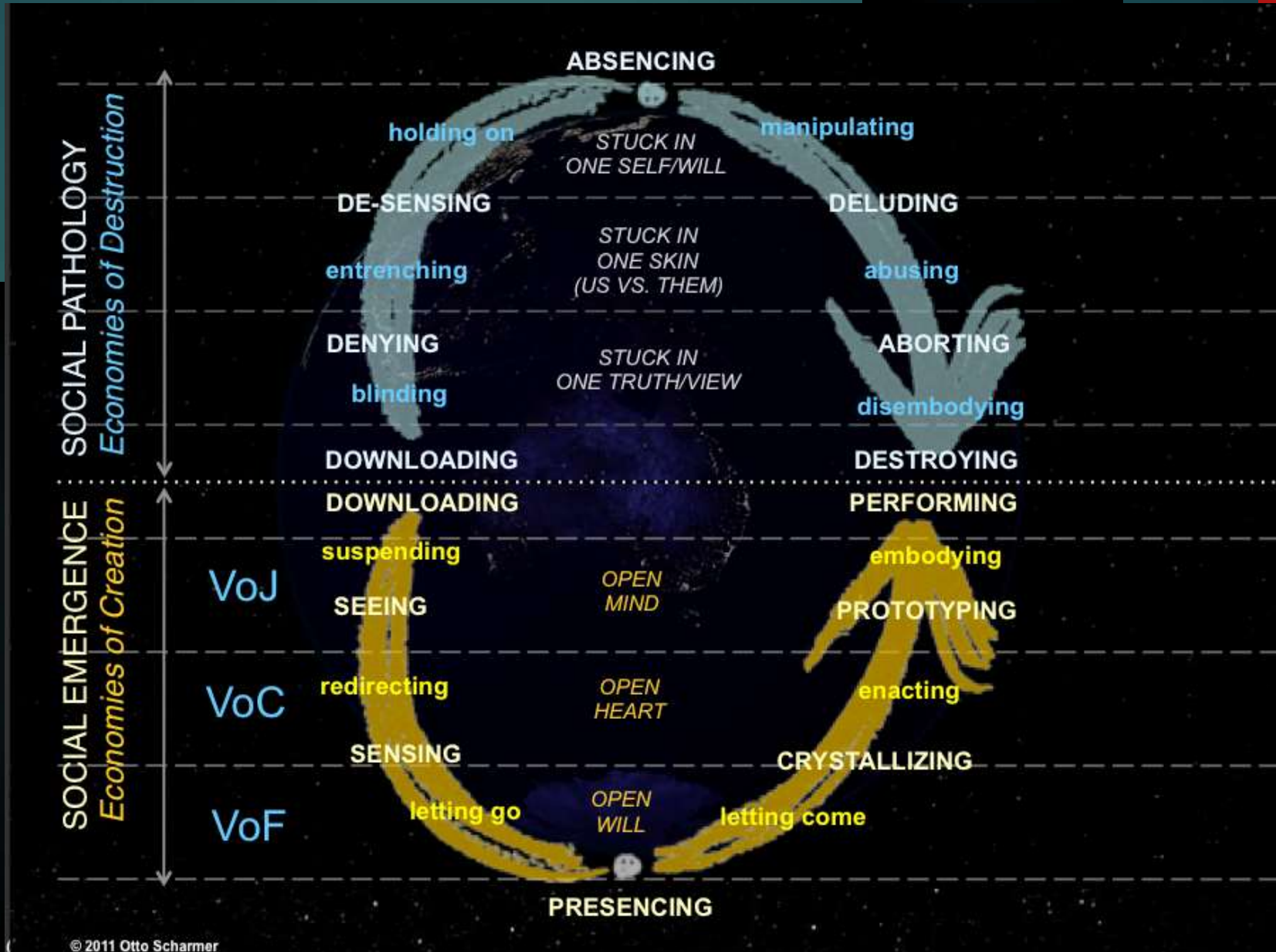
Theory U



- ▶ Open Mind: capacity to suspend our old habits of judgement, to see with fresh eyes
- ▶ Open Heart: capacity to empathize and look at a problem from other stakeholders perspective
- ▶ Open Will: capacity to let go and let come of the emerging new possibilities
***FOUNDATION of Theory U process**

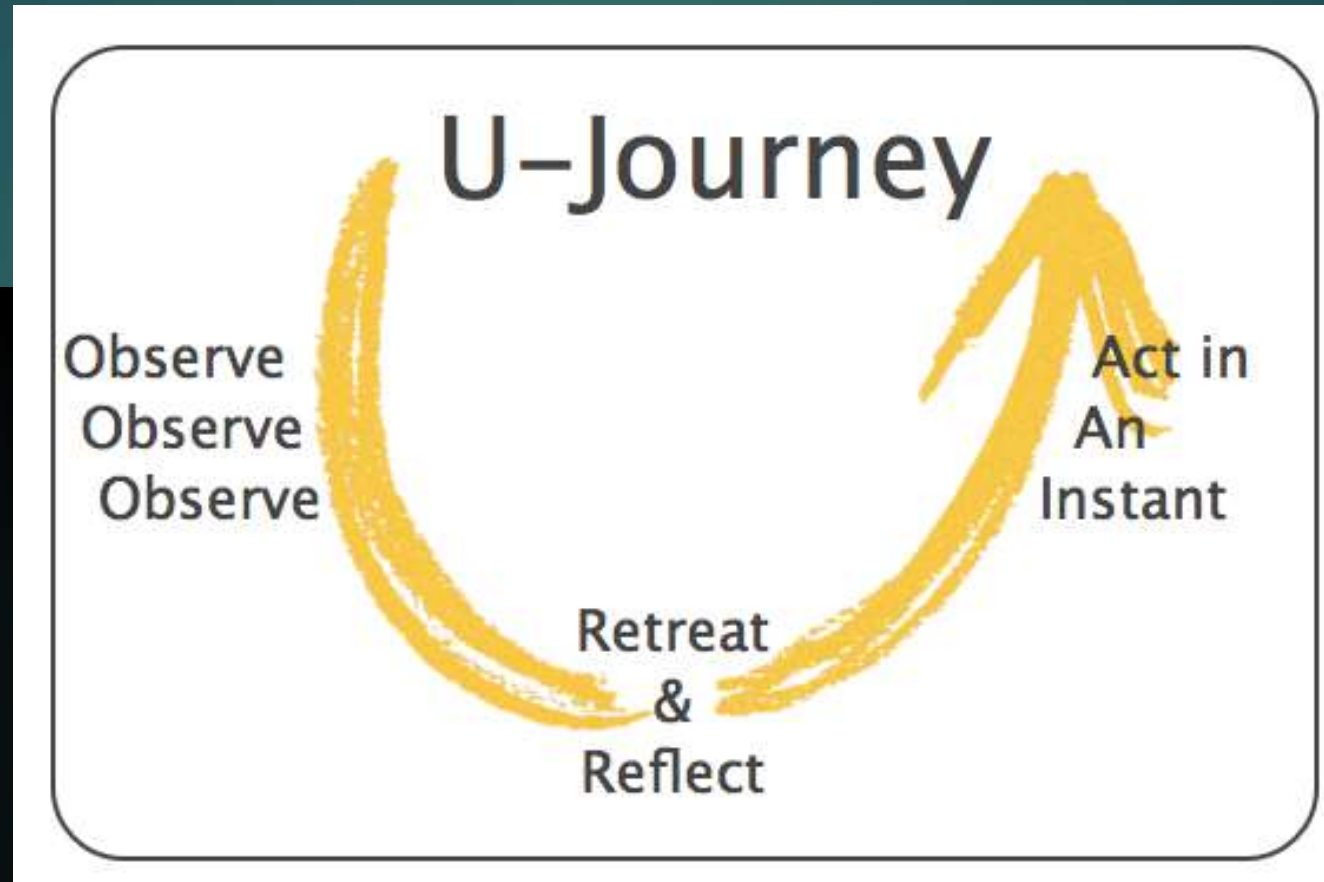
Absencing

Closed Mind:
ignorance
Closed Heart: greed
and de-empathizing
Closed Will: Fear,
holding onto what is.



Applying Theory U

Experience the system from different angles



Rapid prototyping: generate feedback from stakeholders, iterate, iterate, iterate

Access the deepest sources of your intuition

The success of our actions as change-makers does not depend on What we do or How we do it, but on the Inner Place from which we operate. The quality of attention, intention and presence.

The Blind Spot of Leadership



Case Clinic

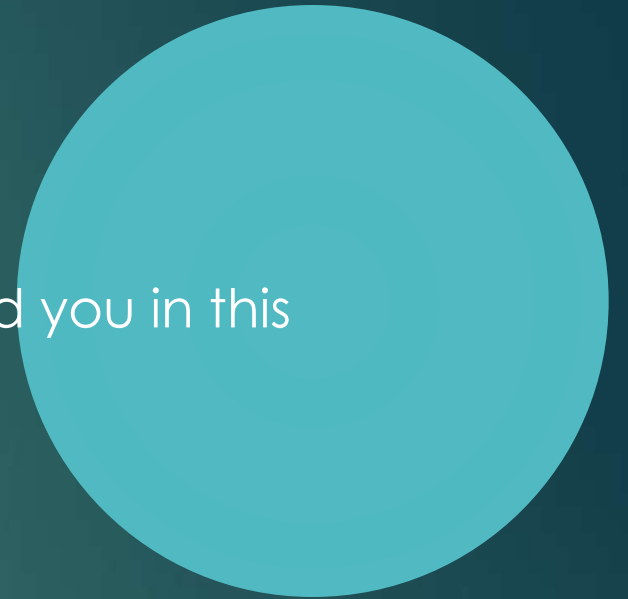
- ▶ *Take a moment to reflect – collective moment of stillness*
- ▶ *Find someone in the room that you don't know, that doesn't work in your department*
- ▶ *Reflect and Share – 10 minutes per person*
- ▶ *Listen empathically, build on each other's ideas. Stay in service of the case giver without pressure to fix or resolve his/her challenge).*

Where do you experience a world that
is **ending/dying**,

where do you experience a world that
is **emerging / wanting to be born?**

Moment of stillness

- ▶ Take a deep breath
- ▶ Focus your attention inwards
- ▶ Feel the connection to yourself and to the people around you in this session.



Becoming a learning organization

- ▶ Learning organizations aren't built overnight.
- ▶ Foster an environment that is conducive to learning.
- ▶ Time for reflection and analysis; think about strategic plans, assess current work systems.
- ▶ Free up time for learning, training, brainstorming, problem solving, prototyping and evaluating experiments.
- ▶ Open up boundaries for the exchange of ideas. Conferences (like this one!!), meetings, learning circles, case clinics, learning forums.
- ▶ **MOVE LEARNING HIGHER ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL AGENDA**
- ▶ Subtle shift in focus from continuous improvement towards a commitment to learning. These shifts provide a solid foundation for building a learning organization.

RESOURCES

- ▶ **Horizontal and Vertical Structures: The Dynamics of Organization in Higher Education**, Richard P. Keeling, Ric Underhile and Andrew F. Wall
 - ▶ **The Fifth Discipline**, Peter M. Senge
 - ▶ **Building a learning organization**, David A. Garvin (HBR)
 - ▶ **Theory U** – Otto Scharmer - www.presencing.com
 - ▶ **Iceberg Model**, Ken Wilber
 - ▶ **Plan – Do – Check – Act Cycle**, Deming
 - ▶ **Triple Loop Learning**, Chris Argyris and Donald Schon
 - ▶ <http://www.belongship.com/test-yourself/> : Understand where McGill stands on the evolutionary scale. Discover which challenges your organization is fit for, and potential ways forward.
- ▶ jessica.malz@mcgill.ca