

The Clover Practice™

The Clover Practice™ is described in the book [Staying Healthy in Sick Organizations: The Clover Practice™](#). This practice is a means for achieving less stress and more peace of mind in the workplace. Three principles make up The Clover Practice™: tell the truth; always speak for yourself; and declare your interdependence (read carefully; *not* independence). The author claims workplaces tend to be fundamentally unhealthy because of obsolete organizing principles of hierarchy and patriarchy and command and control systems, the fact that too many managers and supervisors are not prepared to manage or supervise others, and the willingness to maintain organizational illusions. A practice is something you do every day regardless of the circumstances.

Let's look at the three principles:

Tell the Truth, Always

If peace of mind and reduced stress is our intention, we have to tell the truth even when it's uncomfortable, or inconvenient or we don't look good. White lies and unethically cutting corners compromise our integrity and the degree to which others trust us. This doesn't mean we "tell our truth" to everyone who comes along. But it does mean that "my truth" is just that. It's my opinion, not universal Truth.

Speak for Yourself

Speaking to others about how things look from your perspective, history, memory and experience is a more productive and healthier way to be heard than telling people they are careless, uncooperative, lazy, incompetent, and unprofessional, etc. If you're clear you're speaking from your own observations and are open to and are able and willing to hear others' views, you are more apt to be heard.

Declare your interdependence

No one succeeds alone – no one – even if they think they do. If you truly believed you need others in your organization - regardless of title, position, salary, etc. - to succeed, what would you do differently? You might be more inclined to interact and communicate with, and be openly grateful for, others up and down your organization.

Organizations are living organisms. It's often a challenge to consciously view, or understand, how what you do (say, feel...) affects others – on many levels. When you understand these connections (and consequences) more clearly, you might choose to "do" and "be" differently – which produces greater harmony and collaboration than dis-harmony, competition and conflict.

9:00 Monday morning

Tell the Truth, Always

As a leader, manager, supervisor or employee, do you create a space or container where others feel safe and secure when speaking openly and honestly to/with you? Do you listen and hear? Do you seek clarification and understanding by probing and always digging deeper for clarity? Do you focus on the information, not the personality?

Speak for Yourself

Speaking for yourself means you discuss *your* experience – the who, what, where, when, why and how. You stay away from using "you," "we," "them," "they," "everyone" and the like. Literally, you speak for *your self*. And no one else. Your perspective. Your observation. Without judgment. Without criticism.

Declare Your Interdependence

Where, when and how do you see yourself as part of a larger whole? As a cell in the larger body of your organization? With whom do you interact – directly or indirectly – inside and outside the physical (or digital) walls of your organization? How do you support others and how do they support you to create results, reach goals, problem solve, resolve conflict and achieve?

You might work in a "smart" organization. However, this practice can and will support you and your colleagues – from the mail room to the 52nd floor – create a culture of safety and security, honesty and integrity, and inclusion and respect – all qualities of a "healthy" organization.

Some questions for self-reflection:

Of the three clovers, which is the easiest for you? Which is the most challenging? How so?

When are you most comfortable telling the truth? Least comfortable? How so?

How are you when it comes to speaking for yourself? Do you tend to use "we," "everyone" and the like (rather than "I")?

Do you experience interconnectedness at work (or elsewhere in your world)? How so?

What is your comfort level when working with/on a team? How so?

(c) 2014, Peter G. Vajda, Ph.D. and True North Partnering. All rights in all media reserved.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to share this reading with you and I hope you find it insightful and useful.

Perhaps you'll share this with others, post it on a bulletin board, and use it to generate rich and rewarding discussion.

What is the one thing that is keeping you from feeling successful, happy, confident, in control or at peace as you live your life - at work, at home, at play or in relationship? Maybe you know what that thing is maybe you don't. You just have a feeling that something has to change, whether or not you embrace that change. And how would that change support you to show up as a "better you?"

I'm available to guide you to create relationships that reflect honesty, integrity, authenticity, trust, and respect whether at work or outside of work. I support you to focus on the interpersonal skills that

enable you to relate to others with a high level of personal and professional satisfaction - unhampered by personal inconsistencies, beliefs, "stories," and behaviors that create barriers to a harmonious, pleasant, conscious, compatible, healthy and productive relationship.

I coach by phone, Skype and in person. For more information, 770-804-9125,

www.truenorthpartnering.com or pvajda(at)truenorthpartnering.com

You can also follow me on Twitter: @petergvajda. Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/TrueNorthPartnering>