

Video Transcript: Impact with Integrity - Module 2, Lesson 2

Openness to discovery is being available to learn something new. And, it's not only essential to be able to lead large scale change, to be able to navigate the ups and downs that are coming your way. But it's also just part of being alive. When we stop learning, we start dying. So, this is critical, critical, critical for anyone who wants to lead large scale change. So let's, let's just jump right in here. This is going into the learning objective number seven under no heroes, which is gain clarity on your unique way of unconsciously sabotaging your efforts, right. And identifying alternative plans. So we're going to start off with, how do I take myself out of being available to learn and what can I do about that? So, stay with me. This is a scale on openness to discovery, originally developed by the Hendricks Institute, where I did a lot of training. And, you'll see at the top it's from plus one to plus 10 of gradations of how available you are to learn something new.

And, plus one would simply be having an open posture. So, like, taking your arms from being crossed, to being uncrossed, all the way up to plus making associations about an idea, asking for more information. All the way up to making plans and taking actions together. So, that would be a plus 10. So plus one to plus 10, the higher, the number, the more open to learning you are. Minus one to minus 10 is how closed to learning you are. So, minus one would be literally maybe crossing your arms, minus four might mean making excuses for why you behave the way you did. And then minus 10, literally it could be leaving in a huff, right? Abruptly leaving, and I am not available for learning anymore. So, being able to stay in the game, being able to stay open to learning is a big, big, fundamental skill for leaders of large-scale change.

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What my friend Laurelei did with this information from the Hendricks Institute was she took it and said, there are three ways that you can close yourself off to learning and they map to personas. So there's a hero, a villain and a victim way that you can close yourself off to learning. And we're going to look a little bit deeper into what those are so that you can call yourself, when you take yourself out of learning, you can begin to get familiar with the ways that you're not here anymore, right? And, so you want to take a time out whenever you find yourself going into these minus numbers. So speaking of time outs, I want to take a time out now and ask you to look at the, how open or close to discovery worksheet are you. Look at all the plus numbers and use a highlighter or a little checkmark and highlight the ones that are familiar to you. Like, number plus three, I can do that. I can reliably get myself to at least a plus three. Then, I want you to look at all the minus numbers, both for the hero, the villain and the victim, and highlight any minus numbers that you know you do. And you know you do those ones, right? And so, once you have those all highlighted, hit play again, come back. But right now, hit pause and highlight all of the minus numbers that you know that.

All right, welcome back. Wasn't that fun? Now I want you to look at what you highlighted and see, are there any trends? Do you have some specific categories where ...are there five checked in villain, but none checked in victim, right? What are your personal ways, your unique signature, your flavors of taking yourself out of the game. And, we're going to get a little bit more curious about those. So, the next concept I want to introduce you to is personas. So, I learned about these from Dr. Katie Hendricks at the Hendricks Institute, she incorporated what she knows about personas from Karpman's Drama Triangle. So Karpman did this analysis of all these fairytales and realized that every fairytale has a hero, a villain and a victim. It's what makes a good story, what makes a good drama.

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It's what makes for a good story. It does not make for good large-scale change. So, here's, what happens is when you were born, when you were a baby, you're like really cute and people love doing everything, it was great. And then at some point you became inconvenient to the people who are taking care of you. You needed to do something to get attention. Little babies cannot...literally cannot survive without attention. So the ways you went about to get attention where you had to effort to do it...you couldn't just be anymore, you had to do. That's where these personas come from. They can also come out of traumatic childhood events or things that just didn't work out or things that scared you. And, they're not over anymore. So, as adults now, whenever I get scared as an adult, if I'm not able to be fully present in my body in the moment and say like, "Oh my gosh, I just felt scared," and just kind of shake it off or wiggle it off or whatever that might be.

If I don't presence myself in that way, what's going to happen is my personas are going to kick in and they're going to go, "We got it from here. Thank you very much." And they're going to kick in. The hero, the villain or the victim is going to kick in. And, it's not my essence anymore. It's not the core of who I am. It's this distortion or this, of who I am, that creates a lot of drama. So to get large-scale change done, you want to be in your essence as much as humanly possible. But first, let's look at, let's go, let's double click into these different personas so that you can get some familiarity. Because I want you to understand better how they're showing up at work with you. They come to work with you. So let's start with the hero. The hero, which is essentially the whole non-profit sector, sees other people as needing you, right?

It doesn't see other people as whole and capable of making their own decisions. It's like, "Oh, let me rush in." And the hero can not stand it when someone is uncomfortable.

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So, God forbid someone start crying. The hero can't be with them and say, "my gosh, tell me how you're feeling." The hero has to go run and get them a Kleenex, right? 'Cause you can't stand for someone to be uncomfortable, even for a minute, even if it means they're going to grow.

So the types of things heroes do is look for problems to solve. Heroes cheer people up. I'm not saying that's a bad thing, but every now and then...really, how useful is it when someone says "it's going to be okay?" You know, it doesn't really make you feel better. So, heroes also take one for the team. Heroes work late. Heroes work on the weekends. Heroes refrain from giving feedback, even essential feedback because they don't want the receiving person to feel uncomfortable or feel ashamed.

And, heroes work for nonprofits. Here's a very busy saving the world. So, kind of the favorite phrase or word for heroes is like, "no problem. I got this" right. And I myself, I'm unlearning as much as I can. And learning like loving into...You don't kill off your personas...But my hero persona is the first thing to show up. So, if I get scared and I'm not sure how to respond or what to do, my first instinct is like, let me make everybody comfortable. Right. It doesn't actually solve the problem or make things better. It just sort of covers it over a little bit.

So what we do with our personas is we give them a name. And it's just sort of a way of making it lighter and making it more fun so we can work with it. There's some advanced work that we do in some of our workshops in person with our personas.

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So, I want you to look at your column where it has the hero minus numbers, and look at the types of ways you do a minus and see does a name come to mind for you. So, I think of my hero persona, I think of it as like an Eager Beaver. So, you can see a picture here of this, me at this Eager Beaver Cafe. It's Charlotte, North Carolina. And it's just, what can I do? Looking for things to do so that nobody's uncomfortable and everybody feels safe. But really it's, especially in the nonprofit sector, it is staying in the hero persona is a very fast track to burnout. What happens...So let's hit pause here now. And, look at yours, look at the ways you do hero and give your hero, persona a name or a couple of names. And then once you have that, let's come on back and hit play again.

So, the hero...I gave you the name of the Eager Beaver, but there's other names that you'd have for your hero persona. So, here's some names that I've heard from some of my friends. So there's the Cheerleader, the Energizer Bunny, Wonder Woman, Superman. Like, whatever, it would be a name that works for you, just give your hero persona. A name that fits into how you do hero. And here's how this works: I start with hero. I lead with hero, but when hero doesn't work, I go right into villain. And I'm like, let me tell you, right? I started getting blame-y and criticize-y, right? I move into blame and criticism. So the villain loves to fix blame on somebody or something. The villain knows...my villain knows when something's wrong. Exactly what's wrong and whose fault it is.

So villains cling to fixed beliefs about how things ought to be. And they point fingers. There's two types of villains. There's outies, which point the fingers at other people or institutions. And there's a lot of villain energy in the world right now. And, then there's innie villains, who point the finger at themselves.

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The telltale word that you know that someone is in their villain persona, or yourself, is the word "should." You should do such and such. I should have done such and such. That shouldn't have happened. That's a villain move. And I contrast that with the challenger. The challenger says, "would you be willing to stop?" Totally different energy, right? So, the villain keeps the drama going, right? It just keeps it going. So some of the things that villains do when they come to work with you is micromanaging, pointing fingers, blaming, criticizing, gossiping about people who aren't present, complaining about people behind their back, finding fault with how the message was delivered.

This is a whole thing of, like, "Well, it's not what they said. It's how they said it." That's a super villainy move because it doesn't move things forward, right? It just distracts from the issue. Right. Ultimately villains are the ones that will leave in a huff. So, it can be great fun. There is a short-term benefit to being your personas. You get a jolt of adrenaline, you get some self-righteousness, and that adrenaline actually, it can make you feel really alive. But it does absolutely nothing to advance social change or to have there be better relationships or whatever it is that you want to have in your life. It is a fast track to burnout and dysfunction. When I'm feeling stressed or scared and my hero doesn't work, I go into my villain persona. I call my villain persona Judge Judy, who, you know, as best as we know is immortal and who just kind of sits on her judging stand and judges things.

So, that's wrong, that's messed up. That's messed up. I can do that until the cows come home. It's actually very satisfying. It doesn't change anything, right? So, the difference between you shouldn't do that to, "Hey, are you willing to stop that?" It's a huge difference.

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So it's not helpful to be in the villain persona. We do it, right? We do this. And so what I want you to do now is hit pause, look at all of the minus numbers you did under the villain column. See if you can give your way of doing villain a name that captures the essence of your villain persona. And that'll sort of lighten it up. That's one of the things we do with personas, if we don't take them so seriously. They do come to work with us. You want to get to the point where you'd be like, "Oh, sorry. That was my Judge Judy. I'm back." right. "This is me now again." Right? So that says that we can name it and then bring ourselves back. It can be incredibly helpful. So we'll see you as soon as you have a name for your villain persona.

Welcome back. All right, you've got your Hero persona. You've got your Villain persona. Now we're going to look at your Victim. So, your victim persona believes it is at the effect of. And I always do this when I talk about the victim persona. Like, "Oh, it's never gonna be better." Or like this, this sort of overwhelm type of posture orientation towards the world. So, the victim believes it's at the effect of something outside of themselves. And doesn't have agency. I want to differentiate this very clearly from actual victimization. You can be an actual victim of a crime. You can be a victim of racism, of oppression, of sexism, whatever it may be. It's not about that. That does happen. It's how do you orient to that? Do you say, "Oh, it's okay. I'm sure they didn't mean anything," which would be in the hero, or would you say "That's messed up and now, you know, and now I'm going to put it right back on them," and that would be in the villain. Or do you say, "Oh my gosh, this is never going to stop. It's always going to be this way," which would be more of a victim orientation to victimization. So, I hope you can see the difference there.

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For me, I go to my victim last. It's the last place I go to for many years. I didn't think I had one. Turns out, really my victim persona was running the whole show. Because the last thing I want as a change agent, as a leader in the world is to believe that I'm at the effect of anything, right? I want to have agency, blah, blah, blah. So it was much more deeper in the recesses of my unconscious, but as I delved into it further, I was like, Oh my gosh, when things kind of go haywire for me, it's the victim running the show. So, some of the hobbies of victims when they come to work with you is to avoid making decisions, do anything you can to not actually have to be decisive because it's too hard, right?

There's too many decisions. Victims make excuses. Victims explain why things are never going to change and put a lot of energy into that. Victim's whine and overwhelm and victims overwork themselves. So sometimes when you're overworking, it has a hero flavor of like, "Oh, let me take one from the team. I don't want this other person to be uncomfortable. So I'll do that." And, sometimes, it has a victim flavor, which is more like, "Oh, we have to work on Saturday again." Right? Or, "I have to bring this home with me to do at night," right? The telltale sign--and you just heard that, as I said it--was have to. So, if you're saying the words have to, you're probably in the victim persona.

And what I like to do linguistically, to kind of jolt myself out of it is whenever I catch myself saying I have to do something. Timeout. And I say, I choose to, I'm choosing to do this thing. So, even as something as small as I have to go to the dentist, most people super-duper look forward to going to the dentist. But if I have to go to the dentist, I'll catch myself, say I'm choosing to go to the dentist. And I would like for my teeth to be around for as long as possible. Right.

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So what I want you to do right now is hit pause and give your victim persona a name, and then come on back.

Okay. So my name for my victim persona, I call it Angry Penguin. And so my Angry Penguin kind of waddles around and in a very passive, aggressive manner does housework. And, so, if I'm not getting my way or feeling unseen or unheard, or my hero didn't work, and my villain didn't work, I will resort to waddling around the house in a very passive, aggressive way, doing dishes. I might put them in the dishwasher a little louder than usual, or take out the garbage. And while I'm doing it kind of mutter, "I'm the only person who takes out the trash here." And, that persona is not helpful. It's the least helpful thing. My wife now, when I do that, she'll just be like, "Oh, Angry Penguin is here." Right? And I'm like, "No, it's not Angry Penguin. This is my essence," but I really am an Angry Penguin.

And this gets to one of the keys to how you work with your personas is making it bigger. It sounds paradoxical. But, if you try to hide your personas and not let people see them, then this almost keeps them alive and keeps it going. Which, what you really want to do is make it bigger and almost make it really silly to get it to the point where it's almost like silly theater. And you're like, "Okay, right, I was an Angry Penguin," and it sort of melts it. So, I want you to be familiar with these. I want you to be familiar with which ones come to work with you, which ones show up when you get scared in your large-scale change contexts. Because these are the things that are going to stop the work from moving forward. So good luck with this. We'd go into this deeper in our in-person trainings, but at least knowing who's in your posse is going to be really helpful for you.