


The Power of a Non-Anxious Presence

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The key to effective leadership is the ability to be a non-anxious presence.



Family Systems Basics

We are each part of multiple relationship systems, i.e. family of origin, congregation, organization

In every system there is tension between individuality and conforming to social norms.


Another way to look at this is the tension between self-definition and relationship/emotional connection



Self-Differentiation


The capacity to define one's own goals and values in the midst of surrounding togetherness pressure (Edwin Friedman, *Generation to Generation*)

The hardest thing is to be a "self" while remaining connected. But it is this "presence" that is most essential for leadership.



Say what you believe,
while giving others
the freedom to
disagree.



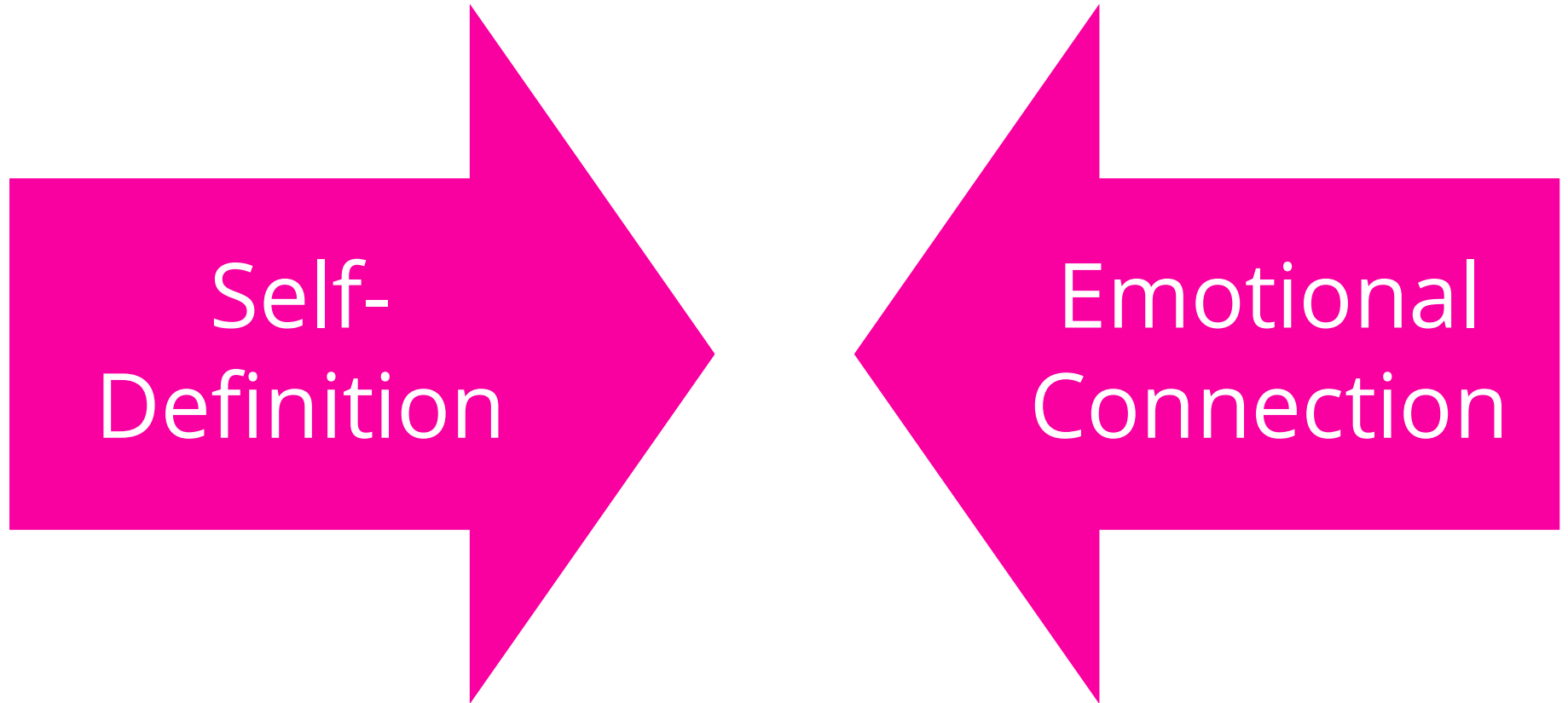
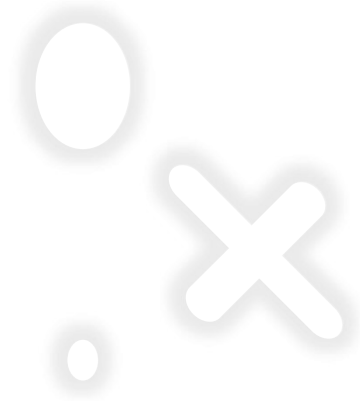


Nobody likes
to be told
what to do.

Leadership through Self-Differentiation

“The basic concept of leadership through self-differentiation is this. If a leader will take primary responsibility for his or her own goals and self, while staying in touch with the rest of the organism, there is more than a reasonable chance that the body will follow. There may be initial resistance but, if the leader can stay in touch with the resisters, the body will usually go along. (Generation to Generation, p. 229)

Leadership through Self-Differentiation



Self-
Definition

Emotional
Connection



Leadership
through Self-
Differentiation
is experienced
as authenticity
and presence


Point of View – Your experience, where you come from matters.

Vision – Self-definition. This is what I believe. This is where I believe God is leading.

Vulnerability – The courage to speak your truth.

Humility - This is my interpretation. I may be wrong. You don't have to agree with me.

Connection – They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care



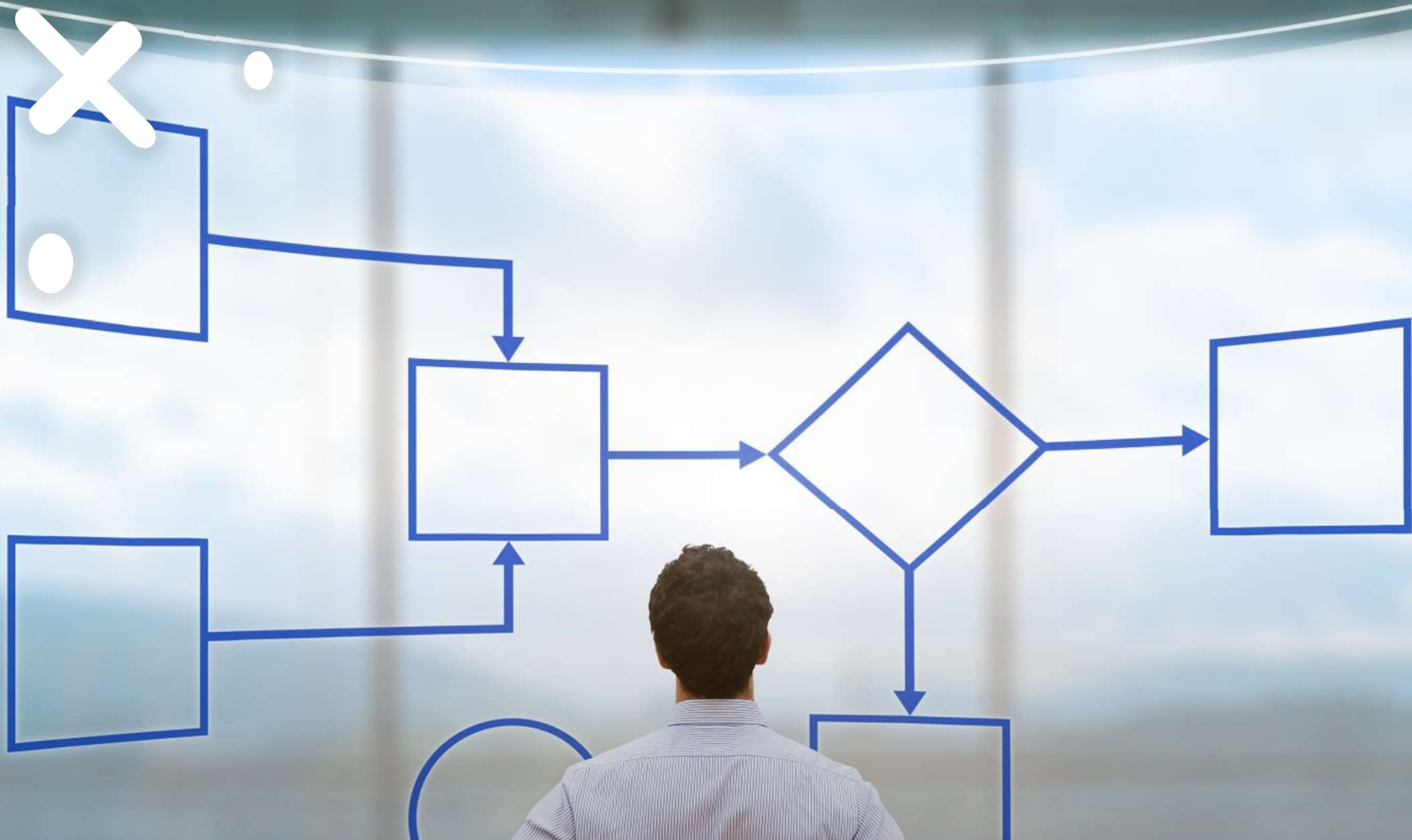
The higher the (perceived) emotional stakes, the harder it is to maintain a non-anxious presence.




The Leverage of the Dependent



Triangles



It's Process NOT
Content



When others are
defining self, feel free
to engage.

When they are defining
others (especially you),
avoid content, while
remaining connected
(move closer).

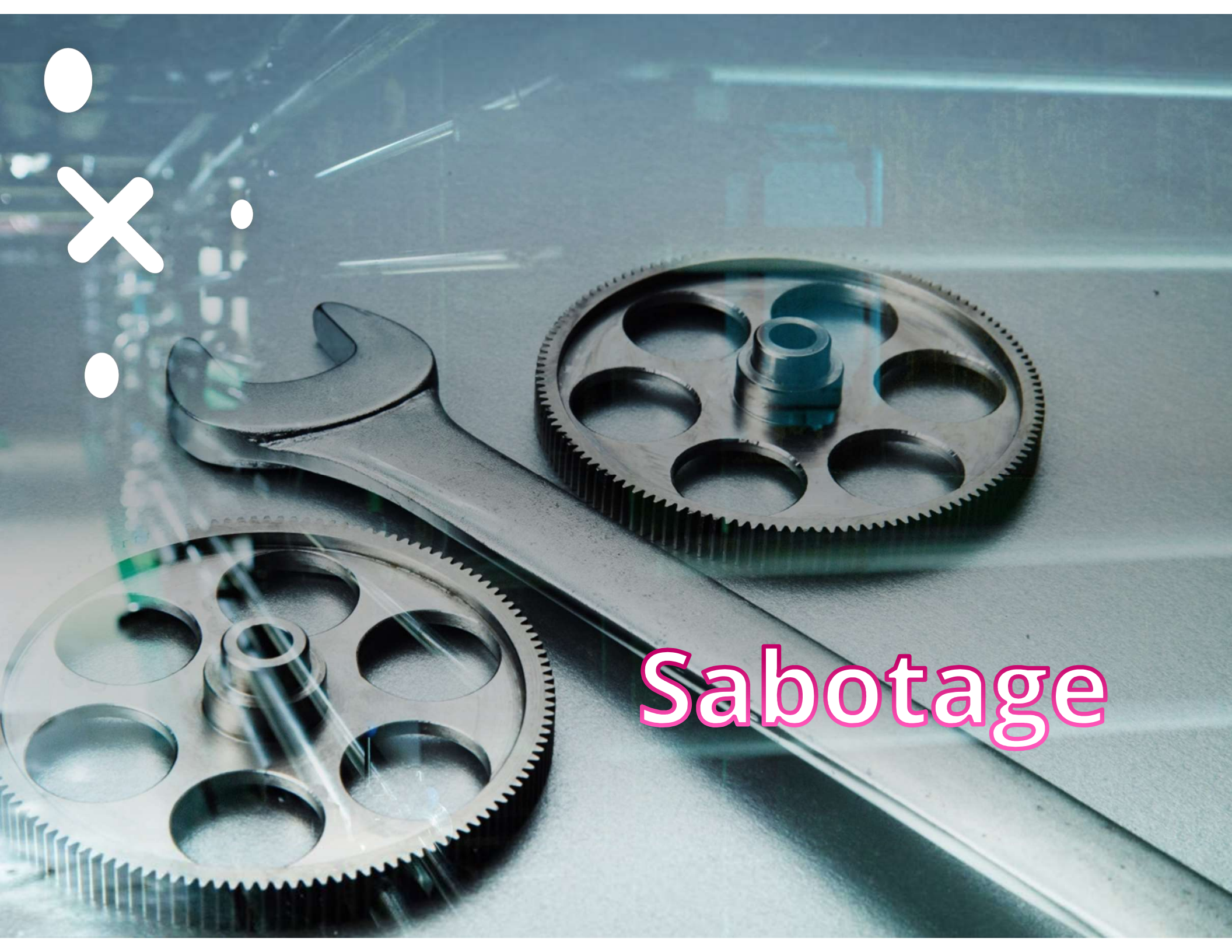


Conflict of Wills

Comes from
the need to
be right

Results in the
opposite

Don't argue,
don't agree



Sabotage



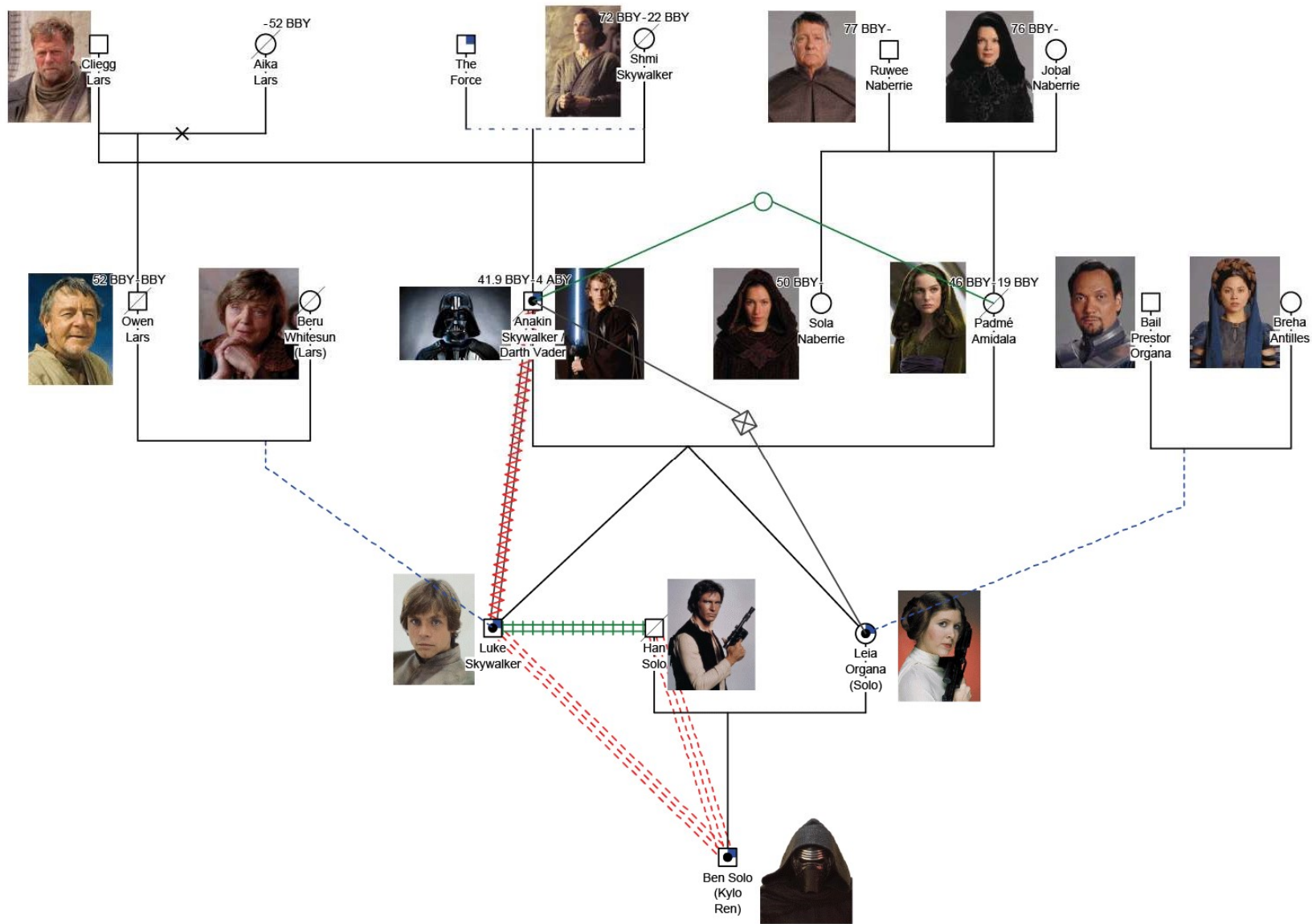
All Change
Is Loss

Use Paradox and Playfulness

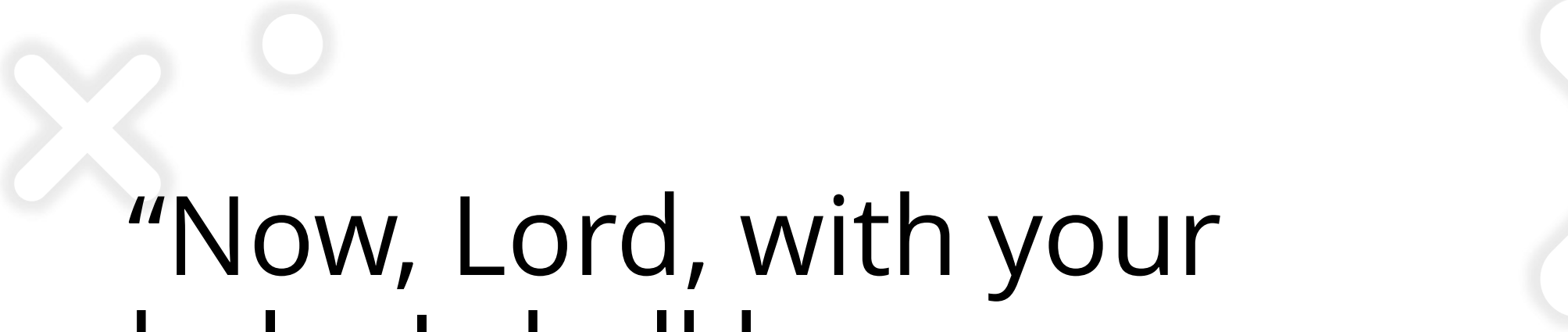


Paradox – gives
the responsibility
of choice back to
the other.

Playfulness is the
antidote to
seriousness



Doing Your Own Work



“Now, Lord, with your help, I shall become myself.”

- Søren Kierkegaard

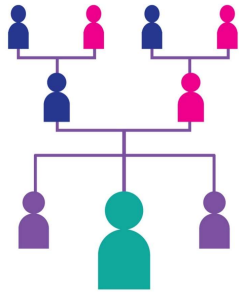


The Non-Anxious Leader: Family Systems Basics

<https://www.pdcabc.org/the-non-anxious-leader.html>

If You Met My Family, You'd Understand

A Family Systems Primer



JACK SHITAMA



Anxious Church Anxious People

How to Lead Change
in an Age of Anxiety



JACK SHITAMA

thenonanxiousleader.com



Discussion

When have you been able to lead as a non-anxious presence?

When have you found it challenging?

How can you start doing your family of origin work?

