Collaborating
with the
Enemy

How to Work with People You Don't Agree with or Like or Trust

Adam Kahane

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Praise for Adam Kahane's Work

Business

"Kahane addresses an important challenge that we face every day: how can we move forward together in situations where we are in conflict and unable to construct a shared vision of the future? In doing this he overturns conventional practice—including his own—and proposes a new approach to collaboration that is better suited to our difficult current context."

—Jan Kees Vis, Global Director, Sustainable Sourcing Development, Unilever

"Adam's *Solving Tough Problems* helped me understand that all our pressing problems—be they strategic issues inside a company or societal challenges like conflict, poverty, or climate change—require that those with a stake and the power to act come together in open dialogue to create a joint diagnosis and a deep commitment to moving forward together. In *Power and Love*, Adam goes further and deeper—into the kind of leadership that it takes to do this. A must-read for every reflective leader."

—Ravi Venkatesan, Director, Infosys, and former Chairman, Microsoft India

"Our societies face really hard problems—poverty, injustice, unsustainability, corruption—that are insoluble by conventional means. Conflicts of interest and profound uncertainties about the future are producing paralysis and inaction. Adam Kahane has, more than anyone, developed and successfully employed tools that enable us to create futures of shared progress and profit."

—Peter Schwartz, Senior Vice President, Salesforce.com, and author of *The Art of the Long View*

Civil Society

"In *Collaborating with the Enemy*, Adam Kahane shows that people who don't see eye-to-eye really can come together to solve big challenges. Whether in our businesses, our governments, our communities, or our personal lives, we can all benefit from this smart and timely book."

—Mark Tercek, President, The Nature Conservancy; former Managing Director, Goldman Sachs; and coauthor of *Nature's Fortune*

"Adam Kahane proposes a solid and clear methodology, supported by his experience in the many processes in which he has participated, that invites us to defy our situation and to transform—not only to change—it, beginning by transforming ourselves."
  —Luis Raúl González Pérez, President, National Human Rights Commission, Mexico

"Kahane takes the core message from his seminal *Power and Love* into uncharted territory: our messy, challenging, and necessary task of working with others to solve intractable problems. He redefines collaboration, testing our assumptions about the interplay between individual agency and collective action. At once theory, memoir, and practical guide, *Collaborating with the Enemy* is a vital primer for people working at all scales to make the world a better place."
  —Ross McMillan, President, Tides Canada

"Nowadays, opposition and conflict are the new normal, yet normal responses to them seem impotent. Amid this chaos and as if delivered to us by 'special order,' *Collaborating with the Enemy* shows us how thinking and seeing differently can help us navigate this challenging landscape. Kahane abandons orthodoxy in taking on the most intransigent problems, showing us the path to effective action in a complex world."
  —James Gimian, Publisher, *Mindful* magazine, and coauthor of *The Art of War* and *The Rules of Victory*

"*Transformative Scenario Planning* is a deeply human book that offers tangible means for tackling the intractable problems that confront us at every level of life, from domestic and local to national and beyond. It offers realistic, grounded hope of genuine transformation, and its insights and lessons should be part of the toolbox of everyone in leadership roles."
  —Thabo Makgoba, Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town

"In our field, the hardest nut to crack is how to address conflicts between parties with fundamentally different worldviews. Adam offers a robust theory and a straightforward practice to address this vital challenge."
  —Ofer Zalzberg, Senior Middle East Analyst, International Crisis Group

Foundations

"How many of us have dreamed of developing the art of helping others solve 'impossible' problems and bridge 'uncrossable' divides? Adam Kahane has taken that journey. Read, listen, absorb, and integrate."
  —Peter Goldmark, former President, The Rockefeller Foundation

"To transcend the perilous state in which we find ourselves, we need to learn to collaborate with those with whom we'd rather not. Drawing on his experience enabling sworn enemies to create peace in places like South Africa, Northern Ireland, and Colombia, Adam Kahane shares insights and lessons we can all use when collaborating with 'those others' is our only or best way forward. *Collaborating with the Enemy* belongs on the same shelf as Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* and Machiavelli's *The Prince*."
  —Stephen Huddart, President, The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation

"Adam Kahane helps us overcome romantic and linear approaches to conflict transformation. *Collaborating with the Enemy* provides a hands-on critique of the myth of the uninvolved mediator and explains the art of working with the enemy."
  —Gorka Espiau, Associate Director, The Young Foundation, and former Peace Advisor to the President, Basque Government

Government

"Mahatma Gandhi said, 'Be the change you want to see in the world.' His life was the unfolding of an even deeper truth: the need to change himself if he wanted to change the world. Hence, his autobiography was titled *My Experiments with Truth*. Adam's story of his engagements with people in many countries, whom he was called to help in their efforts to change their worlds, is an account of his own realization of Gandhi's deeper insight. It is an honest and beautifully told story."
  —Arun Maira, former member, National Planning Commission, and former Chairman, Boston Consulting Group, India

"*Power and Love* includes the story of the Visión Guatemala team, in which a group of us, who in the ordinary course of events would never have met or worked together, had an unprecedented experience that opened up new horizons for us and for our country. Adam helped us cultivate our dreams and ideals and gave us the energy and hope

to act to renew our society."

—Raquel Zelaya, former Secretary of Peace, Guatemala

"Advances and changes in humankind have left the world with super-complex problems—from achieving sustainable development to maintaining peace and security—that require changes in the way we face them. *Collaborating with the Enemy* gives us not only a privileged look into Adam's extensive experiences in high-level engagements to address these problems but also his honest and brave reflection on his successes and failures, and from these his articulation of an important new approach to collaboration."

—Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, former Head, President of Indonesia's Delivery Unit, and Distinguished Practitioner, Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford

"The quality of a decision depends in large part on the quality of the process by which the decision is made. But the political process in my country (as in most) actually causes us to 'enemyfy' each other. If we are to solve the great challenges of our time, whether climate change or economic division and social unravelling, we must learn how to collaborate with those we believe to be our enemies. Adam shows us a way to do so."

—James Shaw, Member of Parliament and Coleader, Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand

Academia

"*Collaborating with the Enemy* is a lighthouse for our troubled times. If we are to find a way to reconcile the divides that imperil our common life, here we have a profound guide and a source of hope."

—Rufus Black, Master, Ormond College, The University of Melbourne

"*Power and Love* is a rare and valuable book. Kahane has immersed himself in the practical challenges of helping people effect social change, and against this backdrop he unfolds a simple and penetrating insight: that power and love are two axes that delineate our individual and collective journeys. Either we master the balance of power and love or we will fail in our efforts to realize deep and lasting change."

—Peter Senge, Senior Lecturer, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and author of *The Fifth Discipline*

Collaborating with the Enemy

HOW TO WORK WITH PEOPLE YOU DON'T AGREE WITH OR LIKE OR TRUST

Adam Kahane

Drawings by Jeff Barnum

A Reos Partners Publication

Collaborating with the Enemy

To my enemies and teachers

Contents

Foreword by Peter Block

*I*f you are working to make the world a better place, there are few experiences more rewarding and useful than having your thinking turned upside down. A shift in thinking is the essence of transformation. It is the basis of renewed faith. It is at the core of great leadership. In most cases the shift happens slowly, perhaps from education or trying to make sense of unsettling experiences, usually occurring without our being aware of it. Once in a while, however, we get lucky. Our mind shifts by simply reading a book. Adam Kahane's *Collaborating with the Enemy: How to Work with People You Don't Agree with or Like or Trust* is such a book.

The book is really an annotation on the title. The title asks me to collaborate with people I don't agree with. Not so difficult. But then the stakes are raised, and I am asked to collaborate with people I don't like. This too is manageable, even common in most workplaces. The final ask, though, is tougher: collaborate with people I don't trust. Even people I consider enemies. To make these acts doable is the promise of the book.

This promise is particularly relevant in light of what is occurring in the world. We live in a complicated time. It is a divisive and polarizing era in which we respond by constantly seeking like-mindedness. We have a growing number of ways to meet up with people similar to ourselves: We are drawn to people with the same interests, same tastes, same politics. Every time I buy something online, I am told what other people like me also bought. And it works. As a larger society, cities are resegregating into neighborhoods of people like us. As nations, we are voting

for politicians who want to keep out strangers and reclaim our country as if someone had taken it away.

We live in a time of growing alienation and isolation. We are losing trust in our institutions and our governments to act in our interests. Most of our elections are variations of a "no" vote. We have growing economic divisions, ideological divisions, contests over values.

All this is why Adam's book is important. It offers a way of thinking and action that can create what seems like an impossible future by inviting all sides of a question into one room, *especially* when they don't agree with, like, or trust each other. It describes this way of being and working and does it in a way to make the process accessible. What is also compelling is that Adam and his colleagues have actually put their thinking into practice. The world has been changed by their efforts.

Here are some of the elements of *Collaborating with the Enemy* that have shifted my thinking:

- I have believed that collaborating with others is our first choice. My view has been that human beings are basically collaborative, wanting to work together, and that we just need to remove the obstacles that prevent this from happening. Not so. Collaboration as presented in this book is simply one of several first choices. It is just as likely that our first choice is imposing our point of view on others, forcing compliance when possible, and doing all we can to get our way. Another first choice is to adapt to the world. Make compromises, minimize differences, and go along to get along.

  What Adam describes are ways to think about collaboration when the situation is increasingly hopeless. When we have reached a moment in which trying to control outcomes and impose our position on others is not working. Or, when adapting to the difficulty becomes untenable. The collaboration described here is aimed at finding a new way to move when the current reality is dire, and there is agreement on

only one thing: something needs to change. This approach applies—whether for us as individuals, or an organization, or a community—whenever we are forced or ready to try something really new.

- For much of my career I made a living as a consultant to organizations, whether they were businesses, schools, governments, churches, or associations. Much of the work involved helping teams to work better, helping labor and management to build trust with each other, or helping departments within a company to cooperate more effectively. In all these situations it was assumed that people were working toward a common goal. In my perspective, if they did not have a desire and instinct to work together and to trust each other, what was the point of coming together? Adam's basic point is that this is exactly the time to come together.

- As a culture, we believe that the answer to fragmentation and polarization is to develop coalitions and strategies to defeat or weaken the other side. We campaign to prove the superiority of our position. If we are oil companies, tobacco companies, or pharmaceutical companies, we establish so-called independent think tanks to gather research that casts doubt on those who oppose us.

  When facing a complex challenge, where prior efforts to achieve results have essentially failed, we invest in a cocktail of marketing strategies, build movements, and mobilize political will to produce the change we desire. In the public arena, the most visible strategies have been the war on drugs, the war on poverty, the war on terrorism, and civil war. We convene summits that craft a declaration and leave us with a set of action steps and a news release. The call to the summit is always to do something for the good of the whole. In times of crisis in the management and organizational world, whenever disruption occurs—a product loses its market or an industry or business is losing its legitimacy to operate—

our propensity is to work at change management. We design culture-shifting programs, initiate training programs, set new standards, find new people, call for more agility and more innovation.

All these are well-accepted strategies and have a net positive impact. They certainly deliver improvements, but most of these transformation efforts are thinly veiled versions of how we try to get other people to change, to shift either their thinking or their actions in alignment with our intention. Colonial in nature, disappointing much of the time.

Where change is stubborn, the conventional strategies suffer from a kind of naïveté. They are constructed on two premises:

One premise is that there is an elite circle of people who know what is best for others and the world. We hold the almost sacred opinion that it is the right and duty of the central circle of leaders and experts to create think tanks; declare war on popular negatives like drugs, poverty, and terror; and select the people who speak and negotiate at the summits. Inside organizations, we basically believe that the central circle is top management and—whether in business, education, the church, or government —they are best equipped to launch the change programs.

The second premise is the belief that we can problem-solve our way into the future. It is a deeply held belief that change will occur when we agree on a vision, set goals and define a predictable path to reach them, and specify observable measures, with timelines and milestones. The glue for all this is our belief and language about holding people accountable and demanding consequences for failure.

Collaborating with the Enemy calls this rational ordering of action into question, especially in the face of complex problems where there are very divergent views and conflicts among important stakeholders. This condition of complex problems, whether in a society or in an organization, calls for a different way. This is where Adam offers something unique.

He talks of stretch collaboration as an alternative to the dominant thinking about how progress is achieved. He outlines a process whereby those who have a long history of distrust, incompatible goals, and embedded stories of not liking each other can create an alternative future without reaching major agreements. This means bringing people with divergent intentions into a room together where the task is not to negotiate or develop action steps. They only need to agree that a condition needs to change, but at no point are they asked to give up their own solutions or story of their position.

A final piece of conventional practice, one that I have held dear and that Adam sets limits on, is that we primarily need to focus on the nature of the conversations between opposing parties and interests. The common paths are to seek understanding through better listening, through carefully structured forms of dialogue, through managing difficult conversations and getting to yes. These methods are always useful, but in the "stretch" approach to collaboration, dialogue is not the main concern. Changing the conversation as the primary means of creating an alternative future is not enough. Something more is called for.

This stretch collaboration has three major tenets, which I will only name here. You need to read the book to do them justice. First, we have to affirm the legitimacy and value of every stance and each of its advocates. This idea manifests the belief that there is more than one worldview or mind-set to be considered. It reflects the thinking in a statement often attributed to Niels Bohr: "For every great idea, the opposite idea is also true."

Second, the way forward in the form of collaboration Adam describes is through experientially learning together. We set aside any effort at coming up with negotiated certainties and engage in joint experimentation. Everyone has an opinion, and it is only by trying some things together that we can jointly see which ones will work in the situation at hand.

Finally, Adam calls us to place attention on the consciousness of ourselves and the people working to achieve collaboration.

This is for anyone in the position of trying to bring enemies together. This consciousness is to be present in a new way, one in which we are able to notice what is occurring in the world rather than trying to impact it. And to notice that we are as much a player in the moment as anyone else in the room.

In addition to the ideas it presents, the book is important because it is written with humility and an acceptance of our humanity. Adam talks about how his own attempts to force collaboration have in fact worked to prevent it. He supports the theory with very concrete examples of how people have found ways to honor and acknowledge the legitimacy of their enemies and create futures that once seemed impossible. The book is insightful as much for its stories as for its theory.

Underlying the book is an unnamed spiritual dimension. It uses the language of Power and Love, the title of another of Adam's books. This language evokes aspects of collaboration that hold a place for mystery. For things unknowable, impossible to define. Collaboration of this kind arises in certain moments in the life of a group that shift the context of the effort and open the possibility of something new occurring. This is most likely to happen when there is recognition of our equal capacity to exercise power and to love, both at the same time, with the same people.

What comes through in the book is a call for wholeness. It asks us to face the harsh reality of the political and human suffering in the world, the existence of seemingly un-negotiable conflicts, long histories of contempt. At the same time, it invites us to include in our thinking the possibility of enemies having a useful place in our longing for a different future. Also, to do this work we have to inquire into ourselves, individually, as conscious, learning, and mistake-making human beings; we have to accept that, in the face of our good will, we can lose trust, agreement, and affection for people, and still move the action forward.

The real work here is about creating the space where peace can triumph in the face of our attraction to the clash of cultures and ideologies, intensified by a journalistic megaphone that is

primarily interested in what is wrong with the world. It aims for peace in the face of social media outlets where attention is the only goal, celebrity without substance makes the winners, and fabrication without facts is the way to create an audience.

There is much unneeded suffering in the world and in our institutional life, much of it caused by our desire to have our own way or to adapt to what we don't believe in. Collaboration with the enemy is one form of the politics we have been waiting for: a reachable way for power, love, and neighborliness to reshape our collective lives.

Peter Block
December 2016

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Preface

I have spent the past twenty-five years helping teams of remarkable people work together on some of the most important challenges of our time: jobs, education, health, food, energy, climate, justice, security, peace. These people have been committed to making progress, and to do so they have been willing to work not only with their colleagues and friends but also with their opponents and enemies: politicians of all parties, guerrillas and army generals, activists and bureaucrats, trade unionists and business executives. When these collaborations succeeded, they produced inspiring breakthroughs, and when they didn't, they produced disappointment and disillusionment. These extraordinary experiences, all around the world, have enabled me to observe, up close and in bright colors, how collaboration works and doesn't work.

Over this same period, I have also, in my daily life, worked together with colleagues, clients, partners, friends, and family. Sometimes I wanted to work with these people and sometimes I didn't. When our collaborations succeeded, I felt happy, and when they didn't, I felt frustrated. Moreover, I felt confused and embarrassed: how could I, an international expert on collaboration, have failed in my own practice? These ordinary experiences have enabled me to observe, also up close but in muted shades, how collaboration works and doesn't work.

The juxtaposition of these two different sets of experiences has surprised me. I have been able to see that the central challenge of collaboration is the same in both extraordinary and ordinary situations. This challenge is simple but not easy: How can we

work together with diverse others, including people we don't agree with or like or trust?

This book is for everyone who wrestles with how to get things done with unlike others, whether within their own business or government or nonprofit organization, or with people in other organizations or communities or sectors. It is for everyone who needs to make progress on their most important challenges, not only with their colleagues and friends but also with their opponents and enemies.

Over these past years, I have had many opportunities in many contexts to try to get things done through collaboration. Through much trial and much error, I have gradually been able to understand what it really takes to work together. This book reports what I have learned.

Introduction: How to Work with People You Don't Agree with or Like or Trust

W̶e face the same basic challenge everywhere: at home and work, in business and politics, on community and national and global issues. We are trying to get something done that we think is crucial. To do this, we need to work with others. These others include people we do not agree with or like or trust. And so we are torn: we think that we must work with these others and also that we must not. Collaboration seems both imperative and impossible. What do we do?

The reason such collaborations seem impossible is that we misunderstand collaboration.

Our conventional understanding of collaboration is that it requires us all to be on the same team and headed in the same direction, to agree on what has to happen and make sure this happens, and to get people to do what needs to be done. In other words, we assume that collaboration can and must be under control. Conventional collaboration looks like a planning meeting.

But this conventional assumption is wrong. When we are working in complex situations with diverse others, collaboration cannot and need not be controlled.

Unconventional, *stretch collaboration* abandons the assumption of control. It gives up unrealistic fantasies of harmony,

Two Approaches to Collaboration

	Conventional Collaboration	Stretch Collaboration
How we relate with our collaborators	Focus on the good and harmony of the team (one superior whole)	Embrace conflict and connection (multiple diverse holons)
How we advance our work	Agree on the problem and the solution (one optimum plan)	Experiment our way forward (multiple emergent possibilities)
How we participate in our situation	Change what other people are doing (one paramount leader)	Step into the game (multiple cocreators)

Conventional

Stretch

certainty, and compliance, and embraces messy realities of discord, trial and error, and cocreation. Stretch collaboration looks like martial arts practice. Stretch collaboration enables us to get things done even in complex situations with people we don't agree with or like or trust.

Stretch collaboration requires us to make three fundamental shifts in how we work.

First, in how we relate with our fellow collaborators, we must stretch away from focusing narrowly on the collective goals and harmony of our team, and move toward embracing both conflict and connection within and beyond the team.

Second, in how we advance our work, we must stretch away from insisting on clear agreements about the problem, the solution, and the plan, and move toward experimenting systematically with different perspectives and possibilities.

And third, in how we participate in our situation—in the role we play—we must stretch away from trying to change what other people are doing, and move toward entering fully into the action, willing to change ourselves.

Stretch collaboration is challenging because all three of these stretches require us to do the opposite of what seems natural. Rather than shrink away from complexity we must plunge into it. Often this feels uncomfortable and frightening.

These stretches require us to pluralize: to move away from paying attention only to one dominant whole, one optimum plan, and one superior leader, toward attending to multiple diverse holons (wholes that are part of larger wholes), multiple emergent possibilities, and multiple cocreators.

Getting things done in complex situations with diverse others is never straightforward. Energies must be mobilized; needs must be balanced; actions must be taken. Stretching does not make this work disappear; it just enables us to do it with less fear and distraction and more connection and awareness. The proverb says, "Before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment, chop wood, carry water." After enlightened

stretching, we still have our work to do, but now we have a better chance of doing it successfully.

This book presents a theory and practice of stretch collaboration. Chapter 1 explains why collaboration is necessary and why it is intrinsically difficult. Chapter 2 suggests a way to decide when to collaborate and when instead to force, adapt, or exit. Chapter 3 specifies the limitations of conventional collaboration and the narrow conditions under which it is applicable. Chapter 4 outlines stretch collaboration, and chapters 5, 6, and 7 elaborate the three stretches it entails: embracing conflict and connection, experimenting a way forward, and stepping into the game. The conclusion offers a program of exercises to put these ideas into practice.

1

Collaboration Is Becoming More Necessary and More Difficult

The urge to form partnerships, to link up in collaborative arrangements, is perhaps the oldest, strongest, and most fundamental force in nature. There are no solitary, free living creatures: every form of life is dependent on other forms.

—Lewis Thomas[1]

*C*ollaboration is often imperative and usually challenging. And the more we need it, the more difficult we find it.

"I could never work with *those* people!"

In November 2015, I was facilitating the first workshop of a group of 33 national leaders. They had come together to search for solutions to their country's most critical problem: the devastating nexus of insecurity, illegality, and inequality. Everyone at the meeting was worried about this situation and determined to do something about it, and they thought that together they might be able to do more than separately. I thought the project was important and was determined to do a good job.

The participants came from every part of the society: politicians, human rights activists, army generals, business owners, religious leaders, trade unionists, intellectuals, journalists. They had deep ideological differences, and many of them were political or professional or personal rivals. Mostly they didn't agree with or like or trust each other. In the country and in the group, suspicion and defensiveness were sky-high.

To solve their most important problem, these people needed to work together, but they weren't sure they could.

I thought the workshop was going well. The participants were talking about their very different experiences and perspectives, all together and in small groups, and at meals and on walks and on trips outside the hotel to visit local people and projects. They were cautiously starting to get to know one another and to hope that together they could make a difference.

Then, on the final morning, the project organizing team (eleven locals and my colleagues and me) got into an argument about some things that were not going well: methodological confusions, logistical glitches, communication breakdowns. Some of the organizers thought I was doing a bad job, and the next day they wrote a critical note that they circulated among themselves.

One of the team members forwarded the note to me. I felt offended and upset that the organizers were challenging my expertise and professionalism behind my back. I was frightened that the accomplishment and income I was expecting from the project were at risk. I thought I needed to defend myself, so I sent off first one, then a second, and then a third email explaining why, in my expert view, what I had done in the workshop had been correct. I knew that I had made some mistakes but was worried that if I admitted these now, I would be opening myself up to greater danger. I was certain that overall I was right and they were wrong: that they were the villains and I was the victimized hero.

As the week went on and I had phone conversations with different organizers, my attitude hardened. I thought the people

who were blaming me for the problems we were having were unconscionably betraying our team effort and me. I fought back and blamed them. I became increasingly suspicious, mistrustful, assertive, and rigid. I also wanted to keep myself safe, so I became increasingly cautious and canny. I decided that I didn't agree with or like or trust these organizers and didn't want to engage with them on this matter or to work with them anymore. What I really wanted was for them to disappear.

The enemyfying syndrome

This short, sharp conflict enabled me to feel in my gut a challenge that I had been thinking about for a long time. In order to make progress on this project, which was important to me, I needed to work with others. These others included people I did not agree with or like or trust. I slipped into thinking of them as my enemies. This polarization within our team put the work we were doing at risk. Moreover, in this small interaction within our team, we reproduced a central dynamic in the larger national system—mistrust, fragmentation, breakdown—that the project had been established to counter.

In this ordinary incident, I enacted a common behavior or syndrome that I call *enemyfying*: thinking and acting as if the people we are dealing with are our enemies—people who are the cause of our problems and are hurting us. In different contexts we use different words with subtly different connotations for the people from whom we differentiate ourselves: *others*, *rivals*, *competitors*, *opponents*, *adversaries*, *enemies*. We use these characterizations often, in both ordinary and extraordinary contexts, sometimes thoughtfully and sometimes casually, even habitually. But the enemies are always the others: *those* people. It's like the jokes about the conjugation of irregular verbs, such as "I am firm, you are obstinate, he is a pig-headed fool." The enemyfying equivalent is "I see things differently, you are wrong, she is the enemy."

We see enemyfying all around us. It dominates the media every day: people identifying others not just as opponents to be defeated but as enemies to be destroyed. These others are variously labeled as nationalists and cosmopolitans, immigrants and racists, corporations and environmentalists, terrorists and infidels.

The 2016 US presidential election overflowed with enemyfying. Speaking of Donald Trump's campaign, comedian Aasif Mandvi explained how enemyfying creates a self-perpetuating vicious circle:

> Trump is essentially tapping into the most fearful, racist, xenophobic, fear-based mind-set in this country, but he's also justifying that in other parts of the world. Whether it's ISIS or it's Trump—what they're basically saying is: There's a reason you should be afraid, there's a reason you should feel disenfranchised, there's a reason that you should feel angry, and it's because of those people, over there.[2]

Enemyfying, vilifying, and demonizing pervade political discourse around the world. And we enact this enemyfying syndrome not only in politics but also at work and at home.

I do a lot of enemyfying. I tell myself stories about how other people are messing things up: colleagues, clients, suppliers, neighbors, family. I know that these aren't complete or fair stories about what is happening and that telling these stories isn't a productive way to spend my time. I also know that many people do the same—for example, in couples counseling, which most people enter thinking, "Our problems are my partner's fault, and I hope this counseling makes them understand that they need to change." But enemyfying is seductive because it reassures us that we are OK and not responsible for the difficulties we are facing.

Enemyfying is a way to understand and deal with real differences. It simplifies into black and white our overwhelmingly complex and multihued reality, and thereby enables us to clarify

what is going on and mobilize energies to deal with it. But, as journalist H. L. Mencken said, "There is always an easy solution to every human problem—neat, plausible, and wrong."[3] Our enemyfying, which feels exciting and satisfying, even righteous and heroic, usually obscures rather than clarifies the reality of the challenges we face. It amplifies conflicts; it narrows the space for problem solving and creativity; and it distracts us, with unrealizable dreams of decisive victory, from the real work we need to do.

THE CENTRAL CHALLENGE OF COLLABORATION

The enemyfying syndrome that I have observed and enacted is at the heart of the challenge of collaboration.

In politics and at work and at home, collaboration is both necessary and difficult. We want to get something done that is important to us, but to do so, we need to work with people who view things differently than us. And the more important the issue and different the views, the more necessary and difficult the collaboration.

The central challenge of collaboration is crystallized in the tension between its two dictionary definitions. It means simply "to work jointly with," but also "to cooperate traitorously with the enemy."[4] The word therefore evokes both a story of generous and inclusive progress, such as an energetic and creative work team ("We must all collaborate!"), and a story of degenerative and amoral villainy, as in France during World War II ("Death to collaborators!").

The challenge of collaboration is that in order to make our way forward, we *must* work with others, including people we don't agree with or like or trust, while in order to avoid treachery, we must *not* work with them.

This challenge is becoming more acute. People are more free and individualistic and so more diverse, with more voice and less deference. Their identities and affiliations are more fluid. Enabled

by new technologies, established political, organizational, social, and familial hierarchies are breaking down. Volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity are growing.

Increasingly often, we are therefore unable to get things done unilaterally or only with our colleagues and friends. More and more, we need to work with others, including our opponents and enemies—and we find it more and more difficult to do so.

This collaborative challenge is wonderful in that it grows out of the weakening of authoritarianism and subservience. And it is terrible in that, if we fail to meet it, we will produce ever-increasing fragmentation, polarization, and violence.

We must find a way to collaborate more effectively.

We are face-to-face with the challenge of collaboration when we say, "I could never work with *those* people!" What do we mean by this common exclamation? Maybe we mean that we don't want to work with those people, or that we are not able to, or that we don't need to. In such situations, when we think it is not desirable or possible or necessary to work with certain others, then obviously we will try to work without them or against them: to avoid them or defeat them.

But what do we do when we think it *is* necessary to work with these others? This might be because we worry that we can't avoid or defeat them, or they have some skill or resource that we need, or we believe it would be wrong to exclude them.

Such situations present us with the central challenge of collaboration. We see these other people's values and behaviors as different from ours; we believe they are wrong or bad; we feel frustrated or angry. Although we know that we have to work with them, we wish we didn't. We worry that we will have to compromise or betray what we believe is right and matters most to us. In these situations, although we see that we need to collaborate with those people, we don't see how we can do so successfully.

How can we succeed, then, in working with people we don't agree with or like or trust?

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