

## Principles of a Transformative Culture

These principles have been taken and adapted from Craig Hamilton's Principles of Evolutionary Culture© Craig Hamilton 2009, Integral Enlightenment, Spiritual Practice for an Evolving World, 2009 by Sarri Bater, Open Edge Transforming Conflict. [www.openedge.org.uk](http://www.openedge.org.uk)

In order to serve its purpose OETC seeks to create a culture of transformative consciousness for itself. This means working with and from the following

**A Wholehearted Intention to Nonviolent Transformation:** Bring all of yourself to this organisation. Recognise that this is a place where your own deepest longing for a greater life can be fully engaged and expressed. Have the love, trust, and courage to give your heart and soul to the work you will be doing. Do this in the knowledge that the power of intention is very transformative. If you want your life to change in a profound way, it will. With that kind of intention behind you, this organisation can be a powerful catalyst.

**A Commitment to Engage:** Organisation practice reveals how profoundly we all impact each other, both through our participation and our non-participation. Your full-hearted engagement is critical, both because it is the only way for you to really reap the benefits of the organisation practices, also because it is needed by the organisation. We are all counting on you to push your own edge, to speak up when things are unclear, to share when something inspiring or meaningful happens for you, and to let go when you start to feel driven by fear and control. We will collectively all start to get a tangible sense of how everything we do lifts us or limits us.

Seeing our impact on the world is not something we'll use to create a "story" about ourselves ("I'm good" or "I'm bad"), but something for us to observe and understand so that it will guide our individual and collective efforts to help humanity.

**A Beginner's Mind:** When entering into serious collective collaborative engagement in service of a shared purpose, it is important to suspend everything you already know about the world. This is not about "dumbing down", or pretending, or permanently abandoning hard-won wisdom. It's about "suspension" of what you already know in order to make room for new ideas and perspectives to emerge. A large part of what makes it possible to live on the edge of transformation is to be in a state of perpetual and profound receptivity; can we be willing to constantly let go of our fixed ideas and allow ourselves to discover anew?

**Speaking from the Deepest, Most Authentic Parts of the Self:** Each time you contribute to the organisation, seek to bring forward the deepest part of yourself. Take the risk to express the deepest truths you know, to be a representative of humanity's highest potential. When we do this, authentic wisdom and presence infuses the organisation as well.

**Deeper Listening:** One of the foundations of authentic transformative collective engagement is the practice of deep empathic listening. This means listening from the deepest part of yourself, not simply hearing with the mind. When someone else is speaking, we ask you to strive to listen for the deeper chords in what they're saying and respond with the greatest presence and power. By building a field of deeper listening, we are creating a powerful supportive container for each of us to step into when we speak.

**Risk Taking:** Choosing not to operate from a place of fear can bring us to the edge of transformation profoundly. This means speaking on an intuition when you're not sure you have the words to give voice to it. Or, responding to a gut feeling that something isn't right, but doing so vulnerably, understanding that no one else may agree. It also means being willing to step into new ways of being, even if they feel scary and unfamiliar. Indeed, the greatest risk of all is to express something so profound that we will never be able to go back to pretending we don't know. Once we've stood in our profound magnificence in the presence of others, we can't go back easily. The more courage we have to come out of fear-based, 'risk aversion' thinking, the more profound will be our experience of and impact on the organisation. When we can sense and respond, we no longer need to predict and control, and we allow what's needed to flow dynamically to us and through us.

**We All Have Evolving Edges:** We are all imperfect beings on an endless evolutionary journey. So, it doesn't matter where we are on that journey. What matters is where we are in relation to our edges. If we're deeply aware of our edges, we're always in the right place, and immense transformative capacities become available to us. In this context, there is no value in trying to be somewhere we're not, or to appear to have it all together. There is immense value in revealing our confusion, our uncertainty, our vulnerability. Saying "I don't know" or "I don't understand" is a beautiful thing because it opens us to understanding and insight, and allows us to be in exactly the perfect place, for the organisation and our work.

**If We're Not Uncomfortable, We're Probably Not Transforming!** Because transformation means moving into new territory in the self, a certain degree of discomfort always accompanies it. Unfortunately, we are deeply conditioned to see discomfort as a negative thing, so we tend to avoid it. Be willing to embrace these "growing pains" so that we can live a life of perpetual growth and development. In this organisation, begin a practice of actively pushing into those uncomfortable edges in yourself, and shifting your perspective so that you no longer see them as the enemy, but as your friends on the path of deeper and higher evolution.

**Embodying our work. Being an Example for Everyone We Meet:** Realise that it's our job is to be an inspiration in every moment to everyone we encounter. Be in the knowing that everything we do is setting a template for ourselves and each other. We all take cues from each other all the time, consciously and unconsciously, so if we want to create a better world, we need to always show up with the greatest wisdom, integrity, care, and authenticity that we can muster. The New World will be created by billions of small acts of profound consciousness.

**A Life of Constant Resolution:** One aspect of living on the edge of evolution is what spiritual teacher Andrew Cohen calls "living a life of constant resolution." This means always striving to clear up any interpersonal tension as soon as possible, so that we can build a field of deep harmony and trust in all of our relationships. It is about leaving each interaction "without a **negative** trace." For organisations interested in authentic co-evolution, this practice is essential. The organisation can decide whether or not to engage it at that time, later in the meeting, or perhaps to take time to resolve it after the meeting. The important thing is to always keep clearing away any **negative** residue from past interactions, so that the collective field of the organisation can continue to strengthen.