5 Essential Skills for Building Collaborative Environments and Relationships

1. Collaborative Intention
2. Truthfulness
3. Self-Accountability
4. Self-Awareness
5. Negotiating and Problem Solving

Defensiveness Action Plan

When my early warning system tells me I’m getting defensive, i.e. I notice myself doing:

1. ____________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________________________

I will take the following action:

1. ____________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________

Radical Collaboration is a guide for individuals and organizations wishing to become more skillful at collaborative relationships.

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Signs of Defensiveness

1. Loss of humor
2. Taking offense
3. High charge or energy in the body
4. Sudden drop in I.Q.
5. Wanting to be right ("No question about it.")
6. Wanting the last word
7. Flooding with information to prove a point
8. Endless explaining and rationalizing
9. Playing "poor me"
10. Teaching or preaching
11. Rigidity
12. Denial
13. Withdrawal into deadly silence
14. Cynicism (victim)
15. Sarcasm
16. Making fun of others (being highly critical)
17. Terminal uniqueness (I'm so special; rules don't apply to me)
18. "It's just my personality; it's just how I am."
19. Not wanting to negotiate
20. Blaming
21. Sudden onset of illness or accident
22. Confusion
23. Suddenly tired or sleepy
24. Intellectualizing
25. Acting crazy (the temporary insanity defense)
26. Eccentricity
27. Being too nice
28. Selective deafness
29. Attack (the best defense is a good offense)
30. Holding a grudge
31. Trivializing with humor
32. Inappropriate laughter or giggling
33. Sour grapes!
34. "I'm aware of that; leave me alone" (defense of awareness)
35. Becoming addicted to: alcohol, drugs, people, shopping, working, gambling, chocolate, workshops
36. Personalizing everything
37. All-or-nothing thinking
38. Catastrophizing
39. Fast breathing/heartbeat
40. Cold, clammy skin
41. Hot, sweaty skin
42. Mind reading
43. Jumping to conclusions
44. Magnifying everything
45. Minimizing everything
46. Emotional rigidity (if I feel it, it must be true)
47. Tight stomach
48. Speaking too fast
49. Becoming physically immobile
50. Obsessive thinking

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