



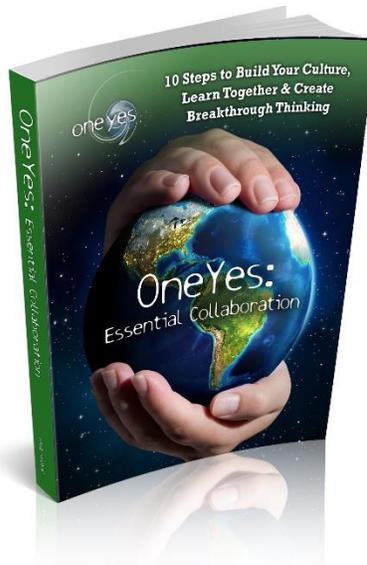
## NEGOTIATOR'S NOTEBOOK

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### **Break Through; 10 Steps to Essential Collaboration**

*Now is our time to lead more powerfully, consciously and collaboratively in ways  
that make our world a better place today and in the future.*

The following are excerpts from David B. Savage's soon to be released book, *One Yes: 10 Steps to Essential Collaboration*.



I am a connector. I am an oilman. I am an environmentalist. I am a leader. I am a coach. I am a negotiator. I am conflict manager. I am a father. I am a grandfather. I am a husband. I am a convener. To know me is to know this; I refuse to be put in any one box. I don't fit in. Throughout my life, I am committed to inviting the right people to come together with the right information, with the right processes with vision and accountability to figure out what is right for them together. My career has focused on interest based coaching, negotiation, mediation and leadership to achieve the triple bottom-line for our companies, our communities and our planet.

I choose knowledge over manipulation. I believe the anti- frac-ing/ pro frac-ing debate is a delusion and a missed opportunity. I believe that debate over climate change is the same. By focusing so much on who is right, we fail to reduce our emissions and all negative impacts on the earth. CO2 is but one issue. Until we understand all the impacts of humanity's actions on future generations, our debates are wasting valuable time and resources. This book is my challenge to you to step up and step in to be part of the necessary and, often, yet discovered solutions. While we have massive annual global conferences on climate change, why not also have find more effective ways to educate and engage all people in conservation. Using less in everything we do as individuals and organizations gives us a tangible and collective role that we never get when the solutions and failures are all "out there" or someone else's responsibility.

Oil executives are not evil. Environmentalists are not evil. Aboriginals are not evil. Youth is not evil. Monsanto is not evil. Politicians are not evil. Hollywood stars are not evil. Big Food is not evil. We are all one. We can continue to slam any group we target as the evil ones. They are not. We are all trying to find fresh ways to move past the huge challenges mankind has and to capture the abundant opportunities as well. We are turning away from one another because often it is not believed to be safe to turn toward. Often the one who sees the big picture rather than the parts is considered the outlier. I see them as mavericks. I see our profession having many mavericks.

Increasingly, we are driven like cattle to focus on the wrong issues and to divide ourselves into "pro" and "con" camps. We miss the opportunity to learn together and to stop what is damaging. We miss the opportunity to focus on energy supply and demand, on better ways of doing business, on better ways to be in community and on possible improvements to our technologies. Rather, we are emotionally toyed with. We, as leaders, must now take the lead from the manipulators that seek to divide us for their own gain.

Collaborative organizations and conversations convened by courageous leaders are more crucially important now than ever.

Industry often speaks about the importance of earning their "social license to operate". I speak of our (as society, communities, business people and leaders) social license to learn and evolve. That's correct; our social license to learn and evolve using methods that invite participation from all. We are not cattle to be prodded or penned. We are the human race with well-developed brains.

Very often those leading the public "anti" demonstrations or the industry "pro" marketing campaigns know little of the subject they so passionately impose on others. Too often, wealthy business interests cloak their secret intentions and interest by manipulating those with a good heart and limited knowledge. Too often, naïve members of the public fail to think for themselves. As a society, we are often stuck with our tunnel vision or groupthink. The information we receive is tailored to our perspective. Every Google search we do, generates only that narrow part of the internet body of knowledge that aligns with my past searches and the contents of my emails. I challenge you, as I challenge myself, to think for ourselves and come together with those with diverse expertise and perspectives to learn and evolve together. Play the devil's advocate or the constructive critic often in conversations and meetings. Challenge yourself and your team to take a larger view before making decisions. Outsiders and opponents have much to teach us.

In my new book, the first four steps are Set Intention, Be Aware, Embrace Conflict and Seek Diversity. Now turn our minds to Design the Collaboration. Each step is important. Creating the appropriate “breathing space”, must be conscious and strategic.

### **Drop Your Weapons S.A.M.**

With over 100 volunteers from the Canadian petroleum industry, in 2004 we developed the Let’s Talk Handbook on Company to Company Conflict Management ([www.c2cadr.org](http://www.c2cadr.org)). A key recommendation of our C2C ADR Council was (and still is) that parties put the conflict aside and meet to discuss the alternative paths to resolution (negotiation, facilitated discussion, mediation, arbitration, litigation, hearing...). There is no discussion of the positions and respective interests of the parties. There is a discussion on what resources are needed, what experts, what references, what are the precedents, what is the schedule, what will this do to the relationship of the parties beyond this conflict and more. This Situation Assessment Meeting (S.A.M.) brings the parties with the authority together (most often for the first time notwithstanding they are deep into their conflict). Once the parties focus their attention to the conflict outside of their positions, they make informed decisions as to what dispute resolution path they choose, what third parties they need to engage (at times a shared neutral third party expert is brought in rather than having dueling experts) and what commitments they may make to one another. The parties are now seeing the conflict and the possibilities together. They have (in the language of Getting To Yes) “separated the people from the problem”. In the great majority of events, within two weeks, they resolve the conflict themselves by negotiation.

Now apply the C2C ADR recommendations and experience to the way you approach collaboration. Rather than launching into the process straight away, go through the first four Steps to Essential Collaboration. Now you are ready to meet with the key people to design the collaboration. Design the collaboration in the same manner as a S.A.M. (Situation Assessment Meeting).

### **Key Design Questions**

Key Design the Collaboration questions to help you;

- Why are you really doing this?
- Why would others choose to join us?
- What is the real question that needs to be answered?
- Are the participant’s priorities complimentary or different?
- What are the alternatives and how do you compare and choose?
- What are the current and necessary preconditions?
- Do you trust the others? Is trust an issue for others? What is needed?
- Is their time line similar?
- What are the underlying interests?
- What is the best alternative to collaborating for everyone individually?
- What will the rules of engagement be?
- How do you encourage disagreement and freedom to speak without invoking negatives emotions and responses?
- What about confidentiality?
- What about competition?
- What resources do you need to make this work?

- What are the metrics and measurables you seek to create?
- What are the styles of the participants and how do you ensure they are included?
- Who has the authority to agree and how will they be engaged?
- How do you support one another in getting the ultimate result approved within the respective organizations?
- How will this serve you, the others and the organization beyond the specific topic?
- What are the threats? What will pull people away?
- How can we make building our collaborative management stronger with this topic?
- How will people and organizations be accountable?
- What is it we wish to capture as we go through the collaboration?
- What is the physical space that will encourage creativity?
- What is the energetic field we create?
- Will there be times when the group needs to shrink and expend?
- How will we communicate with those not directly involved?
- Where and how can we incorporate art, music, poetry, dance, humor into our circle to engage all parts of our brains, creativity and more?
- How do we build ownership of the collaboration within the group?
- What roles do we ask people to play?
- Who is the facilitator or meeting lead?
- Who will the champions be and when might they change in the process?
- What do the executive/ stakeholders need to be our champions?
- What software and other tools best meet our needs?
- Shall we invite open source collaboration from experts and others outside our own organization, team, culture or nation?

### **Come Together: Engage with Respect and Trust**

Assuming we all hope to have a healthy economic, environmental and social future life then let's together design how we are and what we do today to create that. We are not separate. We are one. We are one with our past and our future.

"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team." Coach Phil Jackson

This is an invitation to engage with people who care about subjects and questions that matter to you and/ or your organization. Your collaborative will be most successful in solving significant challenges or making breakthroughs when you bring in others whose opinion and experiences are very different from yours. The stakes are high. We must invite in aboriginals, the environmentalists, the Americans, the Asians, the youth, the wise women, the artists, the accountants, the "at risk", the enthusiasts, the challengers, the perfectionists and the connectors.

### **Characteristics of Great Collaborations**

- ✓ Our intention must be authentic,
- ✓ We build relationship and trust first,
- ✓ We invite and respect diversity of opinion,

- ✓ We establish key questions that matter,
- ✓ We listen,
- ✓ We seek new ideas from the collective wisdom,
- ✓ We are open to unexpected outcomes,
- ✓ We take as long as it takes,
- ✓ “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” Africa proverb.
- ✓ We commit to action and hold accountability.

So what are the questions that matter? From our list of significant challenges we face, choose with courage and vision. Remember not to sell or attempt to convince others. Understand what the underlying interests are and be open to what arises.

### **Changing the Heart Set**

When you come together, changing the mindset, body set and heart set is important. This cannot be another “bloody meeting”. Transition from what you had been doing into a fresh, open and creative energetic space. For most, simply reminding everyone of the intention, purpose and vision may be enough. Some may go outside into nature. Some may use a room that contains art work, music and large windows and is not the usual meeting space.

Ritual is very important and has been very much ignored over the past 50 years. Ritual beginnings and endings to collaborative groups serve as important markers to our brain, heart, spirit and body that this is different and to be aware and open.

Simple rituals may include lighting a candle, focusing on our breath, reading an inspiration, a chime, music, walking, standing in a circle facing one another. Rituals tell us we are here now.

Realize that collaboration, coaching, dispute resolution and most transformative processes are step changes. They will fail if they are seen as “one time” events. Building, holding and challenging ourselves into a culture of collaboration is very powerful and necessary.

“Few things in life are less efficient than a group of people trying to write a sentence. The advantage of this method is that you end up with something for which you will not be personally blamed.” Scott Adams, creator of Dilbert.

Know, too, that in collaboration, like coaching, dispute resolution and most transformative processes most of the great work is actually done by individuals and smaller groups outside of the room or online session. The “landing” and creating can be even more powerful than inside the physical or digital gathering. Inside the space may simply be where the seeds are planted. The crop may be harvested elsewhere.

*“...remember the dangers of the New Groupthink. If it's creativity you're after, ask your employees to solve problems alone before sharing their ideas. If you want the wisdom of the crowd, gather it electronically, or in writing, and make sure people can't see each other's ideas until everyone has had a chance to contribute.”* Susan Cain, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking.*

Know, too, the work is never done.

## **Listen Deeply: Realize What Wants to be Heard and is not Spoken**

When communicating, attention without distraction is a novel concept. Multi-tasking was believed to lead to high performance. Today, we realize that multi-tasking is a myth. We can only do one thing well in each moment. As leaders and participants, we suffer from organizational ADHD. Put the smart phones away. Put the focus on why we are here now.

Leave “positions” and prejudgments at the door. Ensure everyone is heard. Listen for what is heard but is not spoken. Check in and explore statements.

“When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen.” Ernest Hemingway

We have two ears and one mouth for a reason.

As a professional coach, I have been trained to;

- 1) Listen at level one; listen to my internal voice.
- 2) Listen at level two; listen with intense focus on the client.
- 3) Listen at level three; sense to the entire room and its energy.

Try all three levels of listening. Try it with your boss, employee, wife, husband, friends and colleges. How well do you really listen? People want to be heard. People want to be witnessed. They deserve your full attention. If you start to be distracted or judge or think of solutions, you are not listening. Let it go and come back in to the conversation. Listen for what is said and what is heard but not said.

Are you really listening? What is your internal voice telling you? Can you become aware of tension or confusion or a deception? What does your intuition inform you? What doesn't fit with the words being said? What needs clarification?

If there is only one person who does not agree with the group, discover what they may teach you. We tend to minimize the dissidents. Instead, explore what is not understood or accepted and why together. Lead your collaborative as one complete body.

## **When the Light Goes On**

Glenn Isaac, Saskatchewan River Keepers: “Everything that is happening today in the form of protest around the world is because people want to be heard.”

Often in our formal dispute resolution processes, the process takes charge, the judge takes charge or the panel takes charge. The disputants, often, never get a chance to be heard. A significant percentage of people leaving court are very frustrated as they feel they were not heard. In mediation, there are two key moments;

- 1) When the person/ organization is finally heard (gets their day in court is the phrase yet it often doesn't happen in court) things change. Once a person is heard and believes the other side understands, the person is vulnerable. They got what they really wanted and everything else is a lesser priority.
- 2) When the “light” goes on between the parties. They realize a possibility they may both agree to that was greater than they thought possible before they collaborated.

In Collaboration, like negotiation and mediation, the most time must be spent designing, listening, understanding and probing. When you do that, exploring options and possibilities is far more profound and powerful. Time “solving” is the least of all.

People do not want to be managed and fixed. People want to be part of a healthy, diverse, accountable and successful team. Let’s make this real.

### **Key Points**

- 1) Our world, our nations, our communities, our businesses and our families face threats never before seen.
- 2) Projecting the world and its challenges as right vs wrong deceives us from the wisdom of “And”,
- 3) Mediators, manipulators and provocateurs make us less able to deal with these threats.
- 4) Today we have the technology and collective intelligence to overcome these threats.
- 5) For the first time, with 10 Steps to Essential Collaboration you now have a process to collaborate for the benefit of our world, our nations, our communities, our businesses and our families.

Now, what is one thing you will do this day, this week and this month to collaborate and ensure that collaboration is successful? What will be your Break Through?



By David B. Savage, P. Land, BA (Econ), ACC,

[www.savagemanage.com](http://www.savagemanage.com)  
[www.collaborativeglobalinitiative.com](http://www.collaborativeglobalinitiative.com)

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