

The New Johari Window

#28: Quadrant Three: Interpersonal Needs

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In this essay, I continue by detailed exploration of quadrant three, as I did with regard to quadrant one and two. Once again, I turn to analysis of interpersonal needs. The dynamics of Quad 3 is the opposite of Quad 2 with regard to the fulfillment of interpersonal needs. A's task in Quad 3 is to actively express her needs to B (and other people) so that B (and others) might respond in a manner that meets A's needs.

Inclusion

If I have a strong need for inclusion, then the fundamental question becomes: "Do I want these other people to fulfill this interpersonal need for inclusion (as well as other interpersonal needs)?" There are two closely related concerns: "Do I want to determine if I will engage in this relationship or become a member of this group and do I want to determine or at least influence the selection of other participants in this relationship or other members of the group." "I fear that I will have to be involved in a relationship or with a group of which I don't want to be a member."

These concerns about interpersonal inclusion that are housed in Quad Three can take on either a proactive or reactive form. In the case of a proactive stance, I decide not to express my need for inclusion; in the case of a reactive stance, I wait for other people to identify and articulate my need for inclusion. When I am proactive with regard to the retention of a need for inclusion in Quad Three, then it is likely that I don't want to disclose this need to other people. I take a reactive stance when I have a strong need for inclusion, but don't express this need (it remains in Quad Three). I somehow expect other people to "know" that I have this need.

This retention of my need for inclusion in Quad Three might be a result of at least three different interpersonal conditions. First, I might not want to enter this particular relationship or join this particular group; hence, I don't want to disclose my need for inclusion (proactive) or don't want other people to discover my need for inclusion (reactive). At the heart of the matter is a *fear of unwanted acceptance*.

Second, I might not disclose my need for inclusion (proactive) or wait for other people to identify my need (reactive), because I am afraid that these other people will reject me and disregard my need for inclusion. This is a *fear of rejection*. Third, I might keep my need for inclusion in Quad Three, because I assume that other people aren't interested in my need for inclusion. This would be a *fear of indifference*.

These assumptions that lead to my reticence to disclose my need for inclusion might prove to be unwarranted. I will never know, because I have never tested out these assumptions. Other people might simply be unaware of my need for inclusion, since I keep it in Quad Three. Self-fulfilling prophecies often abound when the need for inclusion is hidden in Quad Three. I don't disclose my need, because I assume that other people will reject or be indifferent to this need.

Other people don't respond to my need, because they don't know of this need (not because they wish to reject me or are indifferent to my need). I interpret their apparent non-responsiveness as evidence of their rejection or indifference. This further dampens my desire to disclose this need for inclusion. And so the chain of the self-fulfilling prophecy is strengthened and unwarranted assumptions are reinforced.

Control

If there is a strong need for control then a different fundamental issue is likely to be prominent. The question to be asked is: "Am I in charge?" The closely related interpersonal concerns and questions are: "I want to lead or at least influence what happens in this

relationship or group.” And “I fear being ignored in this relationship or group and left isolated with little support for my ideas and desired direction from the other participant in this relationship or other group members.”

As in the case of the other two interpersonal needs, those concerns about interpersonal control that are housed in Quad Three can take on either a proactive or reactive form. In the case of a proactive stance, I decide not to express my need for control; in the case of a reactive stance, I wait for other people to identify and articulate my need for control.

When I am proactive with regard to the decision not to disclose my need for control (by keeping it in Quad Three), then it is likely that I don’t want to disclose this need to other people. I take a reactive stance when I have a strong need for conclusion, but don’t express this need (it remains in Quad Three). As in the case of the need for inclusion, I somehow expect other people to “know” that I have this need for control – they should invite me to be “in charge” or at least be “influential.” I should not have to be explicit about this need.

This retention of my need for control in Quad Three might be a result of at least three different interpersonal conditions. First, I might not specifically want to be “in charge” or be highly “influential” in this relationship or group. It is not likely to a successful relationship or group. Alternatively, I don’t really care about the outcome of this relationship or group; hence, I have little investment in the outcome. As a result, I don’t want to disclose my need for control (proactive) or don’t want other people to discover my need for control (reactive).

At the heart of the matter is a *fear of unwanted responsibility or authority*. Second, I might not disclose my need for control (proactive) or wait for other people to identify my need (reactive), because I am afraid that these other people will reject my authority or influence. Worse yet, they might disregard my need for control and my competency in exerting this control.

As in the case of the need for inclusion, this assumption is based in a *fear of rejection*. Third, I

might keep my need for control in Quad Three, because I assume that other people aren't interested in my need for control. They have their own agenda and their own control needs — and perhaps view my need for control as somehow a source of competition. As in the case of inclusion needs, this assumption would be based on a *fear of indifference* or perhaps a *fear of competition*.

These assumptions can lead me into serious trouble, for my reticence to disclose my need for control could prove to be unwarranted. I will never know if other people want me to take charge, because I have never tested out these assumptions. Other people might simply be unaware of my need for control (as well as inclusion or openness), since I keep it in Quad Three. Self-fulfilling prophecies often abound in this situation, as they did when the need for inclusion is hidden in Quad Three. I don't disclose my need for control and influence, because I assume that other people will reject or be indifferent to this need.

Other people don't respond to my need, because they don't know of this need (not because they wish to reject me, are indifferent to my need or believe that I am not capable of providing control or influence). I interpret their apparent non-responsiveness as evidence of their rejection, indifference or negative assessment of my competence. This further dampens my desire to disclose this need for control. Once again, the chain of self-fulfilling prophecy is strengthened and unwarranted assumptions are reinforced.

Openness

A strong need for interpersonal openness is often associated with a third fundamental issue that is framed in the following question: "How open do I want to be?" A closely related question is: "What happens to our relationship if I tell you what I really think and feel?" There are two other prominent concerns for the person who greatly values openness: "I want to share my feelings, thoughts or reactions with this other person or with members of this group." However, "I fear group settings in which it is not clear when it is appropriate to speak up or to share aspects of one's inner world."

As in the case of inclusion and control, any concerns about interpersonal openness that are housed in Quad Three can take on either a proactive or reactive form. In both cases, the retention of my need for openness in Quad Three is indeed paradoxical – but all-too-common. I am not open about my need for openness. In the case of a proactive stance, I decide not to express my need for openness. Conversely, with regard to a reactive stance,

I wait for other people to identify and articulate my need for openness. When I am proactive in withholding disclosure of my need for openness (Quad Three), it is likely that I don't want to disclose this need to other people. I take a reactive stance when I have a strong need for openness, but don't express this need (it remains in Quad Three). As in the case of inclusion and control, I somehow expect other people to "know" that I have this need.

The withholding of my need for openness (retained in Quad Three) could result from one or more of three interpersonal conditions. I might not want to be open because I don't trust the intentions, competencies or perspective of other members of the relationship or group with regard to their reception of my openness. I don't want to disclose my need for openness (proactive) or don't want other people to discover my need for openness (reactive) because I don't trust other people in this relationship or group. At the heart of the matter is a *fear of unwanted openness* (my own or other people's).

Second, I might not disclose my need for openness (proactive) or wait for other people to identify my need (reactive), because I am afraid that these other people will reject me and disregard my need for openness. This is perhaps the most painful forms of rejection – I don't want to know more about you. Thus a *fear of rejection* may be particularly strong with regard to this third interpersonal need. Third, I might keep my need for openness in Quad Three, because I assume that other people aren't interested in my need for openness. Once again, this is a particularly powerful motive not to let people know that I wish to be open or wish them to be open. This is a particularly poignant version of the *fear of indifference*.

There is a parallel to our analysis of the self-fulfilling dynamics with regard to the undisclosed need for inclusion or control. Assumptions about other people's reactions to my openness can lead to my reticence to disclose my need for openness. And these assumptions might prove to be unwarranted, but untested (since I will have never tested out these assumptions by taking action via disclosure of this need). Once again, other people might simply be unaware of my need for openness since I keep it in Quad Three.

Self-fulfilling prophecies once again abound. I don't disclose my need for openness, because I assume that other people will reject or be indifferent to this need. Other people don't respond to my need, because they don't know of this need (not because they are "heartless" or frightened of my openness – as I might assume). I interpret their apparent non-responsiveness as evidence of their rejection or indifference. As in the case of inclusion and control, this further dampens my desire to disclose any need for openness on my own part or on their part. The chain of self-fulfilling prophecy is strengthened in yet another way and unwarranted assumptions are reinforced. I know little about other people and they know little about me. My own assumptions are self-fulfilled through my own inaction and failure to disclose my needs.

The Challenge of Interpersonal Needs Disclosure

To what extent do I keep my interpersonal needs "hidden" from view? How close do I play my cards to the vest? With regard to the internal pane of Quad Three (Q3: I) and internal locus of control, I must determine what I want to say, to whom I want to share this information, and in what setting I chose to offer this disclosure. As we look to the external pane of Quad Three (Q3: E) and to external locus of control, I must be concerned about my interpersonal needs "leaking out." If I want to exert more internal control then I may either have to avoid specific people (with whom I tend to "leak" my needs) or choose, more generally, to remain alone in my life, without much interpersonal contact (other than what is needed for my basic survival).

Perhaps Greta Garbo wanted “to be alone” precisely because her interpersonal needs were so obvious. Her Quad Three-External pane may have been quite large. She may have been expressing her interpersonal needs in many different ways and in many different settings. Perhaps, this is what made her a great actress – especially in silent movies – given that film of the 1920s and 1930s depended so much on the nonverbal expression of interpersonal needs. Given this expansion of Joe Luft’s original description of Q3 (by introducing locus of control and interpersonal needs), we can now turn to the diverse perspectives on Q3 that are offered by the American, British and Continental schools.