

The New Johari Window

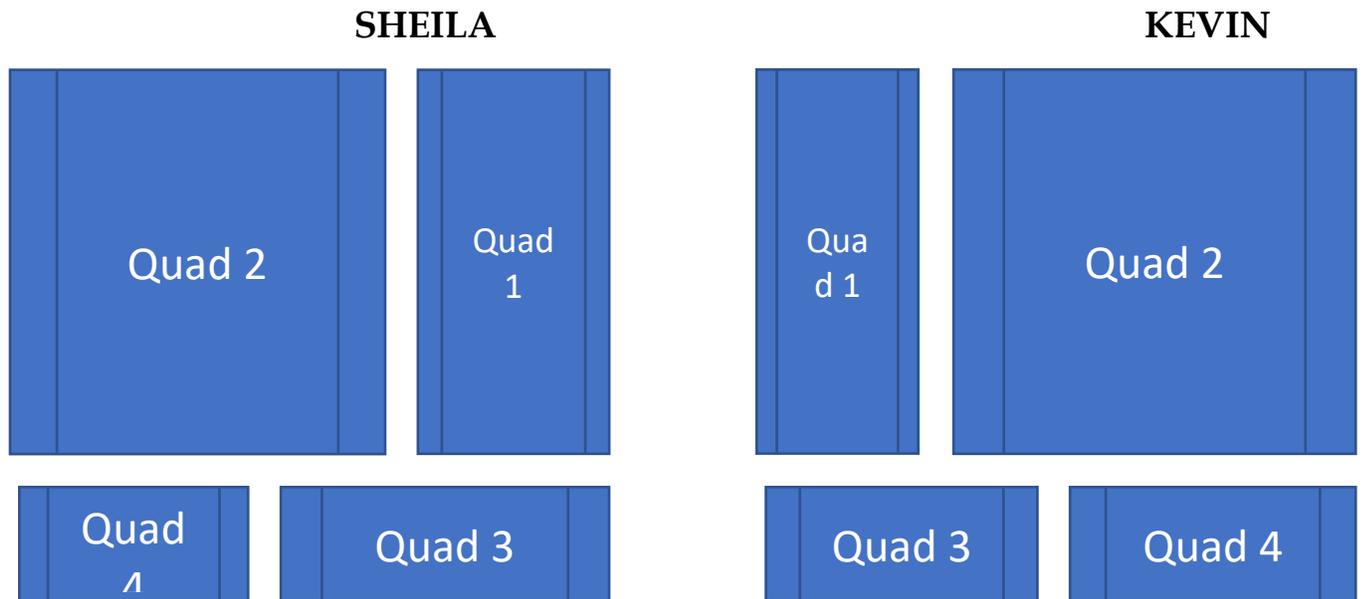
#20: Quadrant Two: Alternative Johari Models

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At this point, I will offer two other versions regarding Kevin and Sheila's second quadrants, using the alternative structures of the original Johari Window that I introduced in an earlier essay (Quad One).

Disjointed Interaction Model

If we don't assume Luft's tight interdependency among the four window panes, then Sheila's and Kevin's windows might look like this:



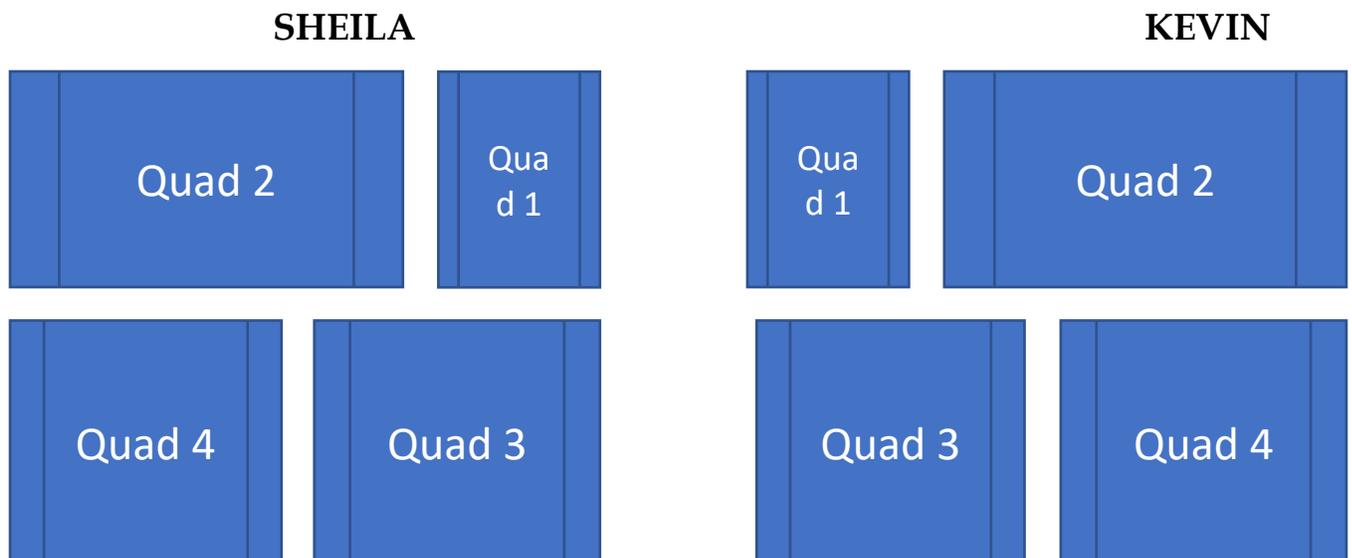
Sheila and Kevin's larger Quad Two would impact on all three of the other quadrants (Quads One, Three and Four). Most importantly, this condition would reduce the size of their public

selves (Quad One) with specific reference to one another. If we introduce the notion of psychic tension within Sheila and Kevin, then the Disjointed Interaction model would suggest that both Sheila and Kevin are likely to feel less comfortable in their relationship with one another. Eventually they will feel compelled to provide each other with more feedback regarding their perceptions (Quad Two).

Alternatively, as Luft proposes, they will both begin to lose access to their own unshared thoughts and feelings (Quad Three) and will go more “unconscious” (larger Quad Four) in his relationship with one another. There is a third option that the *Disjointed Interaction* model offers. Either Sheila or Kevin could find the tension to be uncomfortable or even unbearable and could dis-engage. Kevin could resign from the Board (using some excuse that doesn’t jeopardize his relationship with his boss). Sheila could ask Kevin to resign as Treasurer (citing her friendship with Kevin’s boss as the reason).

Stabilized Interaction Model

What about this second alternative structure? With regard to the Stabilized Interaction model, the relationship between Sheila and Kevin would be graphically portrayed as follows:



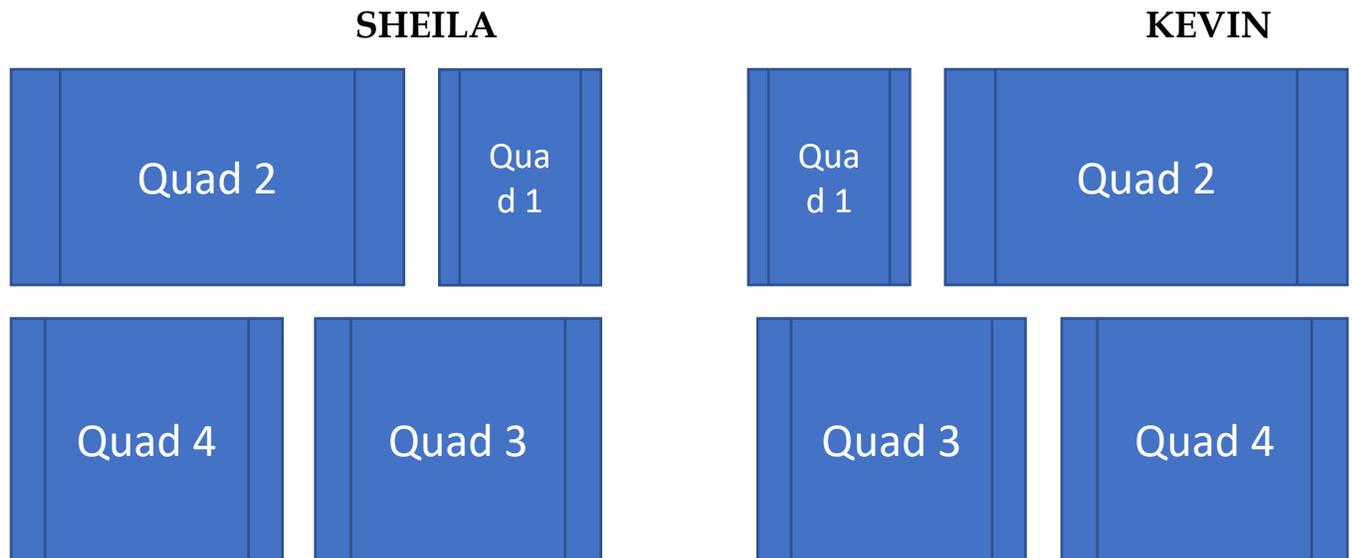
The center point for both Sheila and Kevin would remain the same (at least for awhile), but their windows would be “bent out of shape.” Their second quadrants would be larger, but would be distorted, given the core dynamics of their relationship. This “core” might consist of four elements (which neither Sheila nor Kevin have ever explicitly discussed). First, they will have a professional, not personal, relationship (therefore, no need for Kevin to tell Sheila that he finds her physically attractive or that he doesn’t know how to relate to women). Second, Kevin will need to share all pertinent information with Sheila as Treasurer of her Board (therefore, Kevin will have to be more open with Sheila than he usually is).

Third, Kevin will need to be a competent Treasurer (therefore, at some point early on, Kevin will either have to ask for assistance from Sheila by first revealing his lack of financial experience and expertise, or will rapidly have to gain this expertise from an outside source). Finally, Sheila will have to share (Quad 1) the fact that she is concerned about his competence (Kevin’s Quad Two material moves to Kevin’s Quad One), but that her Board needs someone like Kevin, who has some time that can be freed up from his job to work for Sheila’s human service agency (Sheila’s Quad Three). Kevin can’t resign without disrupting the agency and hurting his own reputation with his boss, even if he could generate an excuse to leave the Board.

Given these four core elements in the relationship between Sheila and Kevin, the failure of both Sheila and Kevin to provide feedback (Quad Two) is ultimately unacceptable. Their windows are bent, the first and second panes are warped and (extending the metaphor) may soon break. Quad Three and Quad Four in both windows are preserved and the meeting point of the four panes is preserved – but at what cost? What psychic expense?

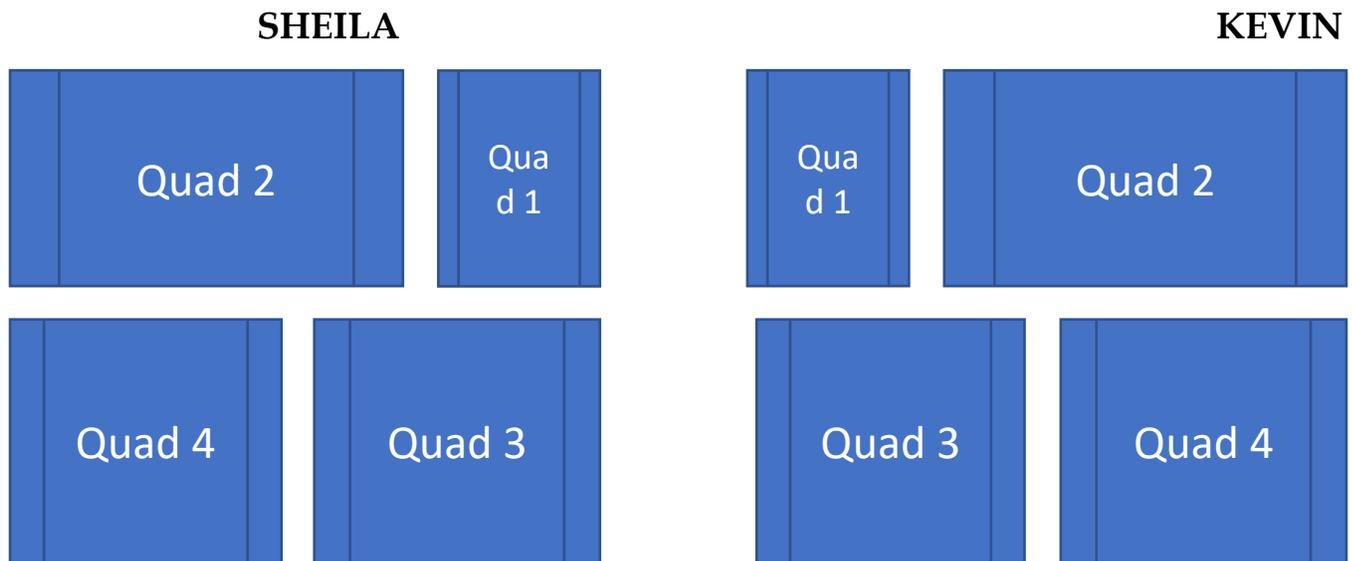
The Stabilized Interaction model requires that one of three changes occur. First, as in the case of the Disjointed Interaction, the second quadrant can get smaller. They can begin to share appropriate feedback. Kevin can share with Sheila that he appreciates her straightforward manner and her honesty regarding her own uneasiness regarding financial matters. Kevin

indicates that this honesty on Sheila's past will enable him to be more forthcoming regarding his own concerns and fears of inadequacy. With this feedback, Kevin's window comes more into alignment:



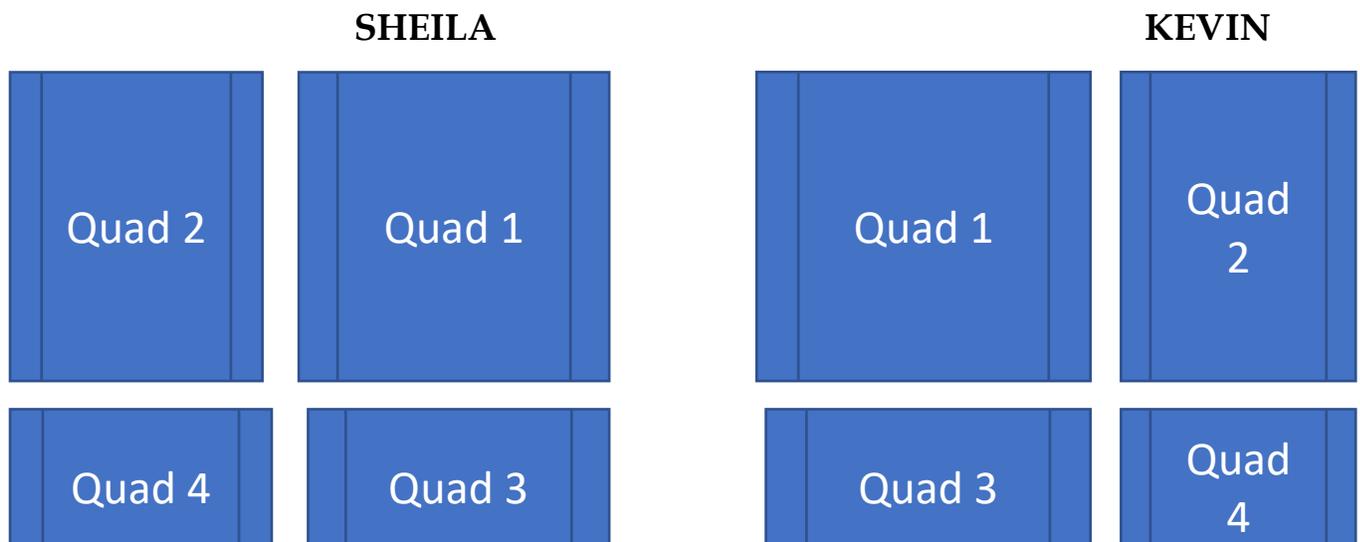
At the same time, or alternatively, Kevin can begin to disclose more about himself in relation to Sheila (Quad Three). He can reveal that he would like assistance in moving into the role of Treasurer. He might also disclose that he feels a bit uncomfortable about Sheila's relationship with his boss. He might even ask Sheila if the two of them could determine what Sheila will and will not share with his boss (as well as what Kevin will and will not share with his boss — since Sheila might also be concerned about confidentiality).

With this disclosure, Kevin's Quad Three would move and come more in alignment with the leading edge of Kevin's Quad Two feedback. Graphically, the relationship between Sheila and Kevin would look like the following:



Note that the meeting point (core of relationship) in Kevin's window has moved right and downward. The combination of Kevin's feedback (Quad Two) and disclosure (Quad Three) to Sheila has led (according to the *Stabilization Interaction* model) to a fundamental shift in their relationship. Such a shift also requires a change in Sheila's window.

She will be more inclined to provide feedback (Quad Two) and to disclose (Quad Three) to Kevin. Sheila's own window would no longer be bent. She could share more with Kevin about her own concerns regarding his competence (Kevin's Quad Two to Quad One), as well as her need for not just competence but also free time on the part of her Treasurer (Sheila's Quad Three to Quad One). The revised relationship might look like the following (in graphic form):



The public quadrant (Quad One) for both Kevin and Sheila expands. They can talk candidly about more matters, without getting too personal (honoring the core principles of their relationship) and can create a constructive and productive relationship as Executive Director and Treasure of a human service agency about which they both care.