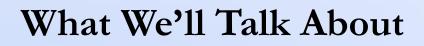
SURVIVAL SKILLS FOR DIFFICULT ENVIRONMENTS

What I Should Have Learned in B-School – and Didn't

Jean Richardson

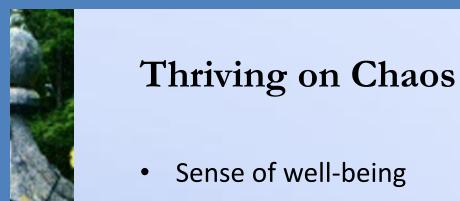
PMP, CSM, CSPO and ITIL Certified Practitioner



- What qualifies a work environment or a project as "difficult"?
- What would surviving—even thriving—look like?
- Strategies



- Lack of safety, personal and interpersonal
- Unrealistic expectations
- Unproductive conflict, often escalating
- Malaise
- Internal competitiveness
- General avoidance of personal responsibility for words and actions
- Punish viciously for mistakes

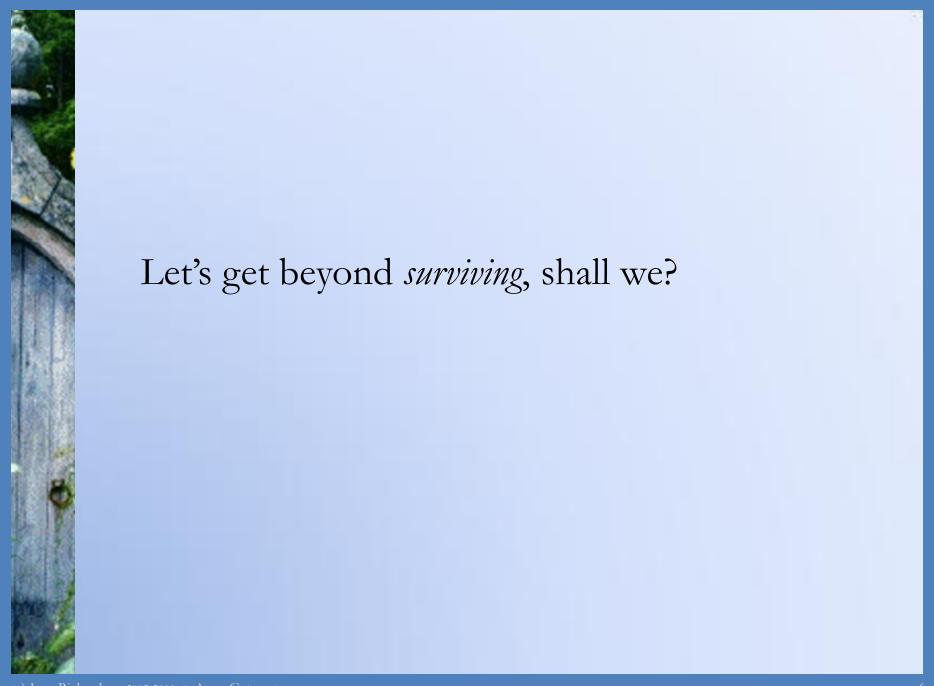


- "I'm a hero."
- Battlefield promotions
- Extremely rapid learning



Surviving is:

- Nobody dies.
- Nobody melts down.
- You're strong, not tough.
- You do learn something.
- You find satisfaction in your work.
- You're proud of your contribution.



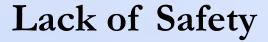


Self control is the only kind of control we ever really have.

That's hard enough to maintain.



- Perceiving and building trust
- Evaluating intensity
- Personal goal setting
- Maintaining personal sovereignty
- Knowing when to leave:
 - Grace under pressure, or a graceful exit



- How do we know when we're safe?
 - Gossip is not tolerated.
 - Credit is given for both errors and successes.
 - Errors are not personalized and used for counting coup.
 - The elements of trust are present.
- Strategy: look for and manifest the elements of trust.



- Trust is built by:
 - A history of integrity
 - Reliability
 - Responsiveness
 - Perception of empathy
- Virtual trust building must be done consciously and is more fragile that trust in face-to-face relationships.



Business is Not War

- "We're not curing cancer here."
- Business is not war, it's wealth creation.
- War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning Chris Hedges
- Strategy: Look up and out.



- Is work your world?
 - Workaholics are happy; most people who know them are not.
- What says who you are?
- Professional development
 - You are here.



The Object of the Game

- Is intensity the object of the game?
- Take your breaks on Wednesdays.
- Strategy: Monitor for unproductive intensity.



Every now and then go away, have a little relaxation, for when you come back to your work your judgment will be surer; since to remain constantly at work will cause you to lose power of judgment . . .

Go some distance away because then the work appears smaller, and more of it can be taken in at a glance, and a lack of harmony or proportion is more readily seen.

- Leonardo da Vinci



- I choose.
- Be loosely coupled and highly cohesive.
- Maintain personal sovereignty.
 - What will make my _____ feel awful?



- The ability to choose from what is available in order to be intentional about your life.
- You cannot be intentional unless you know what you want.
- If you don't know what you want, mark time until you do.



- "It takes about a year for them to figure out it's okay to make mistakes."
- Try to get information about what's to be learned.
- If you don't want to learn this lesson, realize it. You can opt out. Refer to your goals and personal sovereignty.

Staying or Leaving with Grace

- Grace is:
 - 1. Seemingly effortless beauty or charm of movement, form, or proportion.
 - 2. A characteristic or quality pleasing for its charm or refinement.
 - 3. A sense of fitness or propriety.
 - A disposition to be generous or helpful; goodwill.
 - Mercy; clemency.
- Develop an exit strategy as an exercise in readiness. Do a risk analysis and mitigation plan.



- Perceiving and building trust
- Evaluating and monitoring intensity
- Personal goal setting for this job, your life, and your career
- Maintaining personal sovereignty
- Knowing when to leave:
 - Grace under pressure, or a graceful exit.

Questions?
Comments?
Stories?

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