Quick guide to Theory U

- **Born of** a desire to avoid "collectively creating outcomes that nobody wants" (3) by creating societal change.
- Desires to "tap into a different social field, [producing] a shift in the quality of thinking, conversing and collective action" (4); new ways of operating.
- Sees a need for "sustained attention: the capacity to immerse oneself in something and stay with it"(xxviii), both individually and collectively, through principles and practices.
- **Key questions:** "What is required in order to learn and act from the future as it emerges?" (13). How do we move beyond our personal and collective 'blind spots' in leadership and systems?
- For leadership: the goal is to "become aware of [our] blind spot[s] and then shift the inner place from which we operate, both individually and collectively" (10). To "enhance the individual and systemic capacity to see, to deeply attend to the reality that people face and enact" (132).

DOWNLOADING

Begin as imprisoned by thinking/ acting "based on habitual patterns of action and thought" (115)

Observe

▼ SEEING

Perceive from the periphery, at the boundary between observer and observed. Connect to wonder.



Connect one's own experience with participation in the whole.

Listen with the heart.



PROTOTYPING

PERFORMING

Explore the future by trying out emerging future possibilities that connect to deeper intention.

End by embodying presencing

(connecting to source) in everyday

practices, from microcosm to ecosystem.

T CRYSTALLIZING

Stay connected to "our highest future possibility" (188) to "clarify the vision and intention going forward" (199).

LET GO

Stepping into "our real being...our authentic self...approach[ing] our self from the emerging future" (161). Connect to something deeper and surrender to what emerges (179).

Listen

Reflect

Key texts for Theory U:

Scharmer, C. Otto, (2016), *Theory U: leading from the future as it emerges*. 2nd ed. (Oakland, CA: Berrett Koehler). Scharmer, C. Otto, (2018), *The Essentials of Theory U: core principles and applications*. (Oakland, CA: Berrett Koehler).





Act