

Deep Democracy

To understand, empathize with, and support conflicted individuals or groups on all sides of an issue simultaneously and compassionately.

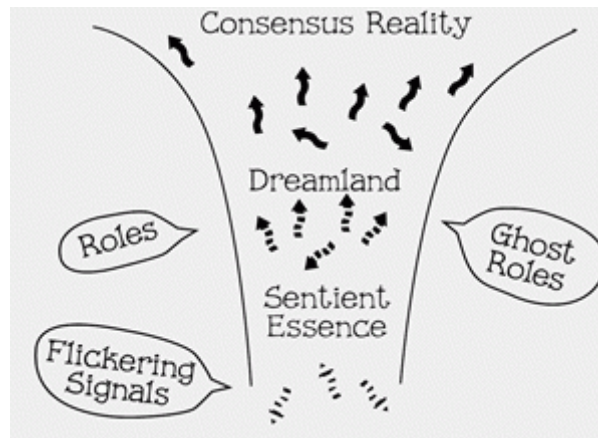


Image: <http://www.iapop.com/deep-democracy/>

“Unlike ‘classical’ democracy, which focuses on majority rule, Deep Democracy suggests that all voices, states of awareness, and frameworks of reality are important. Democracy also suggests that the information carried within these voices, awareness’s, and frameworks are all needed to understand the complete process of the system. Deep Democracy is an attitude that focuses on the awareness of voices that are both central and marginal”. Arnold Mindell

Tags: Social. Building community and embracing diversity.

Challenge:

In most conflicts the opposing parties do not listen well to each other, but rather become defensive, jealous and competitive. Power over and win/lose thinking is inherent in a reductionist worldview, and most of the world’s population has been educated in this paradigm.

Solution:

Deep Democracy involves not only openness to other individuals, groups, and diverse views, but also an openness to experiences including feelings, dreams, body symptoms, altered states of consciousness, and synchronicities as well as an awareness of signals, roles, and the structural dynamics of the interactions between parties involved. Deep Democracy adds a depth to many other participatory processes in that it offers a framework, philosophy and tool kit which, allows the facilitator to both read the field behind the presenting voices and draw out that which is more marginalised. It enables him/her to facilitate an interaction between these more marginalised or minority perspectives. It’s feeling attitude of eldership allows us to empathise with all the voices in the field, rather than unconsciously taking sides.

References:

- <http://www.deepdemocracy.net/>
- <http://www.ddieastafrica.co.ke/whatisdeepdemocracy.html>
- “The Leader as Martial Artist: Techniques and Strategies for Resolving Conflict and Creating Community”, Arnold Mindell, (1993)

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