MODELS OF POWER RELATIONSHIPS

We all have unconscious "thinking-and-perceiving templates" (also known as "Cognitive Schemas" as per Jeffrey Young 2012, and "representations of Self and Other" as per James Masterson 1996) of power relationships - as part of our individual psychology and collective thinking (i.e. culture). These templates determine how we perceive, and relate to power and authority in our personal and professional lives, whether we occupy leader or subordinate roles.

These psychological templates are formed out of our cumulative experience of the use of power in human systems, over the course of our lives. Starting with the first system - our families of origin, through to schools (primary through tertiary), religious institutions, and into our adult experiences in workplaces and other systems in the community.

These templates are described as "Authori**tarian** and Authori**tative** Power Relationship Modes" (Terms adapted from Grill, 2005). They determine how we - as individuals and groups, adopt leader and subordinate roles **behaviourally** *and* **psychologically.**

That is: how we have as "leaders and followers", think and feel - about those who lead us, and those whom we lead.

AUTHORI**TARIAN** POWER RELATIONSHIPS

Authoritarian relationship modes assume that authority and power are *in*compatible with empathy, support and collaboration. Authoritarian modes reflect more traditional organisational, social and political configurations of power relationships.

One common sign that Authoritarian modes are in operation in a workplace is when staff describe the reasons for a particular project or task as, "we're doing it / you have to do it this way - because that's what the MD/CEO etc wants!" or "This is the way its *always* been done."

v.s. " … because this what *we* have decided / this is what *is needed*"

AUTHORI**TATIVE** POWER RELATIONSHIPS

When authoritative relationship modes are in operation in organizations, leaders demonstrate participative and supportive behaviours but do not relinquish power or authority. The leader's authority is preserved: needing to set limits and directions, *and* at the same time empathy and collaboration is recognised and practiced by both "leaders and followers".

Common indications of Authoritative modes for example, are when leaders communicate clear expectations and also conduct supportive leadership behaviours, such as regular direct contact with staff at all levels (as much as is possible).

EVOLVING FROM AUTHORITARIAN TO AUTHORITATIVE POWER MODES

Organisational behaviour and culture develops when leaders, staff and groups engage in *"Organisational Dialogue"*.

Dialogue occurs when individuals or groups engage in conversations that include open discussion and understanding of people's goals, strategies, aspirations and values, and these discussions are not "one-offs" but repeat and evolve over time.

"*Conversations for Alignment*" provide the structure for these types of discussions. This structure can guide both formal discussions (such as strategic planning, team meetings and performance reviews) and informal discussions.