

Presencing Global Classroom: An Introduction to Theory U - Online Course

Dr. C. Otto Scharmer, Presencing Institute

February 19-March 19, 2009

Online Course - Weekly Thursday Sessions

10:00-11:30am EST (USA)

Europe Central European Time: 16.00-17.30

South Africa: 16.00-17.30

India: 19.30-21.00

China: 22.00-23.30

Australia (Sydney): 1.00-2.30 AM

Dr. Otto Scharmer (www.ottoscharmer.com) will facilitate this global classroom designed to provide an introduction to Theory U and the process of Presencing.

Participants will learn:

- The core principles and practices of the U-process
- How to apply the U-process to initiate profound change
- Deep listening and dialogue practices
- Tools for all seven Theory U Leadership capacities
- Ways to enhance their capacity to deal with current leadership challenges
- Ways to enhance their capacity to access the authentic self
- How to access a global network of change makers who use the U process of Presencing to effect profound innovation and change (a global community of practice)

Who should participate?

Change makers and leaders in business and government, as well as those working in community contexts. This is a foundational (not an advanced) program. No prior experience with the U-process or Presencing is required. Participants should bring a professional interest in applying the U-process to change initiatives.

Format

Each session includes a 60-minute teaching/lecture module and a 30-minute live question/answer discussion module. Participants are encouraged to work in small groups 30 minutes before and after each session.

Each class will include a small practical assignment that helps to ground the classroom discussion in the real life and leadership experiences of the participants.

The Presencing Global Classroom will start Thursday, March 20, 2008, and continue with weekly Thursday sessions for five weeks.

Overview of the sessions

Week 1: The Blind Spot: Facing the new leadership challenge

Tool: Empathy Walk

Week 2: Sensing: Shifting the place from which perception happens

Tool: Stakeholder Interviews

Week 3: Presencing: Connecting to source

Tool: Guided Presencing Journey

Week 4: Prototyping: Integrating head, heart, and hand

Tool: Case Clinics

Week 5: Global transformation and the journey of my Self

Tool: All Levels All Fields Matrix

Small Group Work

We highly recommend that participants meet in small groups for 30 minutes before and after each session. You will receive instructions for the small group discussions each week. Indicate on your registration whether you intend to participate in this element of the Presencing Global Classroom, and we will provide contact information for four other participants. Small groups connect either via Skype or by dialing a US conference call number (the phone charges must be covered by the participant). Participants will self-organize their small group work.

Social Networking

As part of the Presencing Global Classroom you will have the opportunity to meet other participants for social networking. You can post your profile and interact with participants around questions, experiences, and ideas. You will receive details after your registration. The Presencing Global Classroom networking space will be a valuable asset both during the program and after its completion.

Reflection Papers

To help deepen your understanding, we recommend that you send us brief reflection papers after each weekly session.

Time Required

The *minimum time* requirement for participating in the Global Classroom is 90 minutes in the formal weekly sessions and 90 minutes of individual work outside the session (to practice using the tools presented in each session). In addition, participants are encouraged to join small groups (2 x 30 minutes) before and after each session.

Equipment Test

Before class begins you will need to participate in an equipment test that takes 5 minutes. The time and date of the testing will be announced. We will offer a test day for checking your connection. Any change in your location or equipment after the test may raise technical issues.

Firewalls and Network Permissions

Some organizations require network permission. Check with your organization and ensure that you get the necessary approvals if you plan to connect via a company network.

Technical Requirements

Please ensure that your equipment meets the following requirements:

- Access to high-speed Internet or (minimum) 56K dial-up
- Email account
- PDF reader (free software)
- Realplayer
- Skype phone account for small group discussions (if you sign up for Skype-based discussion groups)

Technical Support

For troubleshooting any issues related to viewing the live lectures, telephone help-desk support will be available to all participants (windows and Mac users). The help desk will be open during the live testing period from 9 AM - 4 PM EST each testing day. In addition, support will also be available starting one hour prior and during each weekly session (9 - 11:30 AM EST).

Tuition

\$900 Regular
\$300 Each additional Participant from same Corporation
\$280 Non-Profit

Cancellation

The amount paid minus a \$50 cancellation/processing fee will be funded for all cancellations received before February 6, 2009. No refunds will be granted for cancellations received after February 6, 2009.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I miss a class?

You have the option to watch the live session or the taped broadcast. We usually post the broadcast within 24 hours after a session.

How do I send in my questions during the session?

You will receive an email address that you can send your questions to or the Web address of a site where you can post your question.

How do I find out whether I am able to watch the broadcast on my computer?

We will offer a testing time that will be announced after registration closes.

What if I run into technical problems?

We offer during the testing day and on the day of the class technical support.

How do I get into the small groups?

Small groups are self-organized. You will receive email addresses of four other participants. The groups are chosen on their preference to connect either through skype or conference calling. They meet for 30 minutes prior to each class and for 30 minutes after each class.

What if my small group does not work out?

In that case, email us and we will try to find another group for you. But we cannot guarantee a participation in a small group.

Literature and Resources

Scharmer, C. O., *Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges* (Cambridge, Mass.: Society for Organizational Learning, 2007).

Senge, P., C. O. Scharmer, J. Jaworski, and B. S. Flowers, *Presence: An Exploration of Profound Change in People, Organizations and Society* (New York: Doubleday, 2005).

<http://www.theoryu.com>

<http://www.presencing.com>

Questions and Help

For questions please contact:

Katrin <Kaeufer@presencing.org> or Janice <spadafore@presencing.com>

Participant Experiences

"Learning about theory U directly from Otto was great! I feel I now understand so much better the intention, and the real framework of the process. I had done some reading and listened to others talk about it, but had grasped only the smallest part of what this is about. Otto's focus and commitment feels contagious. I feel I have had a shift over the course of the last 6 weeks. It has been very powerful, I think I am personally just now passing through the eye of the needle."

"I loved the crystal clear examples of the video clips, and being together with different people from different parts of the globe and actually feel connectedness."

"It was great to be part of a global group, working and visioning at ONE time together. I appreciated very much the opportunity to take part in the course and be able to combine it with my local place/ work and commitments. No travel commitment. Low cost. Connect with global group of like-minded people. AND the idea that change in the world (personal and in organizations) is already on the way. Self-generated learning amongst a global peer and mentor group."

"In each session I felt I learned something. Throughout each session I felt very connected with the material- it was as if it articulated many things that have resonated within me, to date, unsaid. Otto's way of articulating the material was deeply inspiring. It has given me great encouragement to bring greater purpose to my work- so that my life work can become more integrated into my career. For many years I have seen myself as a 'change agent' but feel that I have not succeeded very much in bringing this sense into service."

"The Presencing Global Classroom helped me become more focused. I especially liked the guided reflection/journaling exercise done in the 2nd or 3rd class. I almost always started my day with meditation however using that meditation to focus on what I want to accomplish in the world and then my day, and asking for help has been of great benefit to me."

"I was able to gain new insights when I applied the various working methods within my working environment."

"There was a unique energy being a part of the live presentations and global group discussions. This was very special!"

"Keep doing this series, over and over. This is a really important breakthrough. There is great promise and success in deep utilization."

Online Registration

<http://pgc.cloudtheory.com/register/>

Background: About the U-Process and Presencing

The U-Process builds on the observation that there is a blind spot in how we lead social change. The blind spot is the source from which all our actions come into being. Our ability to access the blind spot concerns *how we pay attention*.

To understand the blind spot better, consider the different perspectives from which one can view the work of a painter. One can look at (1) the *result* of the creative process: the painting; (2) the *process* of painting, the application of paint to the canvas; or (3) the moment before the artist begins to paint: when she is standing *in front of the blank canvas*. We already know a lot about the *how*, the processes a painter uses. But we know nothing about the inner place, the *source* from which she operates. The same is true of leadership. The period before the creative process begins—the blank canvas dimension of leadership and social reality creation—is what matters most.

The U: One Process, Five Movements

Theory U outlines the concept of authentic *presencing*. By moving through the “U” we connect with our essential Self, and we pay attention in a way that allows us to experience the opening of our minds, our hearts, and our wills.

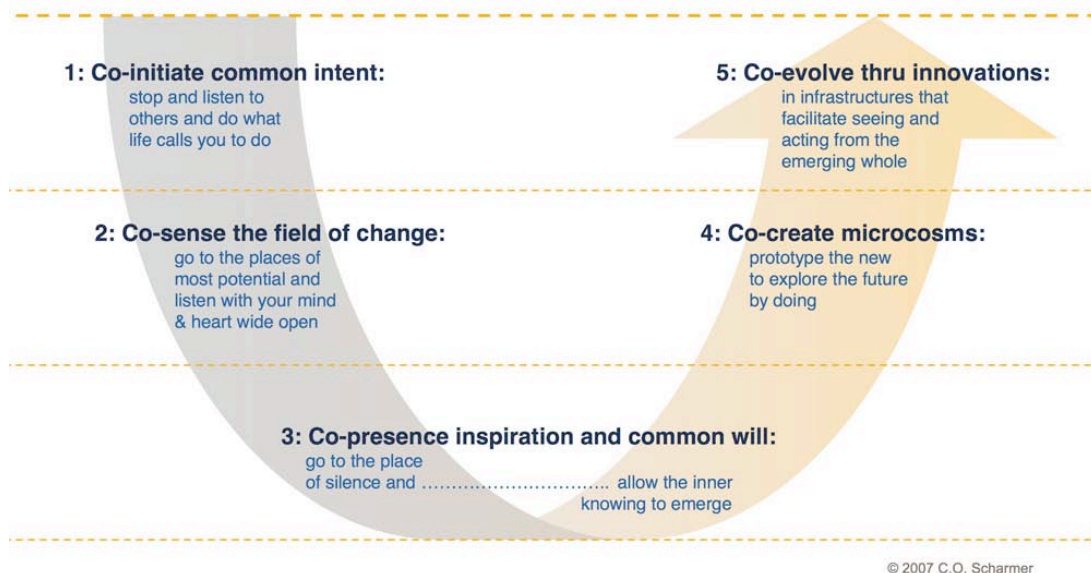


Figure 1: The U: One journey, five movements

This “U” journey takes us through five movements in sequence. We move down one side of the U (connecting us to the world that is outside of our institutional bubble) to the bottom of the U (connecting us to the world that emerges from within) and up the other side of the U (bringing forth the new into the world), as depicted in the figure above.

At the bottom of the U lies a threshold. That threshold can be likened to the eye of a needle. In ancient Jerusalem, a gate was called “The Needle” because it was so narrow that when a fully loaded camel reached the gate, the camel driver had to take off all the bundles so the camel could pass through. Likewise, at the bottom of the U journey lies an inner gate that requires us to drop everything that isn’t essential. This process of letting-go (of our old ego and self) and letting-come (our highest future possibility: our Self) establishes a subtle connection to a deeper source of knowing. The essence of presencing is that these two selves—our current self and our best future Self—meet at this threshold and begin to listen to and resonate with each other.

Once a group crosses this threshold nothing remains the same. Individual members and the group as a whole begin to operate with a heightened level of energy and sense of future possibility. Often they then begin to function as an intentional vehicle for the future that they feel wants to emerge.

Seven Theory U Leadership Capacities

The ability to move through the U as a team, an organization, or a system requires a new set of leadership capacities. The following seven Theory U leadership capacities are practiced today in multi-stakeholder innovation and corporate applications, as well as by the Presencing Institute, which is dedicated to integrating science, consciousness, and profound social change into a new social technology.

- 1. Holding the Space: Listen to What Life Calls You to Do.** Building the U leadership capacity starts with the principle of incompleteness. Listen to what life calls you to do, and to that which emerges from the group of people you convene. To do this effectively you must intentionally leave a lot of open space for others to contribute.
- 2. Observing: Attend with Your Mind Wide Open.** Unless you suspend your Voice of Judgment (VOJ), attempts to reach the places of most potential will be futile.
- 3. Sensing: Connect with Your Heart.** This is what moving down the left side of the U is all about—facilitating an opening process. The process involves the tuning of three instruments: the open mind, the open heart, and the open will. While the open mind is familiar to most of us, the other two capacities draw us into less familiar territory.
- 4. Presencing: Connect to the Deepest Source of Your Self and Will.** While an open heart allows us to see a situation from the whole, the open will enables us to begin to *act from the emerging whole*.
- 5. Crystallizing: Access the Power of Intention.** Even a very small group of key persons may commit itself to the purpose and outcomes of a project. That committed core group with its common intention then goes out into the world and creates an energy field that begins to attract people, opportunities, and resources. Momentum builds, and things begin to happen. The core group functions as a vehicle for the whole to manifest.
- 6. Prototyping: Integrate Head, Heart, and Hand.** Moving down the left side of the U is about opening up and dealing with the resistance of thought, emotion, and will; moving up the right side is about intentionally reintegrating the intelligence of the head, the heart, and the hand in the context of practical applications. Integrate your thoughts, your emotions, and your will.

7. Performing: Playing the “Macro Violin.” An accomplished violinist once realized that he couldn’t simply play his violin in Chartres Cathedral—he had to play the entire space—what he called the “macro violin.” For systems and organizations to accomplish similarly large tasks, they need to convene the right sets of players (frontline people who are connected with one another through the same value chain), and use a social technology that gives them the skills to shift from pointless debating to co-creating the new.