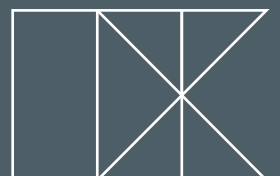


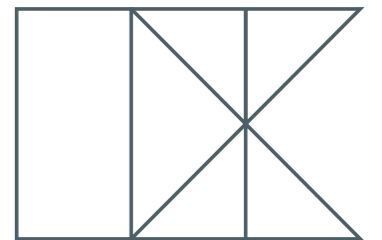
KETS DE VRIES INSTITUTE

Never believe that a few caring
people can't change the world.
For, indeed, that's all who ever have.

—Margaret Mead



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“ONE OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES
IN ORGANISATIONS TODAY IS ALIGNING
PEOPLE TO GET THINGS DONE.”

— MANFRED KETS DE VRIES
(FOUNDER, KDVI)



THE CHALLENGE OF LEADERSHIP

The old saying goes: “For want of a nail, the kingdom was lost.” This reminds us that the best strategic plans will fail if all key people are not fully engaged.

Much energy is focused on innovation, strategic agility, decision-making, and transformation. But when it comes to *implementation*—getting people to work together towards a goal—the hard truth is that results rarely meet the original objectives.

Senior executives tell us: “I wish I had paid more attention in my organisational behaviour classes while doing my MBA. Now I know that people management is the hardest task a leader faces!”

As experienced executives acknowledge, organisations are complex systems made up of people with diverse personalities, life experiences, strengths, desires, and challenges. Consequently, effective organisational interventions, whether focused on individuals or groups, need to address the ways in which people interact with one another, as well as explore the organisational system in which they work.

Organisations are like icebergs—it’s important to consider what lies beneath the surface.

Quick fixes don’t stick. Why not? Because it is essential to start by identifying business challenges and issues, and then link them to deeper sources of energy and motivational forces behind human actions in organisations. These forces are directly related to the ability of a group—for example, a senior executive team—to transform intent into action, and action into *sustainable results*.

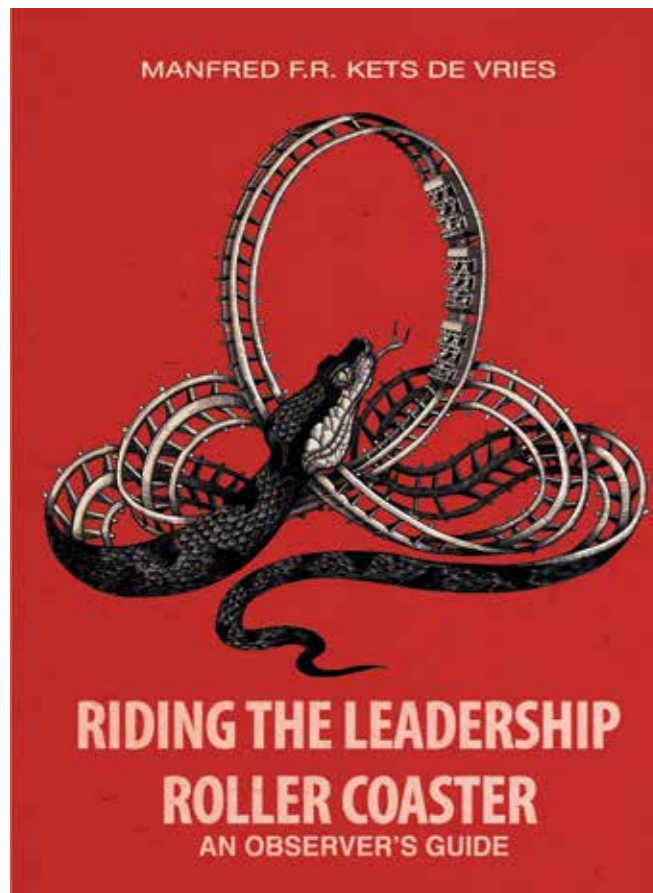
To function well as a team, people need to have courageous conversations.

Getting people to work together effectively is not easy. Courageous conversations—in which people are open and challenging, but also supportive—are often very tough. People like to do things their own way. They might not feel comfortable speaking up. The result is often uncoordinated decisions or a breakdown in strategic implementation.

Courageous conversations help people to understand the reasons that underlie behaviour—their own and others’—and how this can affect the way people work together. This approach helps them to deal with issues that hinder team performance, such as anxiety about change, implicit biases about “ideal leadership”, or misconceptions about motives. In addition, this helps people

explore intangible factors such as history and legacy that influence an organisation's readiness for change.

Courageous conversations require active listening and reflective space. But doing so takes effort. And some situations—such as addressing conflict or underperformance—can seem too hot to handle. Often, the best way forward is to work with an experienced outside facilitator, who can help a group identify and work through issues that are holding them back from reaching their goals.



"LEADERSHIP IS A MATTER OF THE RIGHT INDIVIDUAL AT THE RIGHT MOMENT—SOMEONE WITH THE ABILITY TO EVALUATE THE ENVIRONMENT AND UNDERSTAND THE MOTIVATIONAL FORCES THAT ENGAGE PEOPLE TO FACE ORGANISATIONAL CHALLENGES."

Palgrave Macmillan, 2017

Latest KDVI publication exploring the psychological ups and downs of the leadership journey.



A PSYCHODYNAMIC-SYSTEMIC APPROACH TO ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

KDVI's founding partners were among the first in the world to combine management science with a deeper understanding of human behaviour in organisations. This came to be known as the *psychodynamic-systemic approach* to leadership and organisational development.

Psychodynamic simply means that KDVI partners explore the reasons that underlie human actions in organisations. *Systemic* means taking into account the context—individuals, teams and groups, as well as environment and legacy—in which an organisation's challenge or strategic objective is embedded.

The KDVI psychodynamic-systemic methodology draws on the following concepts:

- **There is often a logical explanation for behavior, even if the behavior seems strange or counterproductive.**
- **The way we behave may be influenced by our past experiences and people we have known.**
- **Our behavior and the decisions we make are often affected by our emotions, even if we don't always realise this.**
- **Even the most "rational" people have blind spots, and the "best" people have a shadow side.**
- **Change is very difficult if the context (the "system") is not taken into consideration.**
- **Change takes time.**

KDVI works with people in organisations to help them develop an understanding of their own behaviour, and how it affects their teams and their organisation. When the link between present behaviour and past experience is explored, people are more likely to arrive at tipping points that fuel change and sustainable results. Our research shows that this has a direct and lasting impact on organisational performance.

THE KDVI APPROACH IN ACTION

The KDVI change methodology begins with an exploration of the current business situation and the people involved, including the **less visible dynamics** that may influence success or lead to derailment.

KDVI's work is **evidence-based**—we draw on and contribute to academic research in our field; we consider our clients to be our partners in an exploration of their unique questions and challenges; and we assess the results of our interventions.

The KDVI methodology is **pragmatic, transparent, inclusive**, and forms a solid foundation for evidence-based organisational interventions. In partnership with each client, we seek to uncover and **resolve sources of conflict**, and to unlock resources for renewed organisational energy.

KDVI's scope is **systemic**—our interventions situate individuals, groups and organisations within a holistic context of environment and history.

KDVI is one of the **original creators of the group coaching method**, for both pre-existing teams in organisations, and for open-enrolment programmes.

KDVI has many **decades of experience** working with top global and virtual teams, in highly complex, diverse organisational environments.

KDVI takes a long-term view, with interventions designed to foster continual organisational learning and **sustainable results**.

“ORGANISATIONAL PROCESSES—SUCH AS ON-BOARDING, STRATEGY BUILDING, INNOVATION, DIVERSITY, RETENTION, LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION, CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND THE LIKE—CANNOT BE FULLY UNDERSTOOD WITHOUT AN EXPLORATION OF INDIVIDUAL MOTIVATION AND GROUP DYNAMICS.”

Case in Point

A SENIOR TEAM INTERVENTION

In 2015, the U.S. petroleum industry was in crisis as oil prices plummeted. The executive team of a global company that provided oil drilling, pumping, and transport engineering services knew they had to transform their solid but complacent organisation in a way that would strengthen their core competencies in a shifting market. And they had to do it now; their company's share price had already dropped by a catastrophic 30% in the previous six months.

In what seemed to be an obvious injection of needed talent, James, a brilliant professor of engineering, was hired as the new Chief Technology Officer; and Joachim, an experienced petroleum industry executive who had worked for a major client joined the company as general manager of the region where a new offshore drilling project was underway. The plan was that the new hires would work with this new client to develop more environmentally sustainable—and profitable—approaches to oil extraction.

However, the company's performance continued to decline, and in the senior executive team things were getting even worse.

The two newcomers were treated as scapegoats for the team's mediocre performance. James was perceived as being rude and disorganised, and Joachim as a know-it-all, whose loyalty seemed suspect. They were blamed (behind their backs) for distracting the others from dealing with the crisis at hand. Overt conflict soon broke out between the two outsiders and other members of the executive team. During a heated argument, one of the executives made it quite clear she believed they were a team in name only.

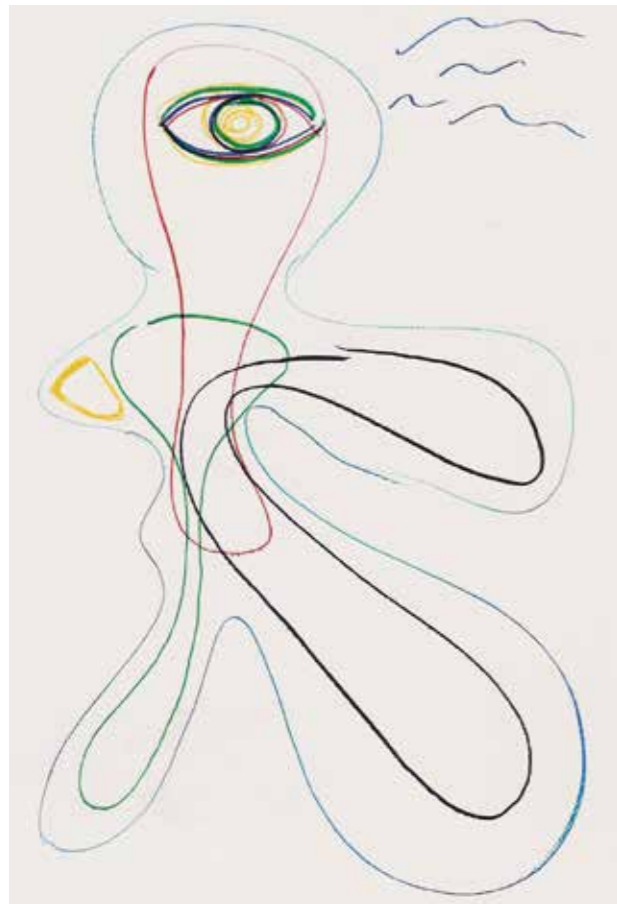
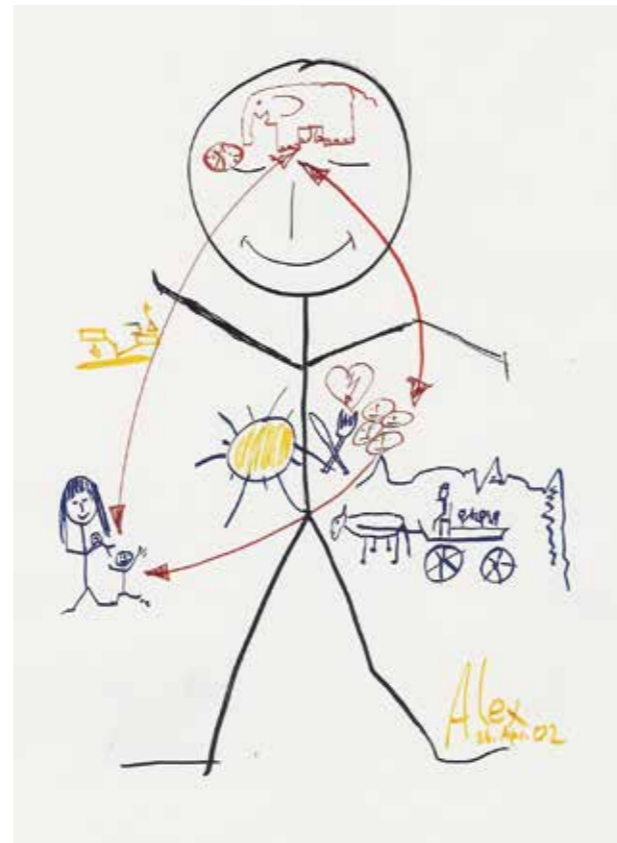
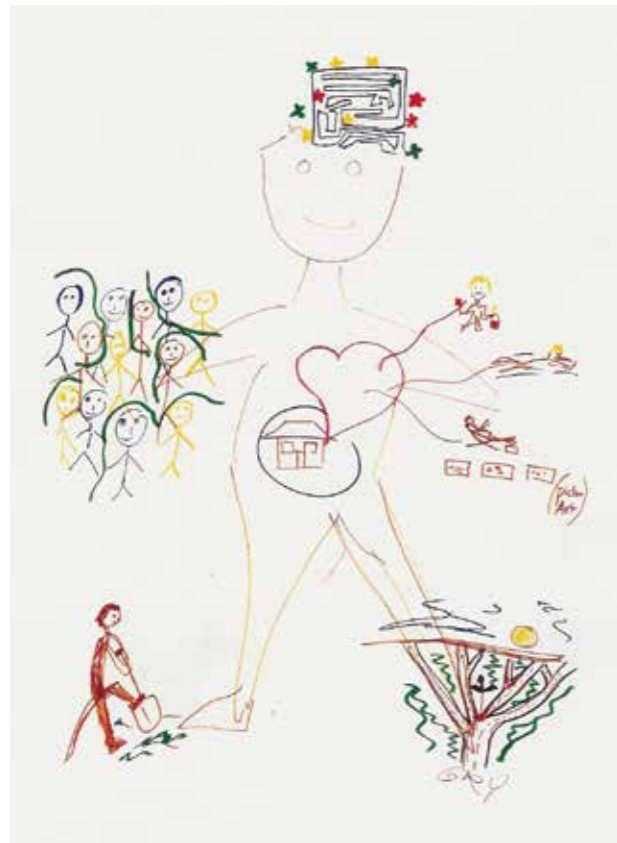
As the situation deteriorated, the CEO asked KDVI to conduct a team intervention.

The intervention was designed with KDVI to give the senior executive team the time and space to reflect on their interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, leadership styles, organisational culture, and decision-making practices. The aim would be to create alignment within the group, and then build on this alignment to anchor a more effective interaction with the client on the new project to get things done.

The KDVI group coach-facilitator had a solid business background and training in the psychodynamic approach to executive coaching. This meant that not only was she interested in how individuals experienced the team's interactions, but she was also prepared to explore the less visible elements: the out-of-awareness behaviour patterns and group dynamics that motivate interactions between individuals and within teams.

Prior to the intervention, she conducted a Leadership Audit—interviewing each team member and some of their colleagues—to get a sense of perspective on the context. Each member of the team completed several 360 degree leadership behaviour and team surveys to get a better sense of their individual strengths and areas for development.

The KDVI facilitator put the team's challenge in context, showing how many of the problems that they were currently facing could be understood as consequences of individual and group dilemmas.



Self Portraits

She began the session with a brief theoretical overview of what makes for effective leadership and high performance organisation throughout. Next, she shared some of the themes that had come up during her Leadership Audit interviews. Without revealing names, she quoted observations about the team from outsiders. She told the group that in order to accomplish anything during the intervention sessions, they would have to engage in “courageous conversations” to deal with their emerging overt and covert conflict. She promised that this type of conversation would not only be helpful in their current situation, but could become a new model for the way in which people in their organisation could work together more effectively.

For the rest of the day, the group worked together to identify the toughest challenges they faced with managing the relationships with key people involved in the client’s project, and the issues they needed to address as a team. At the end of the day, each person received an envelop with their personal feedback reports. The facilitator asked them to read them that evening in private, and to think about ways in which their feedback report might bring new insights related to their own and the team’s objectives.

The next day was devoted to reflection and group coaching.

The KDVI group coach-facilitator first asked each team member to draw a self-portrait. There was some good-natured grumbling but after a few moments, all were engaged in sketching. Next, to link each self-portrait to the task of exploring team dynamics, each person took the opportunity to discuss their own leadership challenges. One by one, the senior executives shared the points

that resonated most from their own 360° survey feedback. The coach and other people in the group offered challenging but supportive comments.

By the end of the group coaching day, they all had a better understanding of their own and one another’s behaviour. They had agreed on action points for desired change.

James realised that, although his technical insights were seen as brilliant and very relevant, he had put the others off with his preference for working things out on his own. To the others, his behaviour seemed obstructive. When the group learned that James had always been a bit of a loner, they agreed that with gentle effort and good humour, they could coax him out of his shell.

To Joachim, the group expressed their confusion and mistrust about his presence among them. After Joachim clarified his motives, it became clear to all that he was in fact strongly aligned with the team’s objectives, and he could be a real asset.

By the end of the group coaching days, the team had resolved several sources of conflict. James’ “rudeness” and Joachim’s “spying” were now discussed with some light-hearted teasing, but not before they had explored deeply the dynamics that led them to vent their own anxieties on the newcomers. Sources of tension between other group members were also identified and discussed. To continue learning beyond the coaching sessions, each team member wrote a personal follow-up action plan based on individual feedback reports and comments from the group. Also, they included a number of suggestions of

“THROUGH GROUP COACHING, INDIVIDUALS BECOME MUTUALLY INVESTED IN ENCOURAGING THE NEW BEHAVIOURS THAT EACH ONE HAS IDENTIFIED, AND COMMITTED TO WORKING TOGETHER AS A GROUP TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS.”



how to be more effective as a team. After sharing the plans, the group agreed to hold each person accountable for his or her desired action points. They also promised to give each other supportive peer coaching to stay on track.

In addition, the team had their first open debate about the project, which led to an energetic discussion about possible near-term strategic options for other clients. To keep the momentum going, the team came up with a specific group action plan for each option. Each team member left at the end of the intervention feeling refreshed, listened to, and reasonably optimistic.

Three months later, the team met with the facilitator for a follow-up session. They reported specific metrics that showed the team was more effective.

They also discussed ways in which their soft skills had improved. There was greater openness among them, marked by real dialogue and welcome exchange of ideas. They marvelled at the extent to which they had bonded as a team

during the intervention. Several people mentioned that they felt more comfortable discussing their doubts and concerns with the others. Rather than worrying about being vulnerable or laying blame, they had developed greater trust and respect for one another.

They had made it a point to start each meeting with an agenda point called “courageous conversations”; this fostered constructive conflict resolution and a greater sense of commitment and ownership. The much-needed talents of James and Joachim were fully integrated and the team agreed that they were now aligned in working together on the sustainable oil extraction project.

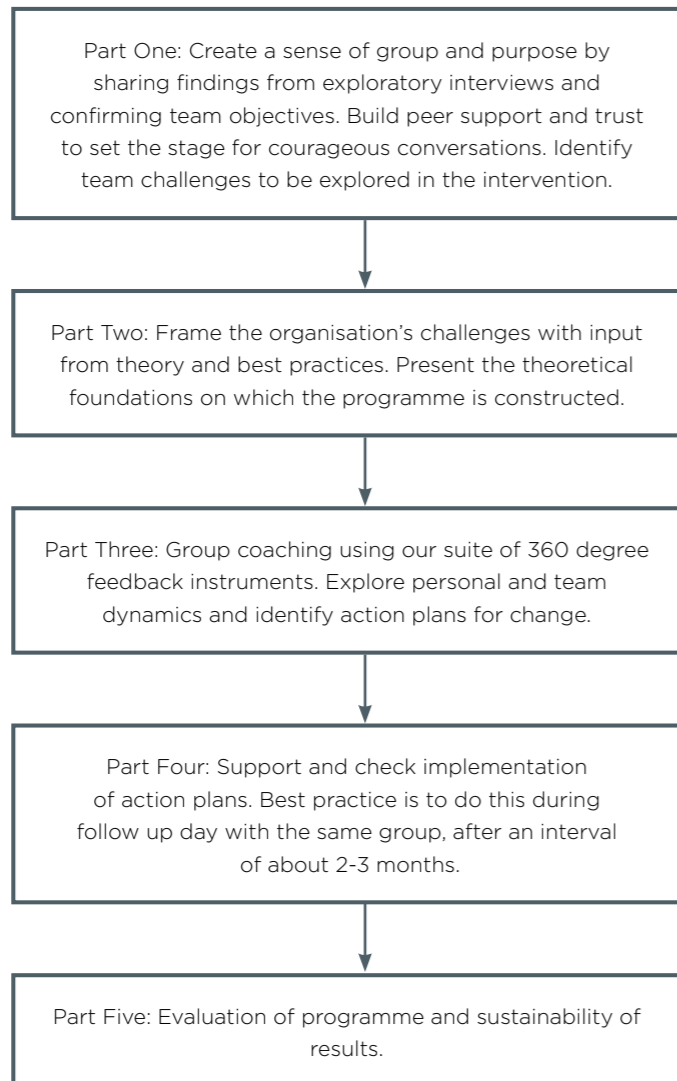
KDVI PROGRAMME FLOW: AN OVERVIEW OF OUR PROCESS

Based on our research on group and individual learning and change, we have developed a robust but flexible best-practice methodology that helps groups to effectively work together during an organisational intervention.

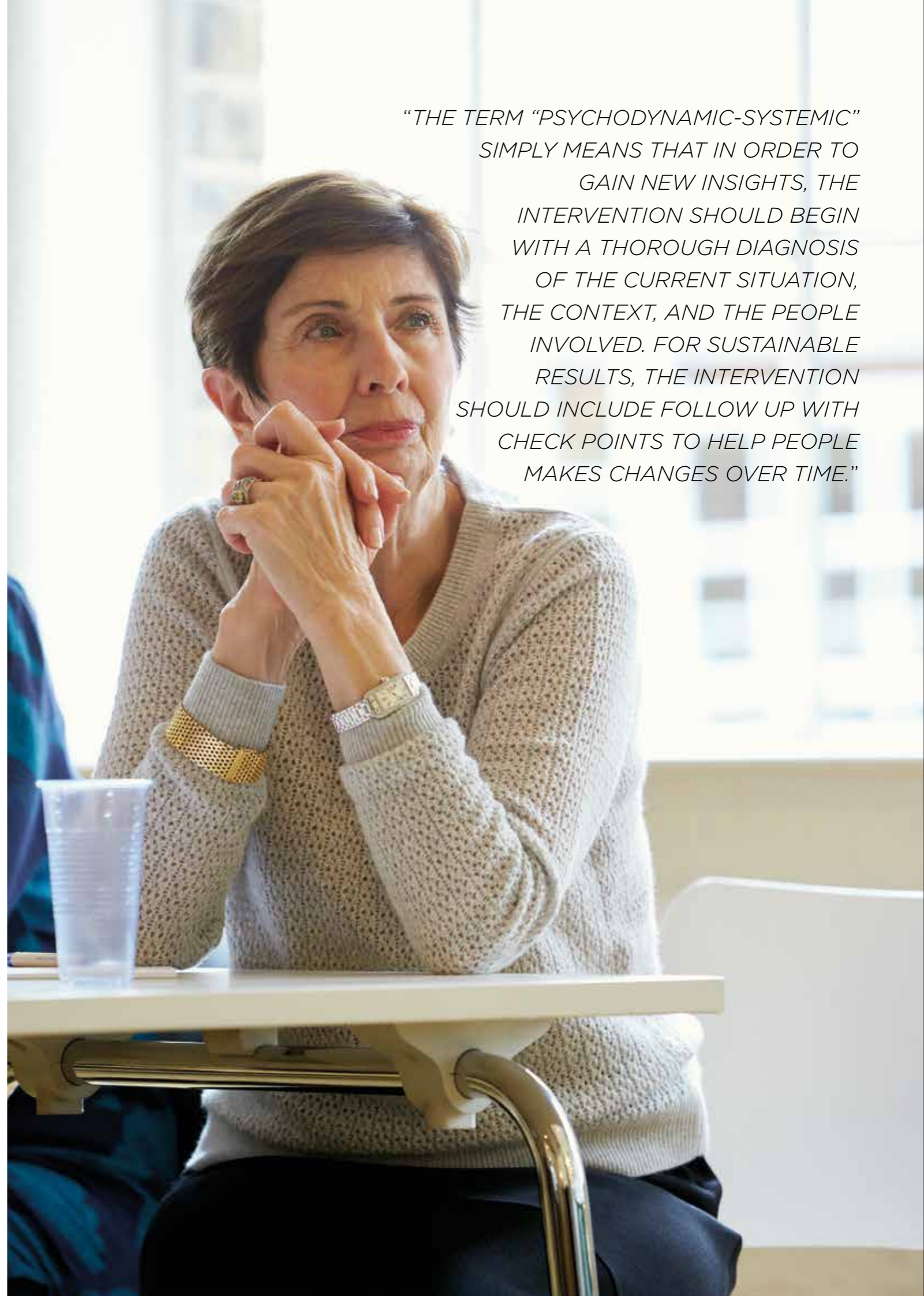
PRE-PROGRAMME OR INTERVENTION PLANNING

Map a common agreement about objectives through Leadership Audits and exploratory meetings.

PROGRAMME OR INTERVENTION FLOW



“THE TERM “PSYCHODYNAMIC-SYSTEMIC” SIMPLY MEANS THAT IN ORDER TO GAIN NEW INSIGHTS, THE INTERVENTION SHOULD BEGIN WITH A THOROUGH DIAGNOSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION, THE CONTEXT, AND THE PEOPLE INVOLVED. FOR SUSTAINABLE RESULTS, THE INTERVENTION SHOULD INCLUDE FOLLOW UP WITH CHECK POINTS TO HELP PEOPLE MAKES CHANGES OVER TIME.”



IN CONCLUSION: KDVI QUICK FACTS

KDVI founders were at the forefront of developing a systemic focus and clinical approach that is now used around the world for leadership and organisational development.

KDVI founders developed and have practiced group coaching for more than twenty years, and have worked with tens of thousands of executives.

KDVI coaches and facilitators pay attention to behavioural patterns that may originate in earlier life phases. We help people determine the individual and organisational roots and consequences of actions and decisions.

KDVI has decades of experience working with individuals and teams at all organisational levels. We work in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

KDVI associates and affiliates intervene at the most senior levels in organisations. All are highly experienced consultants / coaches who have, in the past, themselves played senior roles within organisations (COO, CEO, Partner) and understand the pressing business challenges that our clients face. Most KDVI associates and affiliates hold an Executive Masters from the INSEAD Business School in Coaching and Consulting for Change.

KDVI supports Boards and ExCo teams to manage complexity that may arise from issues such as succession, team conflict, silo-formation, M&As, rapid growth and other disruptive change.

KDVI works with global organisations from a wide range of industries and has a keen knowledge of working with clients from the financial services, healthcare, professional services, manufacturing, energy, technology and education sectors.

“IN OUR EXPERIENCE, IT IS THE ABILITY TO MANAGE AND DEVELOP PEOPLE THAT IS THE SINGLE MOST DIFFICULT CHALLENGE THAT SENIOR EXECUTIVES FACE. IF THEY ARE GIVEN THE TIME AND SUPPORT NECESSARY TO EXPLORE UNDERLYING CAUSES AS WELL AS PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS TO HUMAN DILEMMAS, THE PAYOFF FOR THE ORGANISATION CAN BE SIGNIFICANT.”

