



# Expressive Change **Inscaping**

The concepts shared in this session spring from a global community of practice of organizations asking themselves:

*What type of impact might we have if we took the inner lives of our organizations more seriously as leverage points for social change?*

The material is free to share and adapt (editable version available). To learn more about the community of practice and related materials visit [www.organizationunbound.org](http://www.organizationunbound.org)

## *To get the most out of this session:*

Ask everyone who will be participating to read through all the slides before they come to the session (this will take them 5-10 mins).

Project the session onto a screen or distribute paper copies so that everyone can follow along together.

## *Materials needed:*

- Pens & paper
- Piece of flipchart paper & tape
- Handful of markers

This is one of several self-guided sessions on the concept and practice of expressive change.

Expressive change is about organizations gently exploring, in their daily work, ways that they can embody the changes they are seeking to create in the world.

Each session is designed for a small group of people within the same organization to do together

They are designed to be self-guided and can be done in any order.

This session introduces you to the concept of “inscaping” - a simple, yet powerful practice that expressive organizations seem to share.

Slide	Focus	Time
8-12	Introduction to Inscaping	10 min
13-15	Work Inscaping	25 min
16-17	Life Inscaping	25 min
18-26	Mapping exercise & Closing	25 min

**TOTAL APPROXIMATE TIME**

**1 hour 25 min**

But feel free to go at your own pace

# Inscaping

Expressive organizations don't spend hours analyzing how they can live out their core purpose. They simply approach their work from a deeply experiential place.

They regularly surface and draw upon the inner experiences of organizational members during the normal course of work to shape and guide the organization. By 'inner experiences' we don't just mean emotions. We mean the full range of things that make up our inner lives: ideas, intuitions, curiosities, aspirations, fears, values, biographies, etc.

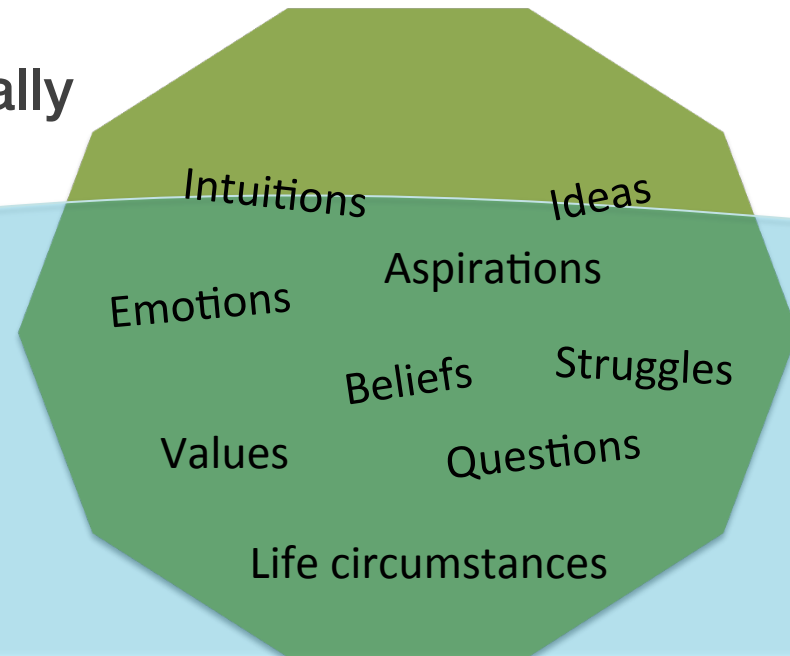
We call this practice "Inscaping". It is through inscaping that an organization's core purpose becomes infused into everything it does.



# Inscaping

Sharing our experiences might sound simple, even obvious, but in most organizations, experiences remain largely submerged.

The typical organization focuses most of its attention on visible forms, like structures, policies, missions, plans, etc. But it is the way that organization members actually experience those forms that largely determines how engaging and socially innovative the organization can be.



# Inscaping

It is tempting to classify inscaping as a soft or utopian practice, but it is actually quite rational and hard headed.

It increases our ability to look at things as they are, not just as we wish they were and reveals the organization as it really is, not merely how we draw it up on paper.

There are **two types** of inscaping.

# -1 - Work Inscaping

Work Inscaping involves sharing how we are experiencing the work itself (tasks, projects, processes, structures, work relationships).

Our curiosities, passions, and fears about that work. Our ideas and intuitions. Our desires. Our struggles.

And perhaps most importantly our relationships: How are we experiencing working with each other right now? What do we most appreciate? What do we find challenging?

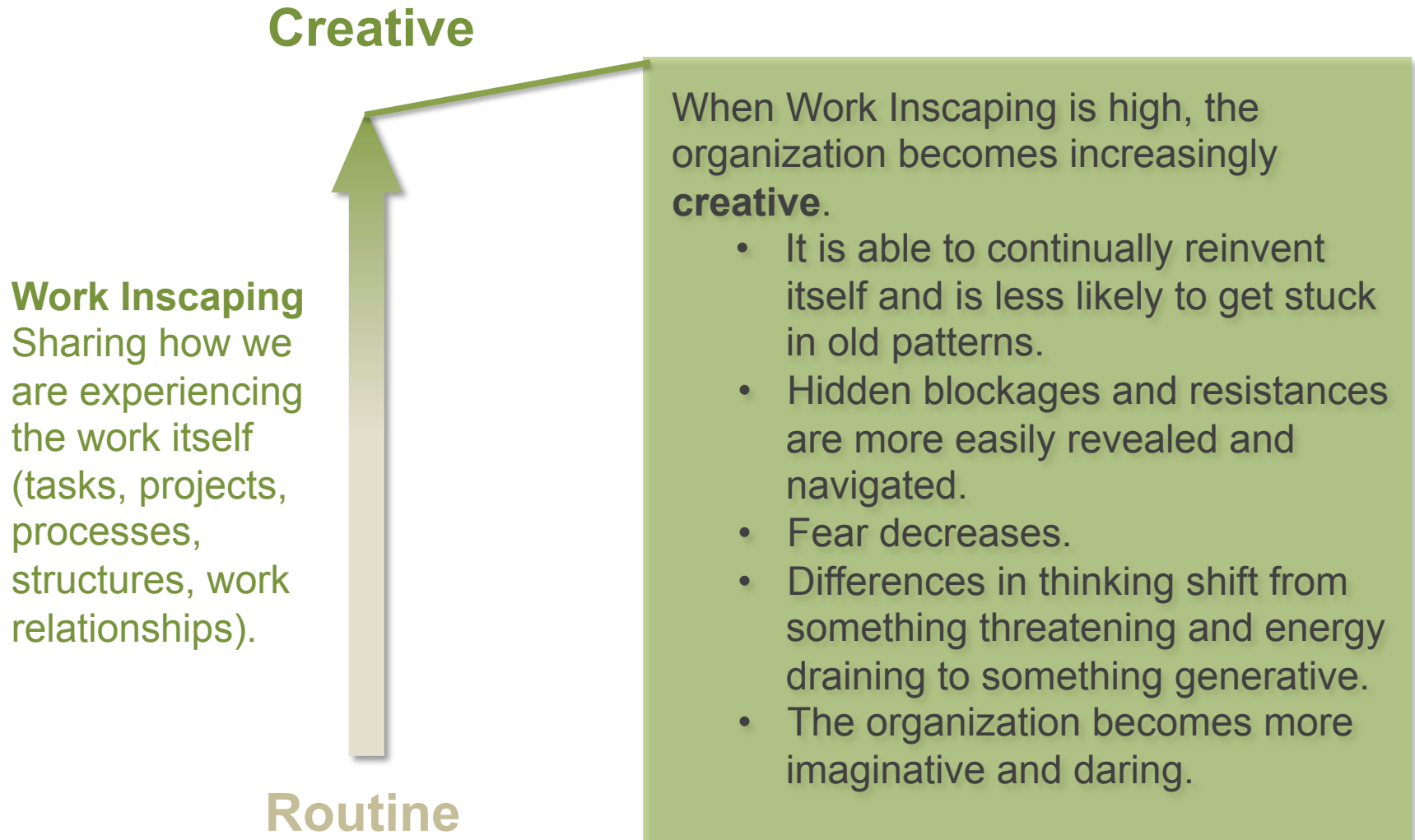
## -2- Life Inscaping

Life Inscaping involves sharing aspects of our broader life experiences that are not specifically associated with our work roles. Our broad hopes and values. Our current excitements and difficulties. Our histories. Our worries and our gratitude.

This does not mean we share every facet of our lives. It simply means that the vast areas of our lives that are usually out of bounds at work are no longer necessarily so.

Both types of inscaping represent distinct kinds of interactions and have very different effects on organizational possibilities.

# Effects of Work Inscaping



# Exercise

- ① Get into pairs (if there is an odd number, make one group of three).
- ② On a piece of paper, take a few minutes to silently jot down some notes on how you are experiencing your work right now: Excitements, frustrations, hopes, curiosities, intuitions, preoccupations, etc.
- ③ Now on the same paper take a few minutes to jot down how you think the person you paired up with might have answered this question. Just make your best guess.
- ④ Take 15 mins to share what you wrote with each other.

# Debrief

Bring the whole group back together for a 5 minute debrief.

- Did anything surprise you?
- To what degree were you previously aware of each other's experiences?
- What emerged from asking these more experientially-based questions?

# Effects of Life Inscaping

When Life Inscaping is high, our work relationships become more **authentic**.

- We relate to each other as whole human beings, developing appreciation for each other's gifts and challenges.
- Our experience of community deepens.
- Work becomes more meaningful as we connect it to our personal values and larger moral questions that transcend organizational boundaries.
- The organization's understanding of how it can meaningfully contribute to the world grows.

Functional



Authentic

**Life Inscaping** Sharing aspects of our broader life experiences that are not specifically associated with our work roles.



# Group exercise

There are many ways to share more of yourself at work beyond your work role or professional persona. Take a few minutes to reflect silently and jot down some notes on ONE of the following questions. (If there are more than 5 people split into 2 groups)

-Is there something that is going on in your outside life that is particularly influencing your work right now (positively or negatively)?

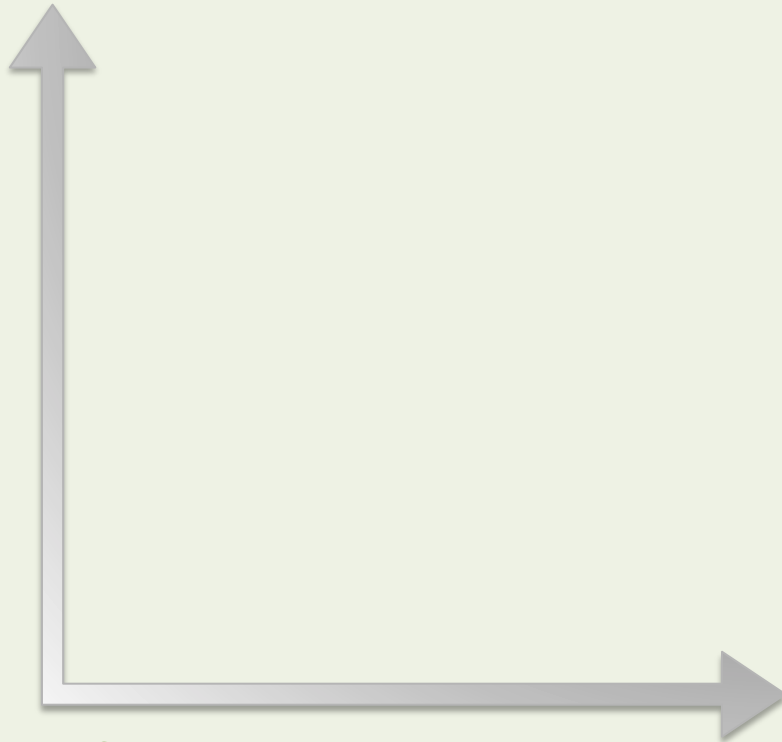
-Is there anything about yourself that you would like to share that you don't normally share at work? (think deep and broad, like values that you hold dear or something in life you feel grateful for)

Take 20 mins to go around the circle and hear from everyone.

# Map your organization

## **Work Inscaping**

Sharing how we are experiencing the work itself (tasks, projects, processes, structures, work relationships).



## **Life Inscaping**

Sharing aspects of our broader life experiences that are not specifically associated with our work roles.

## **Part One – 5 mins**

1) In silence, draw this diagram on your own piece of paper.

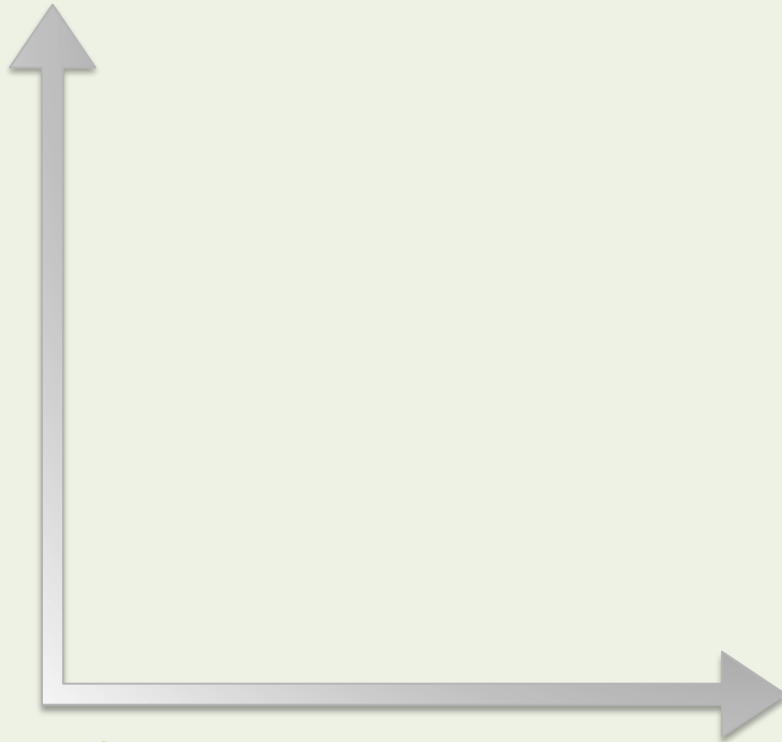
2) To what degree do you feel these 2 dimensions of Inscaping are a natural part of the everyday life in your organization? Where would you map your organization on the diagram?

3) With your pen, draw a dot that represents your answer.

# Map your organization

## **Work Inscaping**

Sharing how we are experiencing the work itself (tasks, projects, processes, structures, work relationships).



## **Life Inscaping**

Sharing aspects of our broader life experiences that are not specifically associated with our work roles.

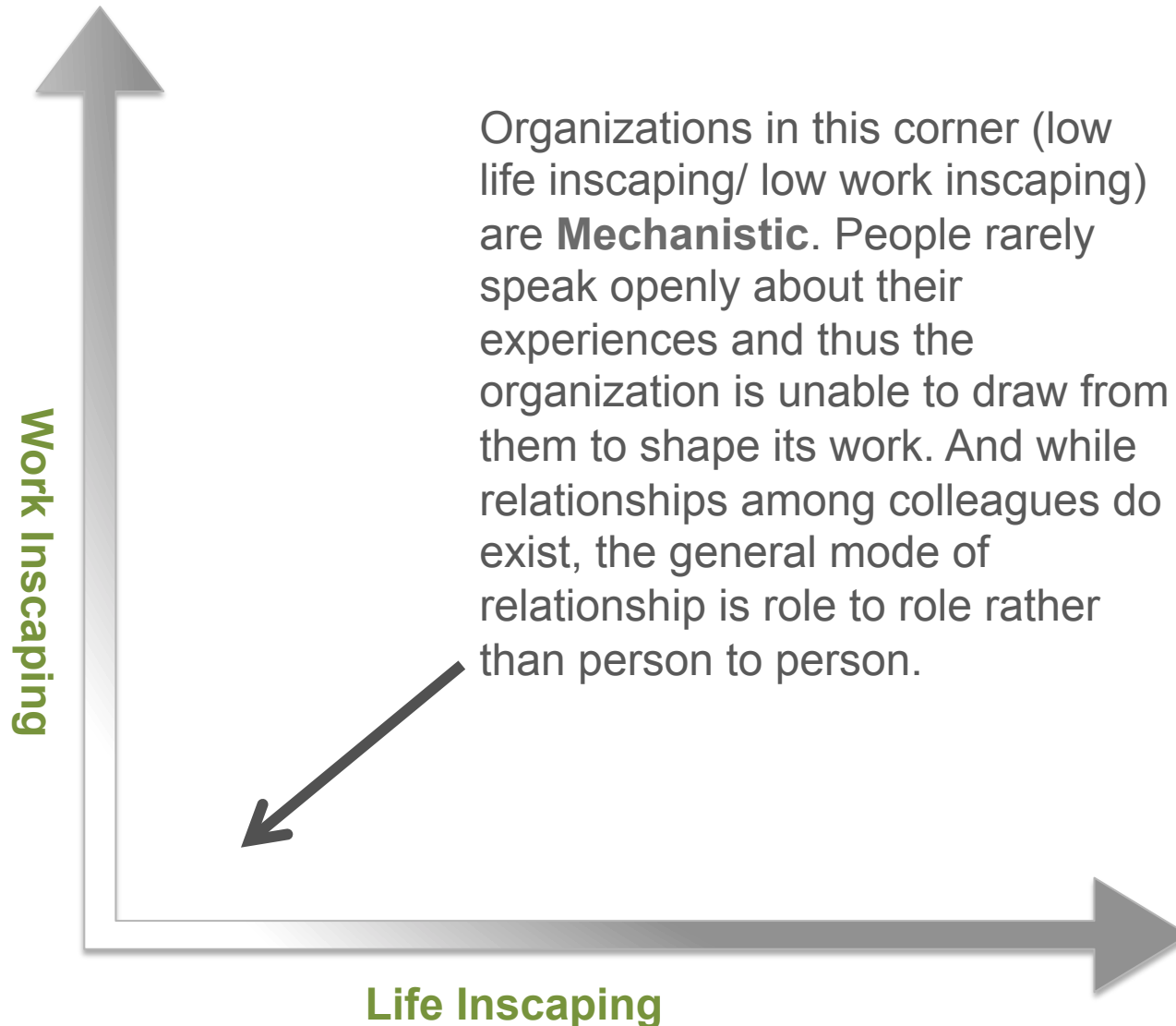
## **Part Two – 20 mins**

1) Now as a group, draw a large version of the same diagram on a piece of flip chart paper and post it on the wall.

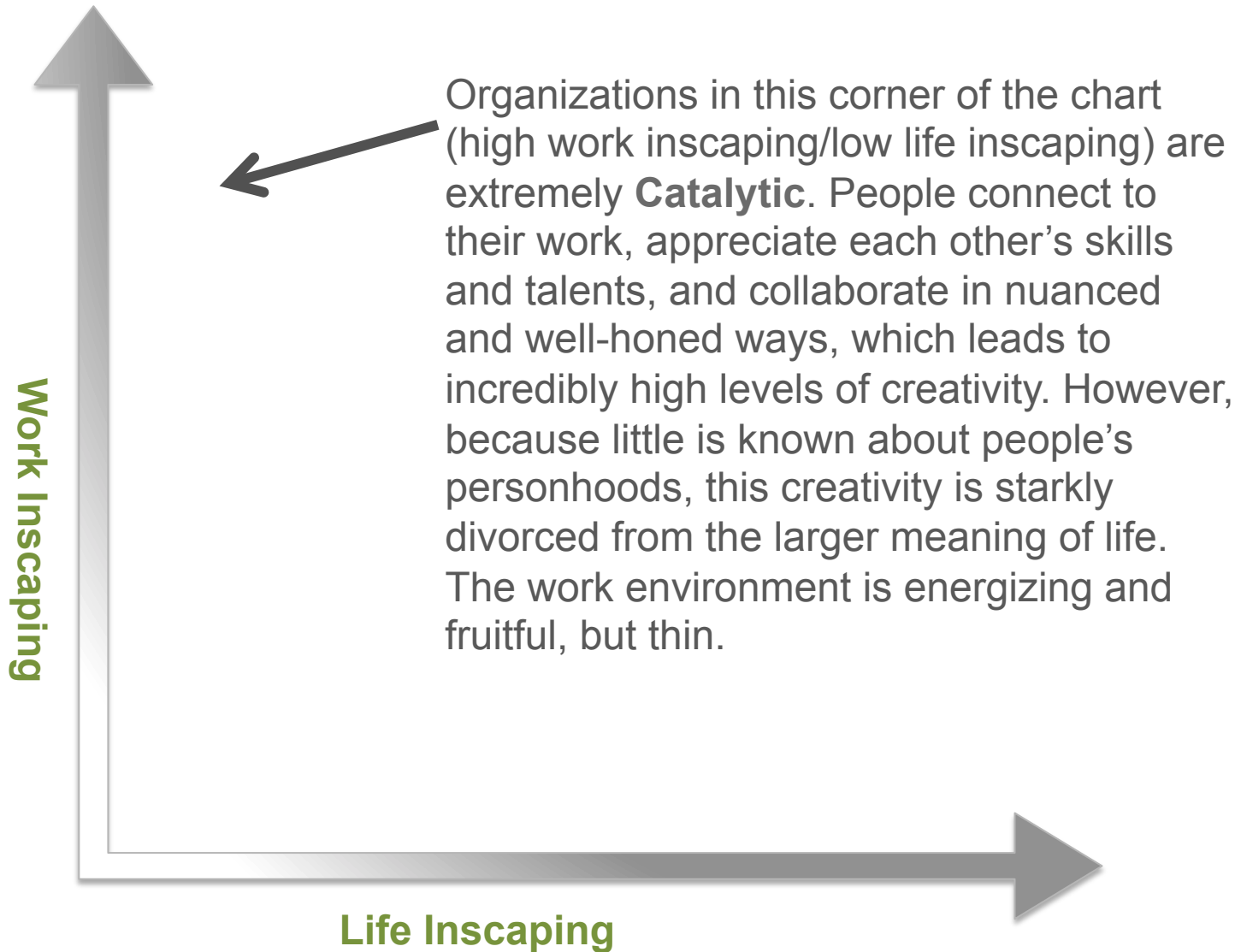
2) Have everyone replicate the mark they made on their individual sheets of paper on this larger version.

3) Read through the next several slides 20-24 together and discuss the results of your collective mapping.

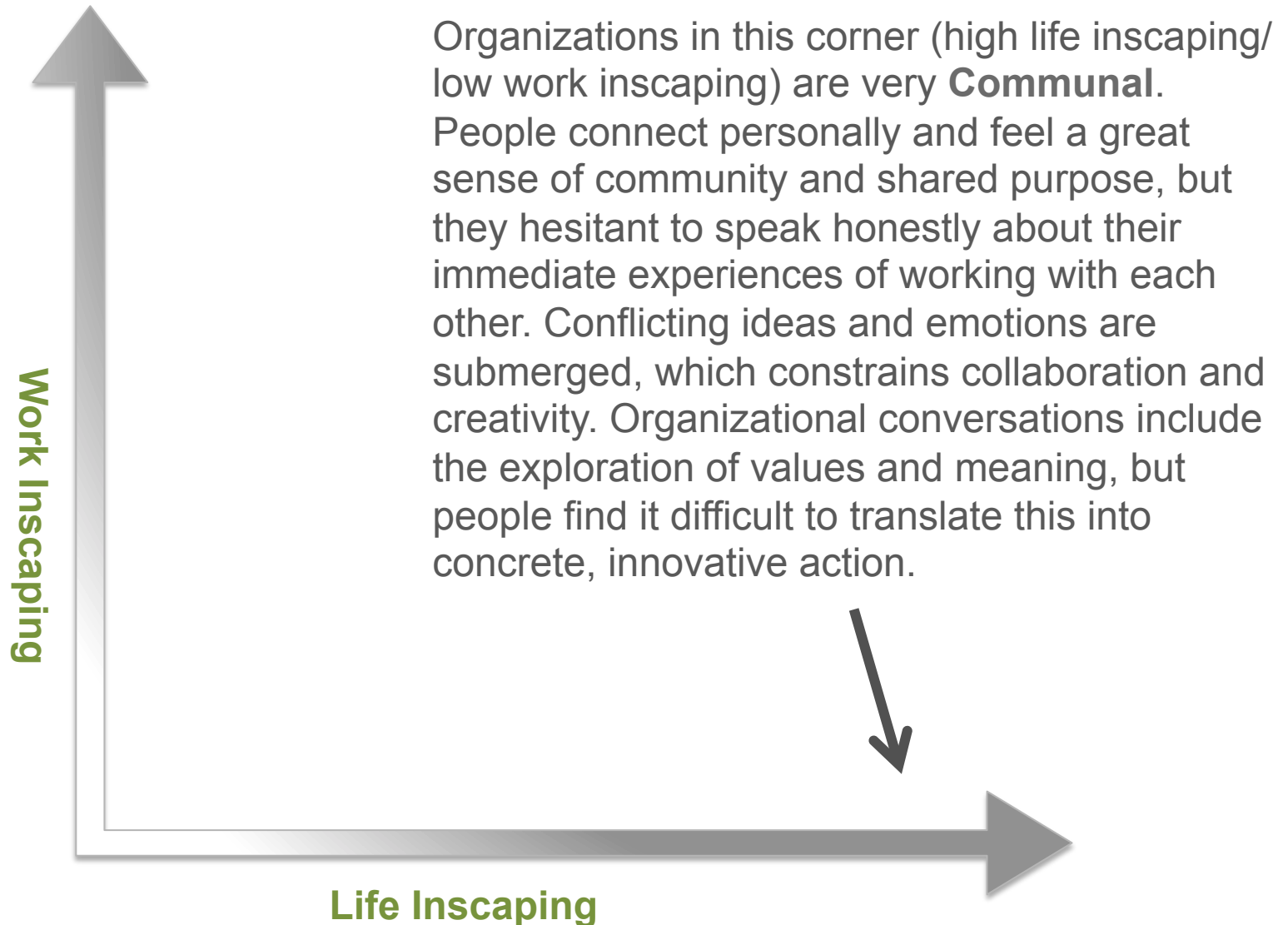
# Mechanistic Organizations



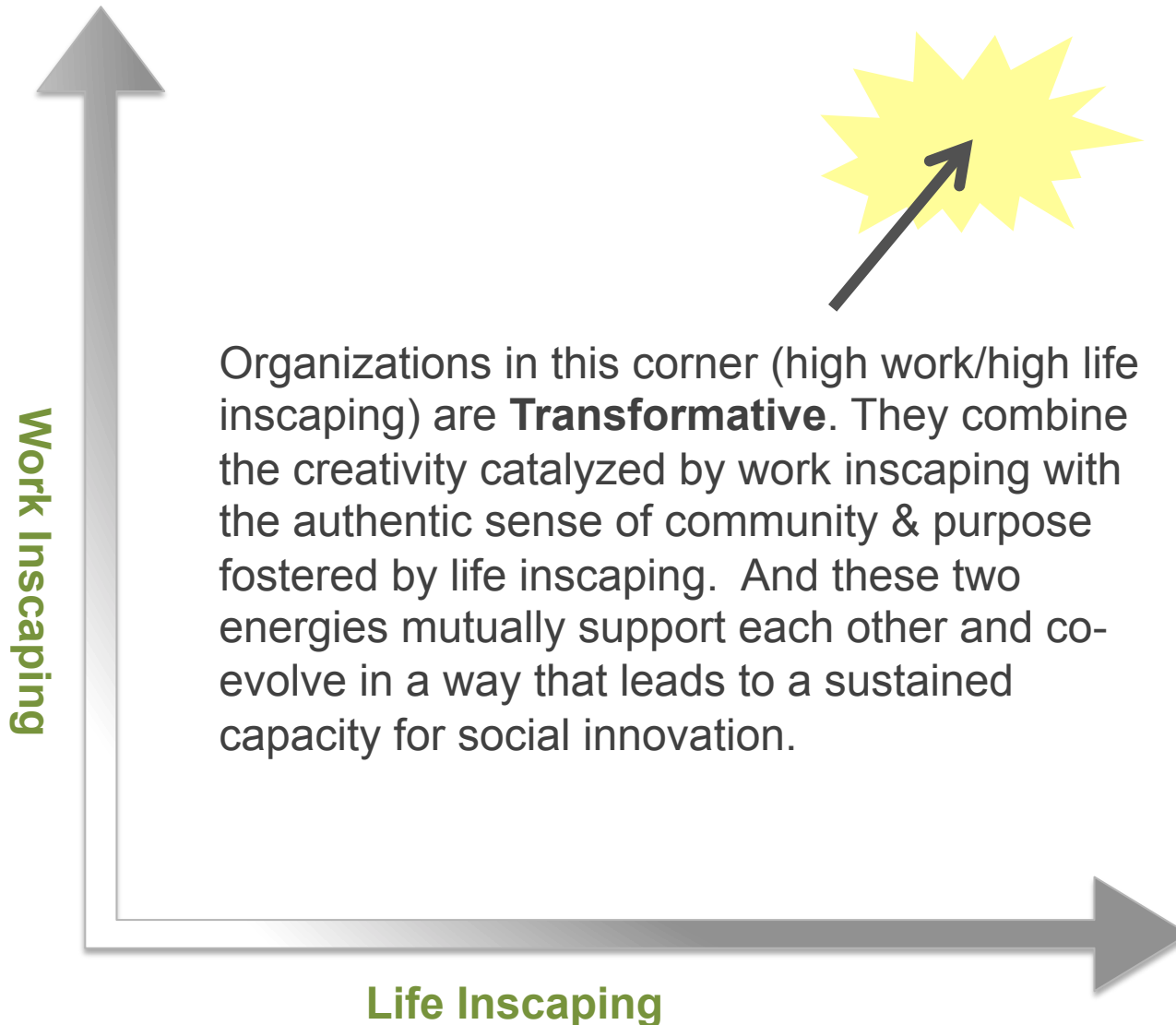
# Catalytic Organizations



# Communal Organizations

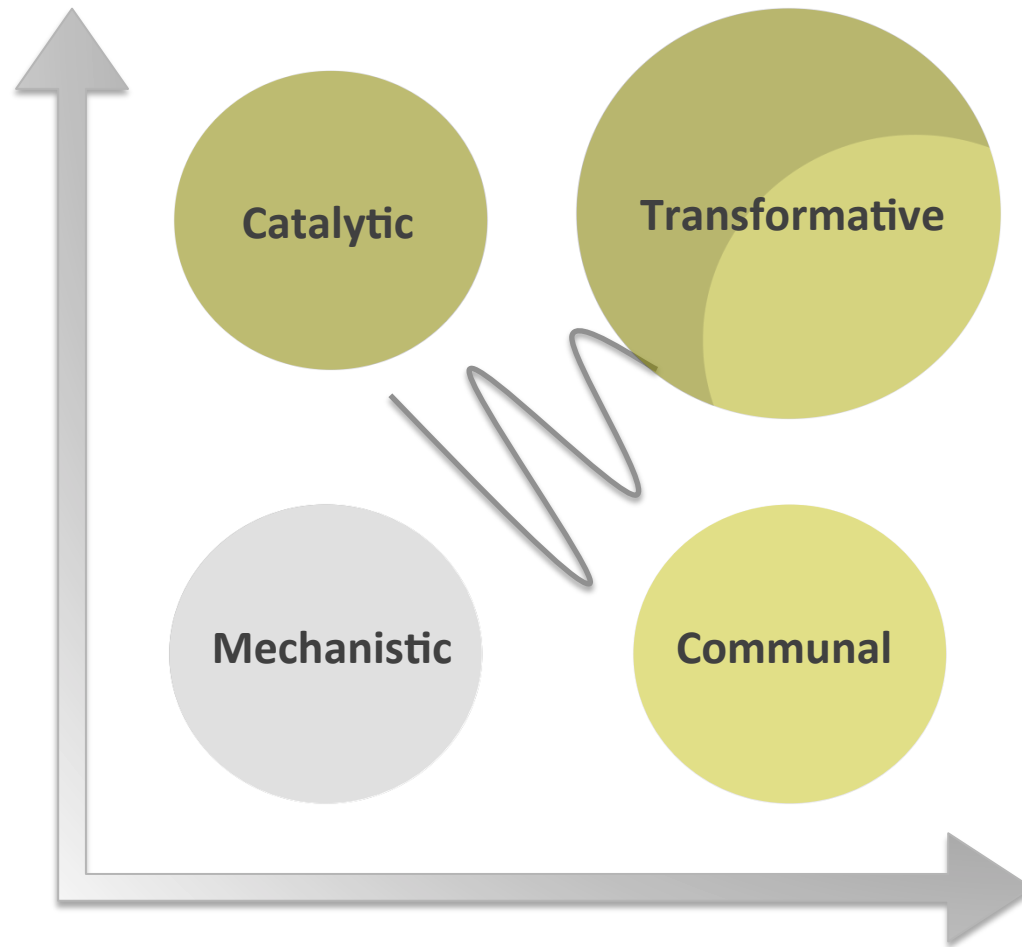


# Transformative Organizations



## Work Inscaping

Sharing how we are experiencing the work itself (tasks, projects, processes, structures, work relationships)



## Life Inscaping

Sharing aspects of our broader life experiences that are not specifically associated with our work roles.



# In Closing

Inscaping seems to breed itself. A little bravery here, some acceptance there, and people grown more and more comfortable with the idea that our inner lives are part of our outer work.

Working in this way is difficult for us at first. It takes practice, but it's worth it. The organizations that we know that are the best inscapers are also the most engaging and imaginative places we've come across. They are dynamic. They are fun. And they crack open and refashion some of our most stubborn institutional patterns with a simplicity and grace that has to be experienced to be believed.

# Exploring further...

Take a moment to consider if there are any actions you'd like to experiment with based on your insights during the session.

The other sessions in this series introduce you to more expressive change concepts and practices. They can be found at [www.organizationunbound.org](http://www.organizationunbound.org)

You might want to try the **“Inscaping in Practice”** session, which contains a handful of daily practices to try out.