Creating Possibilities for Collaboration: Examining How Beliefs and Ways of Being Shape Behavior

In Elena Aguilar's book, *Arise: The Art of Transformational Coaching* (2024), she writes, "People's underlying beliefs and ways of being drive all of our behaviors" (p. 35). Therefore, if we want to explore possibilities for increased and deeper collaboration with others, we must not only look at the behavior but also examine beliefs and ways of being.

This self-guided reflection can be used to examine a relationship in which you'd like to create or deepen opportunities for collaboration. Through a series of guided questions, you'll reflect on an interaction, explore the beliefs and ways of being that may have influenced your behavior, and consider how you might engage differently.

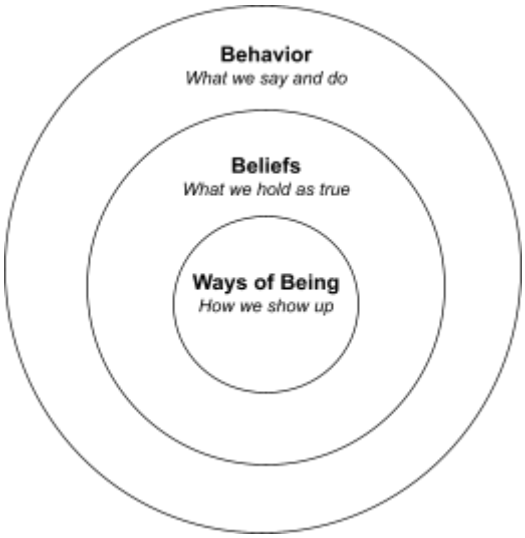
This resource is meant to illuminate what is often hidden. I invite you to take on an explorer stance, to remain open and curious to what you might discover. Resist the urge to judge, critique, or defend. By bringing your beliefs and ways of being into awareness, you can begin to examine how they influence your interactions, whether they support the collaboration you hope for, and what other possibilities might exist. This awareness can expand your capacity and choice to respond and engage differently in your relationships.

1. **Recall an interaction:** Think of a relationship in which you'd like to create more opportunities for collaboration or deepen the collaboration that already exists.
    - What would you like to be possible in this relationship? What might greater collaboration look like?
    - Write about a recent interaction that illustrates how you currently engage with this person. *What happened? What did you and the other person say or do? What circumstances or prior experiences might have influenced the interaction? What were you thinking and feeling during the interaction? How did you respond?*

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2. **Examine your 3Bs:** Use Aguilar's *Three Bs Framework* to reflect on how you engaged in the interaction you described. Begin with *your observed behaviors*. Then explore *your beliefs* and *your ways of being* that informed your behaviors. Use either of the diagrams below to help you.
    - *Behavior*: What did I say or do? What did I avoid saying or doing?
    - *Beliefs*: What was I assuming or holding to be true about myself, the other person, or the situation? What story was I telling myself?
    - *Ways of Being*: What was I feeling? What stance or disposition did I bring to this interaction? How was I showing up?

It is okay if you are uncertain about your Bs. The goal is to explore the relationships between the Bs, not to arrive at a definitive explanation.



Aguilar, E. (2026). *How to coach resistance: Turning pushback into possibility*. (p. 13) Jossey-Bass.

Behavior *What did I do or say?*	**Beliefs** *What do I hold as true?*	**Ways of Being** *How do I show up?*
E.g., I didn't share my concerns during the meeting	E.g., Sharing my concerns won't make a difference	E.g., hesitant & guarded

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3. **Explore possibilities for engaging differently:** Look back at your 3Bs map and consider how your *beliefs* and *ways of being* might influence how you engage with this person. What possibilities for collaboration might emerge if you approached the relationship differently?
    - *What did I notice about the relationship between my 3Bs? What is interesting or surprising?*
    - *Which of the 3Bs seem to support the collaboration I hope for? Which might be limiting collaboration possibilities?*

Our *beliefs*, *ways of being*, and *behavior* are not set. We have tremendous power to experiment with our Bs and even shift them if they are not serving our purpose or who we are. Reflect on the questions below to consider where shifts could be made that would support work towards creating opportunities for collaboration.

- *Ways of Being*: How else might I approach this relationship or situation? What stance might open up different possibilities for collaboration? Might align better with my core values?
- *Beliefs*: What experiences have shaped my beliefs? Can I recall other experiences that complicate, challenge, or add more nuance to my beliefs? What other interpretations or possibilities might be worth considering?
- *Behavior*: If I approached the situation differently, what might I say or do? What could I learn by trying something new?

What is one small shift in my *belief*, *ways of being*, or *behavior*s that I want to experiment with? What might that look like in practice?

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