

# Toxic Boards: Working below the surface

11<sup>th</sup> November 2019

## Safe harbor statement

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The development, release, timing, and pricing of any features or functionality described for Oracle's products may change and remains at the sole discretion of Oracle Corporation.

# Hello

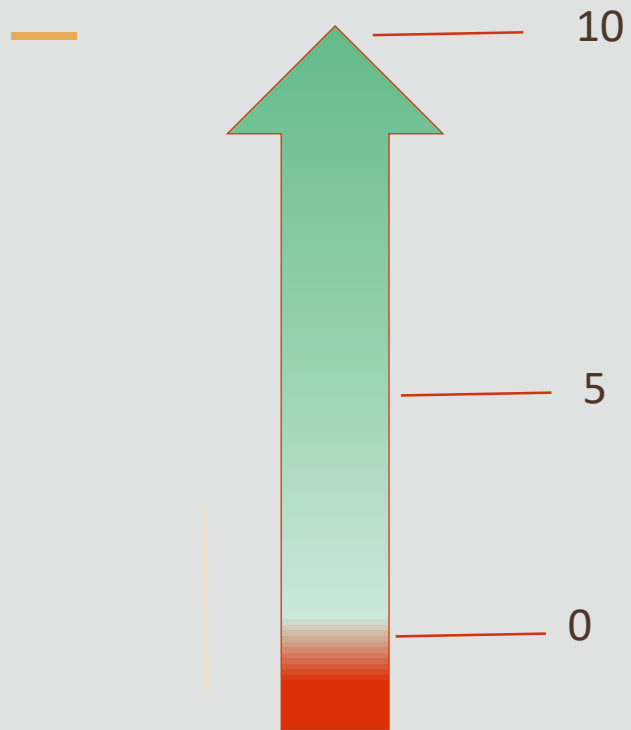
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## Sue Kay IDP-C

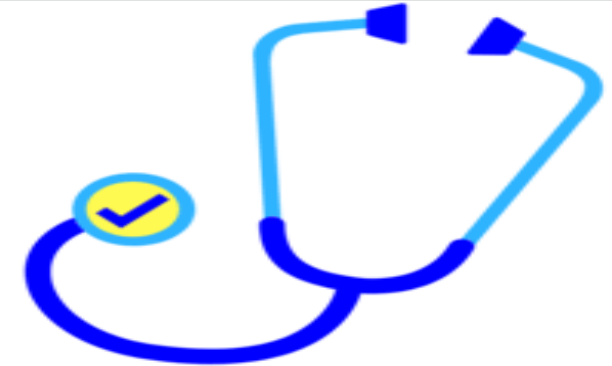
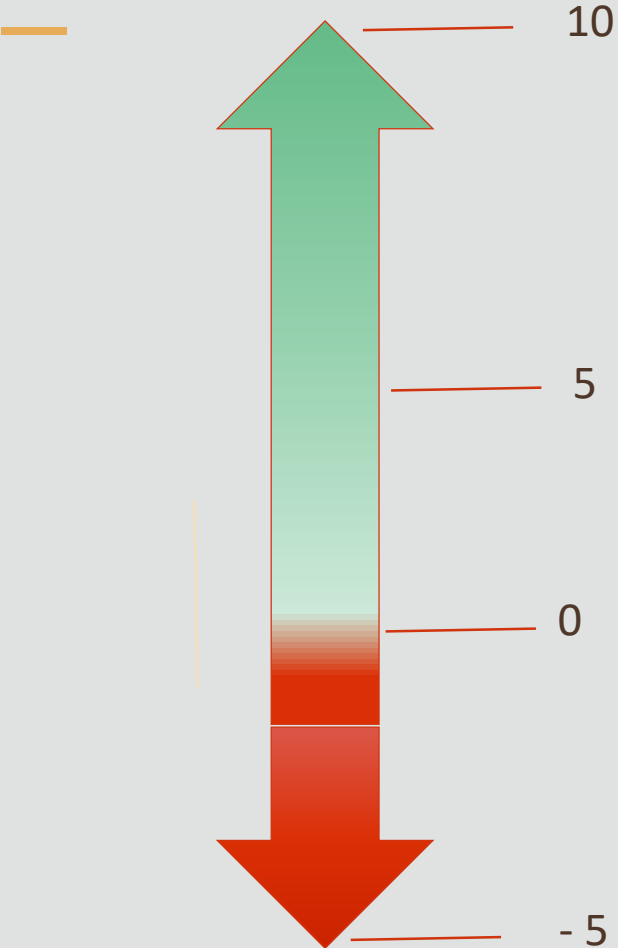
Director, Consultant & Executive Coach  
Professional Doctorate Student – Tavistock



# How healthy is your organisation?



# How healthy is your organisation?





## TOXICITY as a metaphor in Research



## Toxicity is on the increase

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- 2018 Oxford Dictionary word of the year
- 45% increase in online searches for “Toxic”  
- after “gaslighting” and “teclash”



## Toxic Boards: some of the reported signs ....



1. Dysfunctional behavioural patterns ....
2. Lack of trust between ....Chair and Board members, Board members, Board members and Executive team, Chair and CEO ....
3. Poor Board relationships with Executives and/or other key stakeholders
4. Poor communication, no single voice and lack of transparency around decision making
5. Lack of openness, debate, challenge and or support, unhealthy chair practices
6. Little or no exploration of alternative mental models of thinking
7. One dimensional modes of interacting (strategic versus intimate)



# Contextual factors and why they may be on the increase



Bigger intense headwinds

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Greater expectations & increased scrutiny

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Increased pressure and anxiety in the boardroom

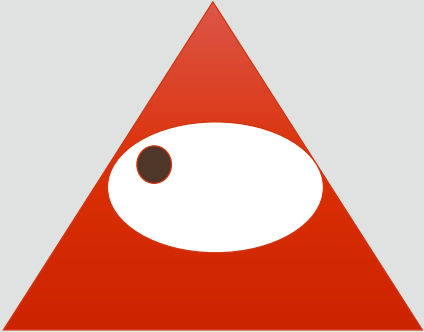
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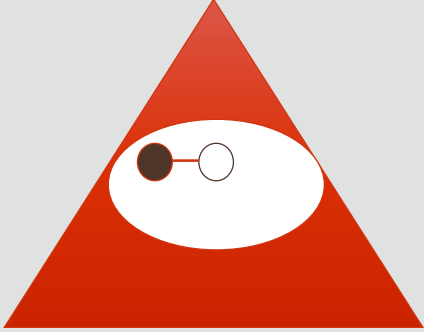
# Coping mechanisms: Subconscious social defence mechanisms



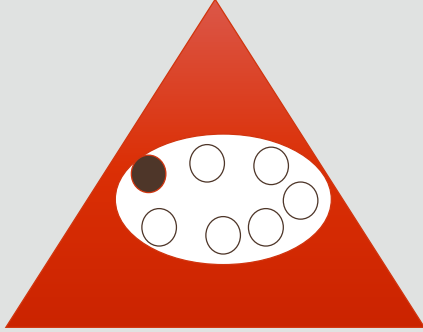
# Opportunities: Multiple lenses of board dynamics



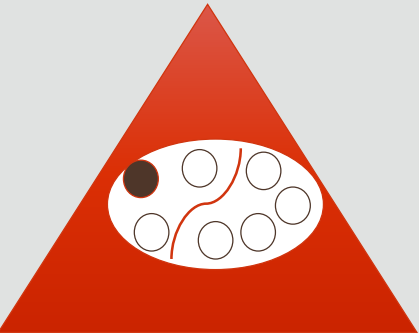
Intrapersonal



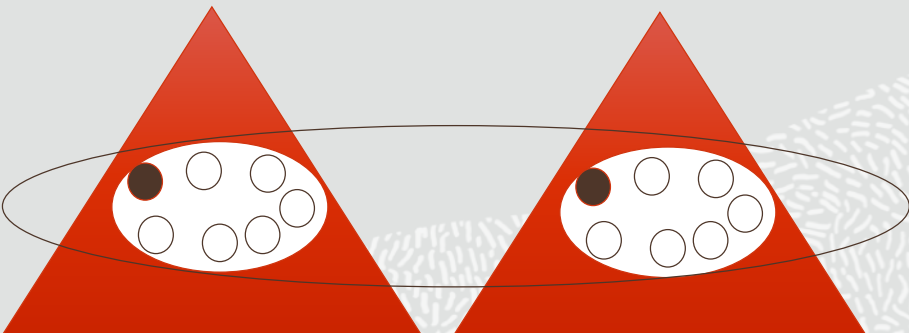
Inter personal



Group Level  
(Group as a Whole)



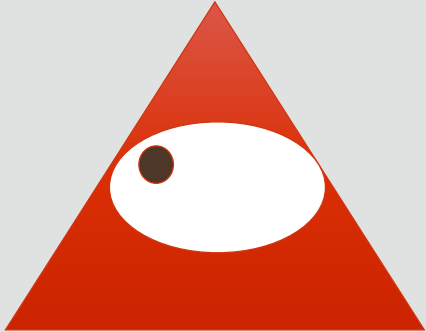
Inter Group Level



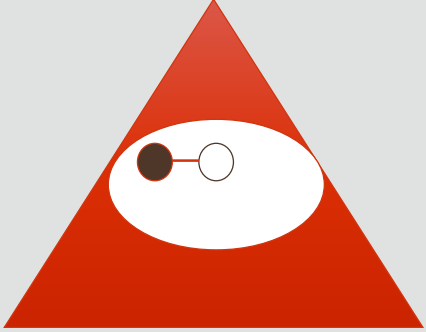
Inter Organisational Level



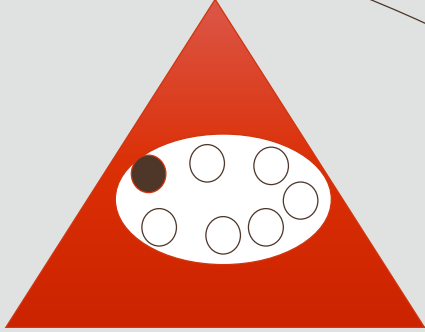
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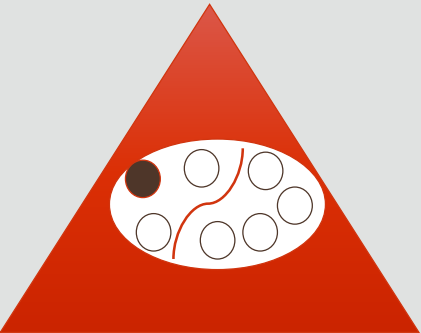
Intrapersonal



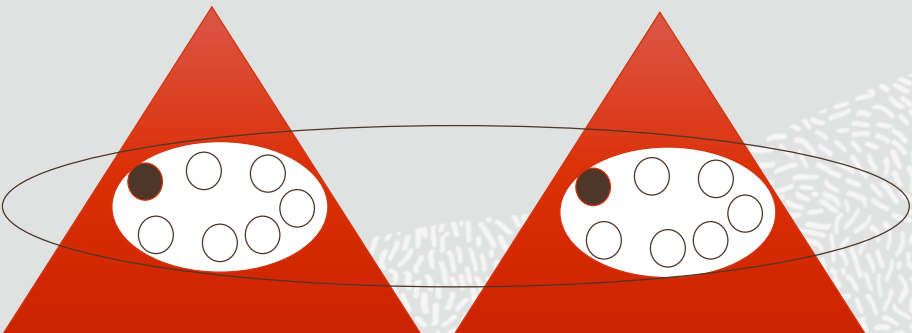
Inter personal



Group Level  
(Group as a Whole)



Inter Group Level



Inter Organisational Level





# Opportunities for HR

Succession,  
Induction and  
On-boarding

Data Analytics

Ethics and  
Cultural  
oversight in  
digital world

Board  
Evaluation  
process

Relationships  
with Board  
members

Crisis times

Dynamics  
between Board  
and Exec

Self care  
(who contains  
HR)



## One final thought ....

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