THE THREAD MOVEMENT

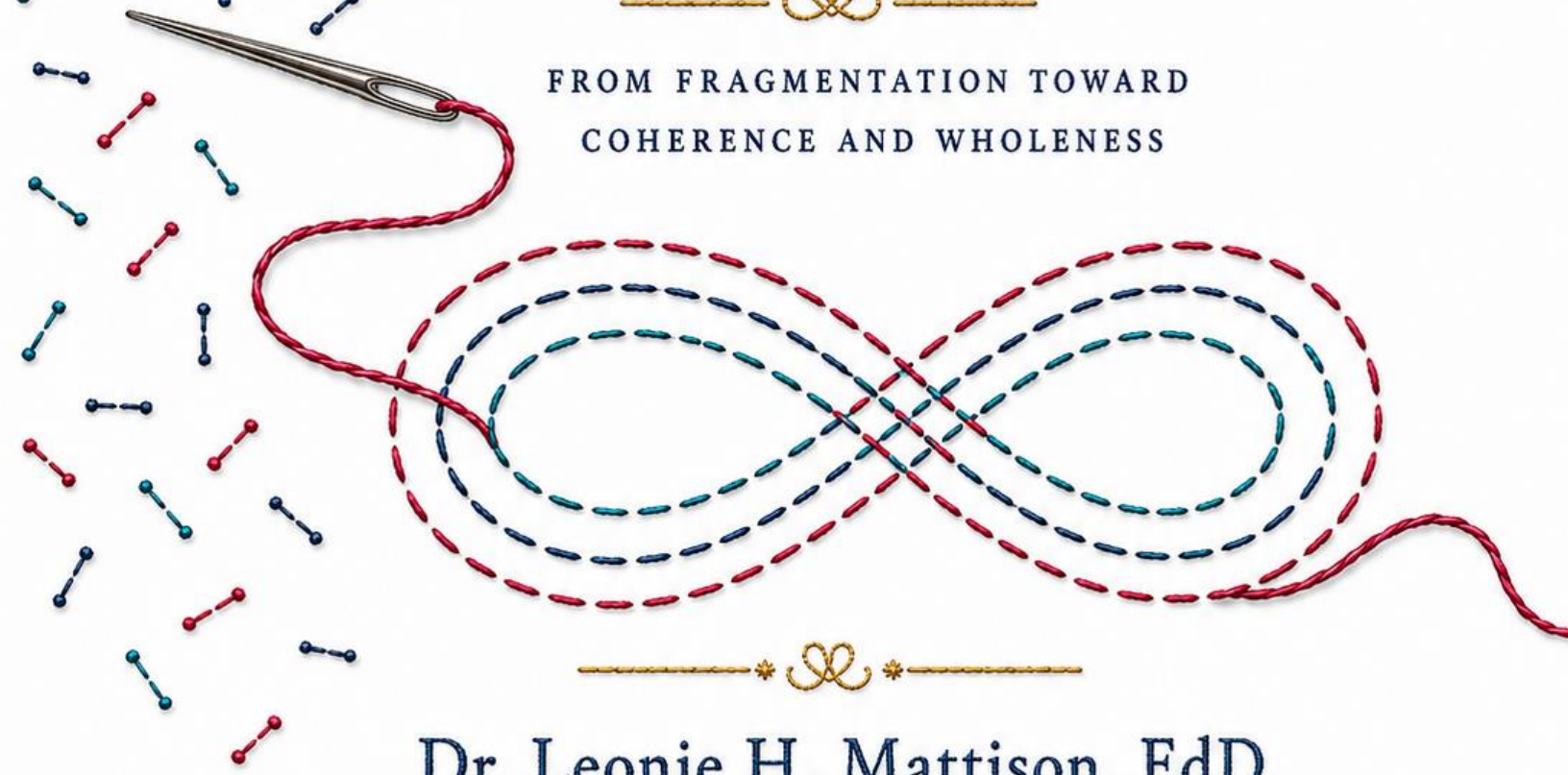
JOURNAL

ISSUE ONE | 2026 | RESEARCH & PRACTICE ARTICLE

The T.H.R.E.A.D. System

A Practice-Based Framework for Intentional Transformation

FROM FRAGMENTATION TOWARD COHERENCE AND WHOLENESS



Dr. Leonie H. Mattison, EdD.

www.leoniemattison.com

THE THREAD MOVEMENT JOURNAL

Issue One | 2026 | Research Journal

The T.H.R.E.A.D. System™: a diagnostic and transformation framework that helps people and organizations examine pressure, surface recurring patterns, and redesign the conditions that shape performance, culture, talent, and impact.

Dr. Leonie H. Mattison, MBA

County of Santa Barbara Behavioral Wellness Commissioner

Katherine Harvey Fellow, Leading From Within

Board of Trustees, Black Girl Clubhouse

Executive Leadership Fundraising Committee, American Cancer Society

Founder, The Thread Movement

threadmovement@gmail.com

Publication and Use Notice

This journal is published by The Thread Movement™ as part of the intellectual, scholarly, and practice-based body of work supporting The T.H.R.E.A.D. System™.

This copy is provided for non-commercial research, education, mentorship, leadership development, organizational learning, and instructional use. Permitted uses include reading, citation, classroom or cohort discussion, limited sharing with colleagues, institutional review, internal learning, scholarly discussion, and professional consultation related to the author's work.

All permitted uses must preserve the author's name, title of the work, citation information, copyright notice, trademark notices, and this publication and use notice.

Other uses are prohibited without prior written authorization from The Thread Movement™, including reproduction, redistribution, modification, resale, licensing, posting to third-party websites, incorporation into paid programs, commercial training, or use of The T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ framework, language, diagrams, tools, practices, or derivative materials for commercial purposes.

Educators, institutions, consultants, practitioners, publishers, and organizations seeking permission to cite, reproduce, adapt, teach, license, or integrate any portion of this work into curriculum, consulting, certification, research, organizational development, coaching, leadership development, or training programs should contact:

The Thread Movement™ - www.TheThreadMovement.com; Leonie H. Mattison, www.leoniemattison.com

Abstract

Context: Many organizations are trying to meet the demands of this moment with systems, habits, governance practices, and operating assumptions built for another era. Designed for slower change, clearer authority, more predictable conditions, and simpler coordination, these inherited structures are now being stretched by sustained pressure, rapid disruption, institutional fatigue, relational strain, and fragmented execution. As a result, transformation cannot be reduced to activity, communication, or implementation plans alone. It requires a disciplined diagnosis of the system conditions that shape performance and behavior. Transformation efforts often stall when leaders are required to address visible symptoms before the organization has created the space, evidence, trust, and shared language needed to examine the underlying decision logics, relational dynamics, behavioral adaptations, cultural norms, and structural constraints that shape how the system responds under pressure.

Framework: This article presents the T.H.R.E.A.D. System™, a practice-grounded and theoretically integrated framework for organizational and talent development, leadership alignment, and systems transformation. It is structured around six applied practices: *Think Deeply, Harvest Wisdom, Release Patterns, Enlist Allies, Adopt Change, and Design Wholeness.* The framework guides individuals and systems from symptom recognition to pattern diagnosis, aligned behavioral change, and the redesign of operating conditions that strengthen coherence, execution, and adaptive capacity.

Methodology: The framework is grounded in autoethnographic practitioner inquiry (Ellis et al., 2011; Schön, 1984), drawing on more than two decades of executive leadership practice across higher education, public systems, nonprofit, workforce development, and community transformation. It is also informed by cultural epistemology, particularly the tradition of quilting as a method of knowledge transmission among women of the African diaspora and the Caribbean, which shapes the framework's core metaphor of thread, pattern, and wholeness. To guard against interpretive self-confirmation, the inquiry adopts patchwork ethnography as a structured reflexive method that renders visible the seams between practitioner life and institutional observation and subjects them to analysis rather than treating them as neutral background (Günel, Varma, & Watanabe, 2020).

Practice Applications: T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ has been applied across individual, team, leadership, organizational, community, and public systems contexts. This includes mentoring, executive coaching, leadership development, organizational consulting, and public systems transformation.

Scope and Boundaries: The framework integrates organizational development, systems thinking, adaptive leadership, implementation science, autoethnographic inquiry, and selected depth psychological theories as nonclinical interpretive resources. It is not intended for use in psychotherapy, clinical supervision, psychological treatment, trauma therapy, diagnosis, or psychometric assessment.

Contribution: T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ provides an integrative practice architecture that connects diagnostic reflection, institutional learning, pattern interruption, relational infrastructure, adaptive behavior, and systems design. It contributes to the organizational development body of knowledge through a culturally grounded, autoethnographically derived, and theoretically integrated methodology that centers the pressure response pattern in transformation practice.

Keywords: *organizational development; leadership development; intentional transformation; pattern diagnosis; systems change; adaptive leadership; psychological safety; implementation science; autoethnography; cultural epistemology; quilting epistemology; women of the African diaspora; pressure response patterns; systems coherence; executive coaching; talent development; practice based theory; systems thinking; quilt making; adaptive capacity; organizational learning; systems redesign; coherent transformation.*

CENTRAL THESIS

The contribution of T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ lies in the disciplined sequencing of established organizational and developmental insights into a practical, usable architecture. This framework begins at the point where most change efforts break down: the moment pressure enters a person, team, organization, or community and triggers familiar response patterns.

Positionality, Method, and Scope

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ is rooted in more than theoretical synthesis. It is grounded in the author's executive career spanning higher education leadership, public systems service, community transformation, and organizational development practice across more than two decades and multiple institutional contexts. This positionality is not incidental to the framework's claims. It is central to them.

Autoethnography provides the epistemological and methodological foundation for this work. Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) describe autoethnography as a self-narrative that situates the self within a social context, linking the personal to cultural, social, and political dimensions. It treats lived experience as both evidence and a site of inquiry for grounded theoretical insight. Adams et al. (2015) argue that culturally informed autoethnographic inquiry produces knowledge that is both personally meaningful and analytically rigorous when examined through appropriate theoretical lenses. Wall (2008) further establishes autoethnography as a legitimate qualitative methodology by challenging the illusion of neutrality in detached observation and revealing the relational, historical, and contextual forces through which knowledge is produced.

The author's personal and senior executive leadership experience, including navigating traumatic experiences, institutional crises, leading culture transformation in under-resourced environments, building cross-sector coalitions, facilitating organizational redesign under public scrutiny, and serving as president and CEO of a depth psychology institution, city and county government, nonprofit and profit leadership, higher education, a behavioral health and wellness commissioner in a large county public health system, forms the primary field from which T.H.R.E.A.D. System™, observations, pattern hypotheses, and practice claims emerge. Consistent with Schön's (1984) concept of the reflective practitioner, practice itself is treated as a form of knowing. It is a disciplined engagement with real systems under real pressure that produces insight not always accessible through detached empirical observation.

The insider practitioner position carries both strengths and limitations. It enables pattern recognition that external observation rarely achieves, especially in complex, relational, and politically charged environments where organizational transformation takes place. It also introduces the risk of interpretive self-confirmation. This is addressed through the framework's emphasis on evidence testing, stakeholder mapping, observable behavior as the primary validation criterion, and disciplined facilitation standards.

The author does not claim that executive practice replaces randomized study. Instead, she argues that executive practice, when examined with scholarly rigor across diverse organizational contexts and theoretical traditions, constitutes a legitimate and distinctive form of evidence within reflective practitioner research and culturally situated inquiry.

Quilting as Epistemology: A Cultural Framework

The language of thread, quilt, pattern, and weaving in this framework is not decorative. It is epistemological. To establish the scholarly depth of T.H.R.E.A.D. System™, the cultural roots of its central metaphor must be clearly documented and defended as a valid source of knowledge.

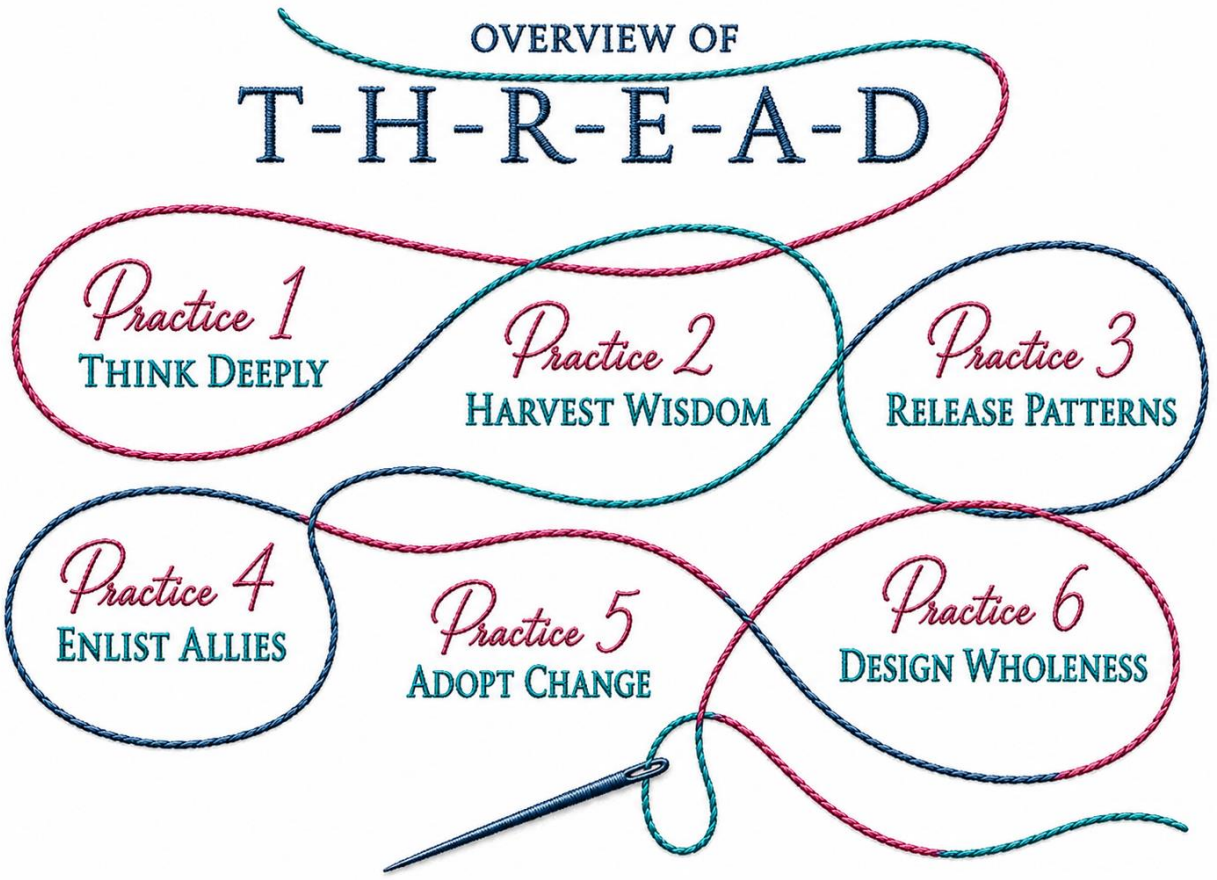
In African American and Caribbean traditions, quilting is understood as material culture, aesthetic practice, community memory, and intergenerational knowledge making. While some historical claims, including the idea that quilts functioned as coded communication in the Underground Railroad, remain debated, this work

does not treat them as established facts. Instead, it draws on well-supported scholarship that recognizes textile traditions as carriers of memory, identity, artistry, survival, kinship, and cultural meaning across generations (Fry, 2002; Benberry, 1992; Mazloomi, 1998; Wahlman, 2001).

The author's grandmother, a practitioner of this tradition in Jamaica, taught through quilting a principle that shapes T.H.R.E.A.D. System™. Every pattern reveals its maker's history, every thread carries tension, and no piece of fabric is too broken to become part of something whole. This epistemological claim explores how knowledge, identity, and transformation are formed.

Within the framework, the quilt metaphor carries precise meaning. A quilt is not built from perfect pieces. It is formed from what exists: fragments, history, inheritance, necessity, creativity, and intention. The thread is what binds these parts into a coherent pattern. In organizational life, the Thread names the underlying pattern that holds together what appears fragmented and reveals what the system has been producing and what it must learn to reshape.

The six practices mirror the work of quilting. *Think Deeply* examines available pieces. *Harvest Wisdom* recovers prior knowledge. *Release Patterns* removes what no longer serves. *Enlist Allies* gathers the needed hands. *Adopt Change* learns new stitching methods. *Design Wholeness* shapes the completed form. The metaphor also reinforces that transformation is collective. A quilt is made through shared effort, corrected through practice, and passed forward through relationship over time.



Organizational and talent development scholarship increasingly recognizes the value of non-Western, Indigenous, and community-based epistemologies in expanding how transformation, equity, and belonging are understood (Cajete, 1999; Kovach, 2021; Wilson, 2008). T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ engages this intellectual tradition by honoring forms of knowledge transmission that historically have been excluded from dominant definitions of theory. It discusses that this exclusion limited the field and that recovering these epistemologies strengthens organizational development's ability to understand and support transformation across diverse systems.

Table 1. Quilt-making practice logic and the six T.H.R.E.A.D. practices

Quilt-making discipline	Organizational/talent development parallel	T.H.R.E.A.D. System™
Study the fabric and the condition of the pieces.	Slow down before action; examine pressure, role, history, emotion, meaning, and the system signal.	**Think Deeply**
Recover the story, prior use, texture, and constraints of the material.	Treat lived experience, data, stakeholder knowledge, and institutional memory as design intelligence.	**Harvest Wisdom**
Cut away what cannot carry the design or must be reshaped.	Identify protective behaviors, outdated assumptions, harmful routines, and structural contradictions that have outlived their purpose.	**Release Patterns**
Piece the fragments with support, alignment, and shared pattern.	Mobilize sponsors, proximate knowledge, cross-functional partners, governance, accountability, and trust.	**Enlist Allies**
Stitch repeatedly so the pattern becomes durable.	Translate insight into practiced behavior, routines, manager actions, decision rights, and learning transfer.	**Adopt Change**
Layer, quilt, and bind the whole so it is ready to use.	Align purpose, people, culture, authority, resources, metrics, reinforcement, and sustainment.	**Design Wholeness**

PRACTICE ANALOGY

A quilt does not become whole because its pieces are beautiful. It becomes whole because the maker studies the fragments, chooses a pattern, makes precise cuts, joins each piece with care, reinforces the layers for strength, and binds the design so it can be used. Organizational transformation demands the same level of discipline and attention.

As complexity, instability, and interdependence continue to intensify across organizational, civic, and social life, there is an increasing need to strengthen how people and systems navigate pressure without reinforcing the conditions that keep them fragmented. The work of intentional transformation now requires leaders to closely examine the human responses, organizational patterns, and operating conditions that shape whether change progresses, stalls, or collapses into repeated cycles. A clear understanding of the patterned drivers of human behavior, organizational response, and system

adaptation has become more urgent as technological change, economic uncertainty, demographic shifts, and labor market transformation continue to reshape work and organizational life (World Economic Forum, 2025).

The study and practice of organizational development, systems thinking, adaptive leadership, organizational learning, implementation science, psychological safety, autoethnographic inquiry, and depth psychology offer important insight into how people and systems behave when existing forms can no longer meet emerging demands. Organizational development examines planned change, culture, leadership behavior, group processes, and the relationships between people and systems (Burke, 2017; Cummings & Worley, 2014). Systems thinking explains how recurring outcomes arise from feedback loops, delays, mental models, incentives, information flows, and underlying structures rather than from isolated events (Meadows, 2008; Senge, 2006).

Organizational learning distinguishes between correcting visible errors and examining the governing assumptions that allow those errors to recur (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Sensemaking research examines how people construct meaning amid ambiguity and disruption (Weick, 1995). Research on threat rigidity suggests that pressure can narrow information processing, centralize control, and reduce adaptive flexibility (Staw et al., 1981). Adaptive leadership distinguishes technical problems from adaptive challenges that require learning, loss, changed behavior, and new ways of operating (Heifetz, 1998). Implementation science shows that adoption and sustainment depend on readiness, fit, context, recipient experience, reinforcement, and the conditions surrounding practice rather than communication alone (Damschroder et al., 2022). Depth psychology focuses on unconscious patterning, symbolic meaning, and the inherited narratives that shape perception and behavior beneath conscious awareness.

This work draws from organizational development, systems thinking, depth psychology, and culturally grounded epistemologies of practice to understand how individuals and systems respond to pressure, meaning making, and transformation. It engages ideas of symbolic meaning and inherited narratives that shape perception and action (Jung, 1969; Hillman, 1977). It also draws on quilting and stitching traditions as disciplined forms of knowledge practice that illuminate repair, pattern recognition, layering, memory, and the creation of wholeness from fragmented experience (hooks, 1990; Parker, 2019).

Together, these fields examine how people and systems interpret pressure, maintain stability, reproduce behavior, learn from experience, distribute authority, make meaning, sustain change, and redesign the conditions that shape action. They span concepts that vary in how they can be observed, operationalized, and evaluated. These include culture, group dynamics, sensemaking, psychological safety, power structures, incentives, decision rights, role clarity, adaptive capacity, threat response, implementation processes, learning transfer, unconscious patterning, symbolic meaning, relational repair, trust building, and the relationship between human behavior and system design.

Across this range, two central themes guide a practice-oriented approach to redesigning repeated responses under pressure. First, pressure reveals existing response patterns within individuals, teams, organizations, and communities, and these patterns carry observable costs. These responses are shaped by prior experience, social conditioning, authority structures, incentives, historical context, identity, unconscious influences, cultural memory, and current operating conditions. Second, practice enables redesign by translating insight into changed

behavior, improved relationships, clarified authority, aligned routines, reinforced learning, and operating conditions that support new responses when pressure returns.

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ addresses this central problem: under pressure, people and systems often repeat patterned responses shaped before the current challenge emerged. These responses may appear as individual behavior, leadership instinct, team dynamics, organizational routines, or cultural norms.

Governance practices, institutional operating conditions, and organizational realities are rarely random. They are shaped through prior experience, social threat perception, authority relationships, incentives, identity, memory, mental models, relational history, and system design.

The practical consequence is significant. When pressure increases, individuals and organizations often try to solve new conditions using familiar responses. A leader may centralize control when collaboration is required. A team may protect silence when learning is required. An organization may launch another initiative while leaving underlying operating conditions unchanged. A community may reproduce inherited narratives while trying to create a different future. In each case, the visible problem receives attention while the repeated response pattern continues to shape perception, decision-making, behavior, and outcomes.

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ translates these concerns into a practice architecture applicable to personal, leadership, organizational, educational, community, and institutional settings. It focuses on the patterned response beneath pressure and provides a structured way to examine, interrupt, and redesign that response. The system is organized around six practices: Think Deeply, Harvest Wisdom, Release Patterns, Enlist Allies, Adopt Change, and Design Wholeness. These practices move the work from reaction to recognition, from recognition to redesign, and from redesign to sustained transformation.

How T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ Works

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ is a systems thinking model for diagnosing recurring patterns, developing people, and redesigning the conditions that shape coherent growth, leadership, and organizational performance. It begins where disruption, fragmentation, inherited response, institutional strain, or unintegrated transition reveals dynamics that a person, team, leader, or organization can no longer ignore.

The system converts pressure into diagnostic intelligence. It first identifies what is happening beneath the visible challenge, then assesses the real cost of continuing the familiar response, and holds space for what follows.

The system must be released and must be designed to support a more coherent future. In developmental terms, these operating actions correspond to four movements within the framework: *Inward, Backward, Outward, and Forward.*

Operating logic.

Locate Inward. Name what is happening beneath the first explanation. *Think Deeply* slows the system down enough to reveal the pattern that shapes behavior, decisions, and outcomes.

Assess Backward. Examine what experience has taught and what repetition is costing. *Harvest Wisdom* surfaces knowledge. *Release Patterns* interrupt scripts, defenses, rituals, and assumptions that limit development and change.

Decide Outward. Identify who must be enlisted to sustain the new response. *Enlist Allies* builds

sponsorship, relational infrastructure, shared accountability, and developmental support.

Act Forward. Translate insight into practiced change and redesigned conditions. *Adopt Change* shifts mindsets, roles, behaviors, and practices. *Design Wholeness* reconfigures structures and operating conditions that sustain coherence and impact.

Applied across self-becoming, talent, teams, leadership, organizations, and systems, the model strengthens pattern clarity, adaptive capacity, and integrated impact. Its aim is practical. It enables thriving people, resilient systems, equitable communities, and sustainable futures by creating conditions that enable diverse responses.

The system can be applied wherever people and systems experience pressure and must choose between repeating inherited responses or designing a more coherent future. This includes executive leadership, organizational transformation, education, workforce development, community change, women's leadership, youth-future readiness, and institutional redesign. Its value lies in making repeat responses visible, examinable, and re-designable.

Before exploring the practices individually, this section provides a brief context for the underlying psychology of the work. It explains how pressure can activate conscious interpretation and unconscious protective responses, how repeated responses become patterned through social, structural, and psychological reinforcement, and how those patterns affect behavior, decision making, and system outcomes.

Judgment, learning, collaboration, redesign, implementation, and intentional transformation form the foundation of the framework. The guiding question becomes what response keeps repeating under pressure, what is it costing, and what must be redesigned so a different future can emerge.

Theoretical Foundations of T.H.R.E.A.D. System™

The Pressure Pattern Response: Conscious Interpretation and Unconscious Protection

According to Corlett and Pearson's work on the organizational psyche, organizations can be understood through both their visible structures, strategies, policies, and behaviors and the less visible patterns of meaning, identity, myth, image, and unconscious assumptions that shape how people interpret and respond to organizational life (Corlett & Pearson, 2003). This principle aligns with ideas found in depth psychology and organizational development, where what appears on the surface often reflects deeper patterns operating beneath immediate awareness. Jung's work on the unconscious, complexes, archetypes, and symbolic meaning provides a foundation for this view, suggesting that human beings often respond through emotionally charged patterns and inherited images before they can fully explain those responses rationally (Jung, 1969). Corlett and Pearson extend this interpretive lens into organizational settings by examining how archetypal and unconscious patterns shape organizational dynamics, culture, change, and meaning making within institutions.

This depth psychology perspective is important for transformation practice because pressure doesn't just prompt rational problem-solving. It can also trigger familiar narratives around authority, safety, legitimacy, competence, belonging, control, loyalty, failure, and survival. When a work system is disrupted, people may believe they are simply responding to a new policy, strategy, technology, conflict, or accountability demand, yet beneath the surface, they may be reacting to deeper psychological and organizational patterns that shape behavior in ways they do not immediately recognize.

At the collective level, these patterns operate as more than individual responses. The Tavistock tradition of

systems psychodynamics shows that organizations construct unconscious social defenses against shared anxiety and build them into roles, routines, and policies that persist independently of the individuals who occupy them (Menzies Lyth, 1960). Wilfred Bion further demonstrated that groups under pressure move into basic-assumption states of dependency, fight-flight, and pairing that protect members from anxiety while pulling the group away from its primary task (Bion, 1968). Reading recurring organizational patterns as social defenses, alongside the individual and archetypal patterns described above, gives the framework a systemic diagnostic reach that matches the scale at which pressure operates.

Demand is clear. Yet beneath the visible response, the organization may also be drawing on older patterns of protection, rescue, control, loyalty, exile, heroism, preservation, or survival. In this sense, the first response under pressure becomes diagnostically important because it may reveal the symbolic, cultural, and psychological pattern shaping the system's behavior.

The protective function of such patterns should be taken seriously. A familiar response may have helped a person, team, organization, or community preserve dignity, maintain order, reduce conflict, avoid punishment, protect a sense of belonging, or sustain institutional identity under earlier conditions. Organizational development helps explain how they become embedded in norms, roles, routines, decision rights, and leadership behavior. Systems thinking helps explain how repeated responses are reinforced through feedback loops, incentives, delays, and mental models. Depth psychology helps explain why these responses can feel necessary even when they are no longer effective.

Jungian and post-Jungian concepts are engaged here as interpretive and metaphorical frameworks for organizational pattern recognition, not as psychological diagnostic instruments or clinical tools. Archetypal and symbolic interpretation should therefore be used with care. It should not be used to label people, assign personality categories, or fix organizations into static types. Its value is diagnostic. It offers a disciplined way to examine recurring patterns of meaning beneath organizational response. The purpose is to help leaders see how a repeated response under pressure may carry an inherited story, a protective function, and a hidden cost. Once that pattern is visible, the work shifts from reacting to the surface problem to redesigning the conditions that enable a different response to emerge.

This interpretive lens must also be widened beyond Jungian and archetypal traditions alone. Black feminist thought clarifies that knowledge, voice, interpretation, and authority are shaped by power, lived experience, social location, and the politics of which realities are recognized as legitimate (Collins, 1999). Research on Black women's managerial experience further demonstrates that organizational pressure, advancement, authority, and belonging are not experienced evenly; they are shaped by race, gender, class, institutional norms, and the informal rules of organizational life (Bell & Nkomo, 2001). Foundational scholarship on race in organizations argues that mainstream organizational theory has too often rendered race invisible or peripheral and calls for race to be written explicitly into how organizations are studied and understood (Nkomo, 1992). These sources strengthen the work's diagnostic depth by insisting that patterned responses under pressure must be examined in relation to power, identity, history, and the interpretation permitted to shape organizational reality.

Culturally grounded textile traditions, including African American quilting, add another important epistemological layer. Quilting provides a structured way to understand memory, fragmentation, repair, joining, concealment, preservation, and the

formation of usable wholeness from what has been cut, carried, and reassembled (Fry, 2002; Benberry, 1992; Mazloomi, 1998). In this context, quilting is not treated as a decorative metaphor. It functions as a culturally rooted epistemology of pattern recognition and repair, offering a way to examine what has been inherited, what has been protected, what must be cut or joined differently, and how fragments can be redesigned into a more coherent whole.

The pressure pattern response, as used here, is not positioned as a new standalone theory or a replacement for established scholarship. It is a practice-based synthesis that integrates organizational development, systems thinking, Black feminist epistemology, culturally grounded repair traditions, depth psychology sensibility, and transformation practice. It supports leaders in examining what pressure activates, what familiar responses protect, what costs accumulate through repetition, and what conditions must be redesigned so intentional transformation can take root.

Effects of Conscious and Unconscious Response to Pressure

The significance of conscious versus unconscious responses becomes clearer when examining their effects on perception, judgment, problem solving, learning, collaboration, and performance in transformation contexts. Conscious response refers to what individuals and groups can notice, name, explain, reflect on, and intentionally choose. Unconscious response refers to protective patterns operating beneath immediate awareness, shaping what feels safe, threatening, legitimate, possible, or unacceptable before those meanings are fully available to rational awareness.

In organizational behavior, responses to pressure are often explained through visible triggers such as performance demands, accountability expectations, policy changes, or structural shifts. Yet beneath these stated explanations, responses may also reflect deeper dynamics such as the protection of authority, belonging, competence, control, identity, legitimacy, or institutional survival.

In one line of research, Nisbett and Wilson examined whether people can accurately report the mental processes that shape their judgments. In their widely cited work on verbal reports, they found that individuals often have limited introspective access to the cognitive processes that produce their decisions, even when they offer confident explanations for their choices (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977). The implication is not that conscious reasoning is unimportant. Instead, the study challenges the assumption that people always know why they have judged, chosen, avoided, defended, or preferred one course of action over another.

This finding is reinforced by Bargh and Chartrand's work on automaticity, which challenges the assumption that individuals consciously and systematically process all incoming information before acting. Their research shows that perception, evaluation, motivation, and behavior can be activated by environmental cues and can operate outside conscious awareness or intentional control (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). Together, these studies suggest that subtle, often unnoticed influences can shape what people notice, how they interpret events, and how they later explain their responses.

When translated into organizational life, a leader, team, or institution under pressure may believe it is responding only to a new policy, strategy, technology, conflict, or performance demand. However, the response may also reflect deeper layers such as competence, control, identity, legitimacy, or institutional survival. The conscious explanation describes what appears to be happening, while the deeper response often reveals what the system is trying to protect.

DIAGNOSTIC LENS: CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS RESPONSES UNDER PRESSURE

- What the system says is happening: The stated issue, visible problem, formal explanation, or presenting challenge
- What the system may be protecting: Authority, belonging, competence, control, identity, legitimacy, safety, or institutional survival.
- How the response becomes patterned: Repeated routines, incentives, leadership behavior, informal rules, emotional memory, and organizational norms.
- What the pattern costs: Judgment narrows, learning weakens, collaboration becomes guarded, redesign remains superficial, and implementation repeats the old logic.
- What redesign requires: Making the protective response visible, examining its cost, and changing the conditions that continue to sustain it.

This distinction has direct implications for judgment. When people have enough time, safety, evidence, and authority to engage an issue directly, a conscious response can expand judgment. Under these conditions, pressure can be treated as information rather than a threat. Individuals and groups are more able to ask better questions, test assumptions, consider disconfirming evidence, and make intentional choices. In contrast, an unconscious protective response can narrow judgment. When protection operates outside awareness, people may misread ambiguity as danger, defend prior commitments, rely too heavily on familiar explanations, or interpret challenge as a personal or institutional threat.

Research on threat rigidity helps explain why this matters in organizations. Staw, Sandelands, and Dutton (1981; see also Mazzei et al., 2024) argue that threat conditions can restrict information processing, centralize control, and increase reliance on dominant routines across individual, group, and organizational levels (Staw, Sandelands, & Dutton, 1981). In practice, this means pressure can make a system appear more disciplined while actually reducing its adaptability. What looks like decisiveness can become premature closure. What looks like alignment can become compliance. What looks like stability can become the repetition of an older protective pattern.

The implications for learning are equally significant. Organizational learning depends on the ability to surface assumptions, examine errors, revise governing norms, and learn from disconfirming information (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Conscious response supports learning when individuals and groups reflect on what is happening, why it is happening, and what must change. An unconscious protective response can interrupt this process by shifting the system toward self-protection. People may protect their status instead of examining evidence, preserve a sense of belonging through silence, defend their expertise rather than test assumptions, or maintain their legitimacy by avoiding deeper issues.

Collaboration is also affected. Research on psychological safety shows that learning behavior depends on whether people feel safe enough to speak up, ask questions, disagree, and take interpersonal risks without fear of punishment or humiliation (Edmondson, 1999). When a conscious response is present, collaboration supports inquiry, shared diagnosis, and coordinated redesign. When unconscious protection is activated, collaboration becomes guarded. Teams may still meet, plan, and communicate, but the quality of collective sensemaking declines. The group remains active while becoming less honest, less adaptive, and less capable of addressing the pattern beneath the surface problem.

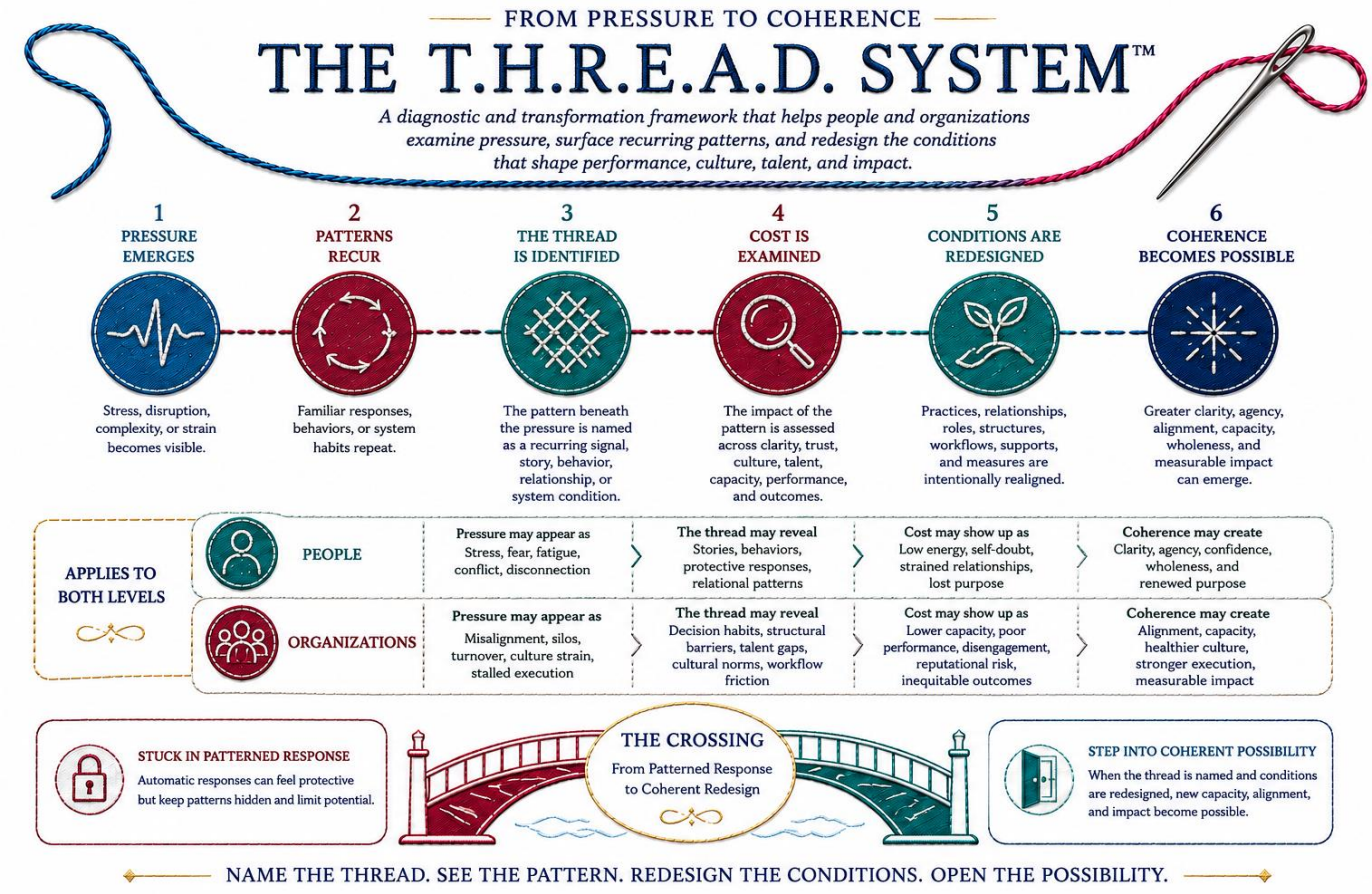
These effects become especially important during redesign and implementation. Conscious response

helps a system name the issue, interpret evidence, choose direction, and redesign the conditions that shape behavior. An unconscious response can lead a system to adopt a new solution while preserving the old protective logic. Structures may change while norms remain the same. Roles may shift while authority patterns remain intact. A new strategy may be adopted while the same fears, incentives, decision rights, and informal rules continue to guide behavior.

Over time, unconscious protective responses can become patterned through social, structural, and psychological reinforcement. What begins as a protective reaction can become embedded in routines, governance habits, role expectations, communication patterns, incentives, and leadership behavior. The organization may continue repeating the response that once protected it, even when that response now limits judgment, learning, collaboration, redesign, implementation, and intentional transformation.

Distinguishing between conscious and unconscious responses offers a practical way to understand why transformation efforts often stall, even when the presenting problem has been correctly identified. Conscious interpretation helps people name the issue, examine evidence, and choose a direction. Unconscious protection helps explain why the same responses keep returning, why learning is sometimes avoided, why collaboration becomes guarded, and why implementation can reproduce the very conditions it was designed to change. The work is not only to solve the visible problem but also to make the protective response sufficiently visible to examine its cost and redesign the conditions that sustain it.

Figure 1. From Pressure Signal to Redesigned Conditions



Visual synthesis: pressure activates the response; the response reveals protection; cost clarifies redesign requirements; redesigned conditions open possibilities.

Table 2. Conscious and Unconscious Response Under Pressure

Response role	What it does under pressure	Effect on transformation
Conscious response	Names the issue, examines evidence, tests assumptions, and supports deliberate choice.	Expands capacity for judgment, learning, collaboration, redesign, and implementation.
Unconscious protective response	Protects authority, belonging, competence, control, identity, legitimacy, or survival before the threat is fully conscious.	Narrows perception, increases defensiveness, preserves familiar routines, and repeats the protective pattern.

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ Non-linear Six Practices to Intentional Transformation

The six practices of T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ are interdependent, yet each performs a distinct function in the movement from pressure response to intentional transformation. Separating them analytically clarifies how the system strengthens conscious interpretation, reduces automatic protection, and translates diagnosis into redesign.

The response architecture can be stated simply: pressure activates a familiar response, the response reveals what the system is protecting, and the cost of that protection identifies what must be redesigned.

The six practices are described here in a representative sequence, yet the system is non-linear in application: practitioners may enter at any practice point, return to earlier practices as new patterns surface, or move through multiple practices simultaneously. The movement through the framework reflects the recursive, iterative nature of transformation rather than a fixed procedural order. The six practices are organized across four movements: Inward, Backward, Outward, and Forward that represent distinct orientations to transformation and provide the developmental pathway through which intentional change becomes possible.

The *Inward Movement* focuses on awareness. It directs attention to how individuals and systems interpret pressure, construct meaning, and respond before action occurs. The purpose of the Inward Movement is to strengthen conscious interpretation by slowing automatic reactions and increasing the capacity to examine what is happening beneath the surface of immediate events.

This emphasis on awareness is supported by research in reflective practice, adult development, metacognition, and mindfulness. Schön (1983) argues that effective practitioners develop the capacity to reflect in action rather than merely react to circumstances. Kegan and Lahey (2009) similarly suggest that transformational growth requires making previously hidden assumptions visible so they can be examined rather than unconsciously obeyed. Research on mindfulness and attention regulation further demonstrates that awareness practices can reduce automatic responding and increase intentional decision-making under pressure (Kabat Zinn, 1994; Brown & Ryan, 2003).

The *Backward Movement* focuses on understanding. It directs attention to experience, memory, history, inheritance, and repetition. Its purpose is to recover wisdom from what has already been lived and to identify patterns that continue to shape present behavior. Rather than keeping a person or system trapped in the past, it uses the past as a source of learning. It reveals what should be carried forward and what responses should be released.

The *Backward Movement* draws from experiential learning theory, organizational learning, narrative inquiry, and memory studies. Kolb (1983) argues that learning emerges through reflection on experience rather than experience alone. Organizational learning scholars also note that institutions tend to repeat patterns when lessons are not fully examined or integrated (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Senge, 2006). Narrative researchers further explain that individuals and organizations shape identity through stories about the past, which makes reflection on inherited narratives necessary for meaningful change (Bruner, 1990; McAdams, 2001).

The *Outward Movement* focuses on relationship and collective capacity. It recognizes that transformation rarely happens through individual insight alone. Its purpose is to build the relational, strategic, cultural, and institutional conditions needed for change by engaging the people, resources, authority structures, and partnerships that support a new direction.

Research on social capital, collective efficacy, psychological safety, and network theory supports this movement. Edmondson (1999) shows that learning and adaptation improve when people feel safe enough to share ideas, concerns, and dissenting views. Bandura (2000) explains that collective efficacy shapes whether groups believe they can achieve desired outcomes. Network research also shows that relationships play a major role in the spread of innovation, trust, and organizational change (Borgatti & Foster, 2003).

The *Forward Movement* focuses on implementation and integration. It translates insight into action and reshapes the conditions that support sustained behavior change over time. Its purpose is not only to initiate change but to embed it within structures, routines, decisions, relationships, and systems so that transformation becomes durable, coherent, and sustainable.

Implementation science supports this movement. Research shows that successful change depends not only on identifying what should change but also on creating the conditions required for sustained adoption (Damschroder et al., 2022; Proctor et al., 2011). Systems thinking research also emphasizes that lasting transformation requires redesigning structures, incentives, relationships, and feedback loops rather than relying only on individual motivation (Meadows, 2008; Senge, 2006).

Think Deeply begins the Inward movement by slowing interpretation under pressure. Harvest Wisdom and Release Patterns form the Backward movement by recovering what experience has taught and examining what has become costly through repetition. Enlist Allies begins the Outward movement by strengthening the relational, strategic, and institutional conditions required for transformation. Adopt Change and Design Wholeness complete the Forward movement by translating insight into deliberate action and integrating new conditions into a more coherent future.

Think Deeply

Movement One: Inward

In Jungian and post-Jungian psychology, unconscious material is understood as an active field of images, emotions, complexes, symbolic meanings, and inherited patterns that can shape perception before the ego fully understands what is happening (Jung, 1969; Samuels, 1986). From this perspective, the first response to pressure may reveal more than a conscious opinion. It may reveal a pattern already organizing meaning beneath awareness.

Corlett and Pearson extend this insight into organizational life through their work on the organizational psyche. They argue that organizations can be understood through visible structures, strategies, policies, and behaviors but also through

less visible stories, archetypes, habits, assumptions, and cultural images that shape how people interpret institutional experience and respond to change (Corlett & Pearson, 2003). This matters for Think Deeply because the practice begins with a core premise: the visible problem may be expressing a deeper pattern.

Think Deeply is about disciplined interpretation under pressure. When disruption occurs, individuals and organizations often move quickly toward explanation. The explanation may be accurate. It may also be familiar, protective, incomplete, or shaped by institutional memory. A conflict may appear to be a communication issue but may reflect a deeper pattern of authority. A stalled initiative may appear to be an implementation problem while expressing a trust problem. A governance challenge may appear procedural while reflecting an older story about legitimacy, control, or belonging.

Research on judgment under uncertainty helps explain why this practice is necessary. Tversky and Kahneman showed that people often rely on heuristics or mental shortcuts when making judgments under uncertainty. These shortcuts can reduce complexity, but they can also produce systematic errors when the familiar, available, or representative is mistaken for the accurate (Kahneman, 2013). In organizational life, pressure often increases the appeal of familiar explanations because they restore a sense of certainty.

Additional research in cognitive psychology supports this concern. Nisbett and Wilson (1977) found that individuals often have limited access to the processes shaping their judgments, while Bargh and Chartrand (1999) demonstrated the extent to which automatic cognitive processes influence behavior outside conscious awareness. Together, these findings suggest that people frequently act from interpretations they did not intentionally choose.

Karl Weick's work on sensemaking adds organizational weight to this claim. Weick (1995; see also Maitlis & Christianson, 2014) argues that people in organizations construct meaning retrospectively while events are still unfolding (Weick, 1995). Organizations, therefore, do more than respond to reality; they participate in constructing the reality they then respond to. Under pressure, a system may construct a fast explanation, organize action around it, and then treat it as fact.

Recent organizational development practice also supports this move from surface diagnosis to meaning making. Dialogic OD emphasizes that organizational change occurs through shifts in the conversations, narratives, and meanings that organize social reality. Bushe and Marshak (2015) describe Dialogic OD and generative change as especially relevant in complex, adaptive contexts where traditional diagnostic and planned change approaches may be insufficient for the depth of change required. This is directly relevant to Think Deeply because the practice asks leaders to examine the meaning-making process before the system becomes organized around the first available story.

Research on double-loop learning further reinforces this practice. Argyris (1990; see also Vince & Reynolds, 2023) argues that organizations frequently defend existing assumptions through organizational defenses that prevent deeper inquiry. Double-loop learning requires questioning the governing variables underlying action rather than merely correcting errors within existing frameworks. Think Deeply aligns closely with this deeper form of learning.

Reducing unconscious protection through Think Deeply begins with making the first explanation provisional. A leader can ask what we are treating as fact that may still be an interpretation. What explanation arrived first and why? What evidence are we privileging? What are we avoiding because it

would complicate the story? What does this response protect?

This can be surprisingly difficult. Under pressure, speed often feels like the answer. Certainty feels stabilizing. Authority feels protective. Expertise feels efficient. Yet each can become a way of avoiding deeper interpretation. A team may move quickly because delay feels unsafe. An institution may defend the dominant explanation because a deeper diagnosis would threaten identity, credibility, or control. In this sense, unconscious protection can appear as competence.

Research on threat rigidity provides additional insight. Staw, Sandelands, and Dutton (1981) found that individuals and organizations often narrow their attention and rely on familiar responses when confronted with a threat. While these responses may create short-term stability, they can reduce adaptability and inhibit learning. Think Deeply intentionally interrupts this narrowing process.

Increasing conscious interpretation requires conditions that enable a fuller diagnosis. People need access to evidence, permission to question the first account, capacity to tolerate ambiguity, and enough psychological safety to name what the dominant story may be protecting. Argyris and Schön's work on organizational learning is useful here because it distinguishes between correcting action within existing assumptions and examining the assumptions that govern action itself (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Think Deeply strengthens the second capacity.

The practice question is therefore:

What is really happening beneath the first explanation?

When practiced well, Think Deeply shifts the first response from a reaction to a transformation. Pressure becomes diagnostic information rather than only a trigger for action. The system gains the ability to pause without becoming passive, to examine without becoming stuck, and to interpret without defaulting to inherited responses. Think Deeply prepares the foundation for the remaining practices, since intentional transformation depends on seeing the pattern before repeating it.

Harvest Wisdom

Movement Two: Backward

Harvest Wisdom starts from the idea that experience holds data, but experience does not automatically become wisdom. People and organizations can move through years of activity, crisis, success, failure, grief, adaptation, and achievement without fully understanding what those experiences have taught. This practice asks what knowledge already exists within lived experience, organizational memory, cultural inheritance, and earlier attempts at change.

Experiential learning theory supports this view. Kolb explains that learning emerges through a cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1983). Experience only becomes development when it is reflected on, interpreted, and carried into future action. Schön reinforces this idea through the concept of the reflective practitioner in which knowledge develops through reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, especially in complex situations that cannot be solved by fixed rules (Schön, 1983).

Harvest Wisdom also serves a deeper psychological function. In depth psychology, memory, image, inheritance, and symbol are not only historical traces. They continue to shape present behavior. From a post-Jungian perspective, the past can remain active through complexes, family and cultural narratives, institutional myths, and inherited patterns of authority, loss, survival, and possibility (Jung, 1969; Samuels, 1986). In organizational settings, history is rarely fully past. It continues to influence what feels possible, dangerous, legitimate, or forbidden.

Black feminist thought strengthens this practice by grounding knowledge in lived experience and social location. Collins (2000; see also Collins, 2019) argues that dominant systems often privilege certain forms of knowledge while marginalizing others, making lived experience and collective wisdom essential sources of understanding (Collins, 1999). Harvest Wisdom, therefore, cannot rely only on official records, formal leadership accounts, or dominant narratives. It must also ask whose experience has been ignored, dismissed, or left unrecognized as knowledge.

African American quilting traditions offer a strong cultural lens for this practice. Quilting gathers fragments, preserves memory, connects what has been separated, and creates meaning from what might otherwise be discarded. Scholarship on African American quilting shows how textile traditions carry cultural memory, survival, kinship, artistry, coded communication, and historical witness (Fry, 2002; Benberry, 1992; Mazloomi, 1998). Harvest Wisdom follows this logic. What has been broken, hidden, preserved, or pieced together may hold essential knowledge for transformation.

Reducing unconscious protection through Harvest Wisdom means resisting the impulse to dismiss the past too quickly or to idealize it too easily. Under pressure, systems often protect themselves by making statements such as "we already tried that," "that is just how things are here," or "that history no longer matters." These responses may mask avoidance of grief, failure, conflict, or accountability. At the same time, the past may be romanticized to protect identity or maintain continuity. Harvest Wisdom requires a more honest and disciplined engagement with memory.

Increasing conscious interpretation requires asking what experience has revealed, what has been learned through difficulty, what has been ignored, and what knowledge already exists but is underused. Leaders must separate nostalgia from wisdom, repetition from learning, and institutional memory from institutional mythology. This also requires humility, since the most useful knowledge for transformation may sit with those who have carried the system's consequences most directly.

The practice question is therefore:

What has experience already taught us that we have not yet fully used?

When practiced well, Harvest Wisdom changes the system's relationship with the past. The past is neither a prison nor a brand story. It becomes a source of knowledge for reflection and examination. This practice strengthens intentional transformation by ensuring the future is not built on amnesia, denial, or borrowed strategies but on wisdom tested through lived experience.

Release Patterns

Movement Two: Backward

Release Patterns focuses on what happens when a response that once protected a person, team, organization, or community becomes costly through repetition. The practice rests on a difficult premise: not every familiar response deserves to be preserved. Some patterns once supported safety, belonging, legitimacy, or survival but now limit judgment, learning, collaboration, redesign, and implementation.

Argyris and Schön's work on defensive routines is central here. They describe organizational defensive routines as actions and policies that prevent people from experiencing embarrassment or threat while also preventing them from identifying and correcting the causes of that embarrassment or threat (Argyris,

1990; Argyris & Schön, 1978). This offers one of the clearest organizational explanations for unconscious protection. The routine shields the system from discomfort while maintaining the very conditions that need to be examined.

Senge's work on mental models also supports this practice. Mental models shape what people notice, how they interpret evidence, and what actions appear reasonable (Senge, 2006). A pattern becomes powerful when it is no longer experienced as a choice. It becomes the way things are done, the way authority operates, the way conflict is managed, the way risk is avoided, or the way belonging is maintained. Release Patterns calls the system to examine what has become automatic.

Depth psychology adds another layer. Jung's work on complexes suggests that emotionally charged patterns can organize perception and response outside conscious control (Jung, 1969). A complex may be triggered by a present event while carrying energy from an older story. In organizations, a similar dynamic can occur when a current disruption activates an older institutional wound, hierarchy, myth, fear, or identity defense. The present situation becomes entangled with what has not yet been consciously integrated.

Kegan and Lahey's work on immunity to change is also useful because it explains why people and systems may resist changes they consciously endorse (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). A person may be committed to collaboration while unconsciously protecting status. A team may be committed to innovation while protecting certainty. An organization may be committed to equity while protecting legacy power arrangements. The competing commitment often remains invisible until the pattern is examined.

Reducing unconscious protection through Release Patterns requires naming what the pattern has been protecting and what it now costs. Leaders can ask: What response keeps returning, what did this pattern once make possible, what does it now prevent, who benefits from its continuation, and who carries the cost? They can also ask what becomes unsafe if this pattern is released.

This practice must be handled with care because patterns often carry dignity. A pattern may have protected a community from harm, a leader from humiliation, a team from conflict, or an institution from collapse. Releasing the pattern does not require contempt for the past. It requires the courage to admit that what once protected the system may now be limiting its future.

Increasing conscious interpretation through Release Patterns requires converting repetition into evidence. Instead of treating repeated conflict, silence, delay, turnover, failed implementation, or mistrust as isolated events, the system asks what the repetition reveals. Pattern recognition becomes a form of intelligence. The repeated response is no longer only a problem; it becomes data about the system's protective logic.

The practice question is therefore:

What response keeps repeating, what has it protected, and what is it now costing?

When practiced well and applied consistently in real settings, Release Patterns shift the transformation from aspiration to consequence. The system stops mistaking repetition for culture, loyalty, tradition, or prudence. Over time, it begins to see the cost of the familiar. This practice creates the conditions for meaningful change because people and organizations cannot redesign what they remain committed to defending or emotionally invested in protecting.

Enlist Allies

Movement Three: Outward

Enlist Allies begins the outward movement because transformation rarely holds through individual insight alone. Once pressure, wisdom, and pattern

have been examined, the work requires relational, strategic, and institutional support. The practice asks who must be engaged, authorized, protected, challenged, resourced, or brought into accountable partnership so the new response can survive contact with the system.

Psychological safety research provides one of the strongest scholarly foundations for this practice. Edmondson (1999; see also Edmondson, 2018) defines team psychological safety as a shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking, and her research links psychological safety to learning behavior in real work teams (Edmondson, 1999). This matters because transformation requires people to speak about uncertainty, error, conflict, risk, and competing interpretations. Without sufficient safety, people may comply publicly while protecting themselves privately.

Systems psychodynamics adds a necessary caution. Under acute anxiety, alliances can harden into defensive collusion in which partners bond to protect a shared comfort and shield the system from disturbing information while appearing to cooperate (Bion, 1968). Enlist Allies, therefore, seeks to contain alliances rather than merely comfortable ones. A containing alliance functions as a holding environment that absorbs and metabolizes anxiety in the service of the work, allowing partners to stay present to difficulty rather than discharging it through avoidance. This concept draws on Winnicott's notion of the holding environment, extended here from its origins in developmental psychology to its organizational application (Winnicott, 1961). The measure of an ally becomes the capacity to hold tension, honor candor, and remain accountable when the change grows uncomfortable.

Research on social support also supports this practice. Cohen and Wills (1985; see also Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010) describe social support as a buffer against the effects of stress, especially when the support matches the demands of the stressor (Cohen & Wills, 1985). In organizational transformation, the right ally is not only encouraging. The right ally provides judgment, protection, access, accountability, expertise, translation, sponsorship, or relational trust at the point where the work is most vulnerable.

Relational coordination adds an organizational design layer. Gittell's research shows that high-quality coordination depends on shared goals, shared knowledge, and mutual respect reinforced by frequent, timely, accurate, problem-solving communication (Gittell, 2002). Enlist Allies, therefore, extends beyond seeking support from people who agree. It requires building the relational infrastructure needed for coordinated action across boundaries.

Black feminist thought again deepens the practice. Collins emphasizes the importance of collective knowledge, self-definition, and the politics of voice and authority (Collins, 1999). Bell and Nkomo's work on Black women's managerial experience shows that authority, belonging, sponsorship, and institutional legitimacy are unevenly distributed in organizational life (Bell & Nkomo, 2001). Enlist Allies must therefore ask who holds power, who holds proximity, who has been carrying knowledge without authority, and whose participation changes the quality of the diagnosis.

Reducing unconscious protection through Enlist Allies requires interrupting the isolation that often forms around pressure. Under threat, leaders and teams may narrow the circle, over-rely on familiar insiders, avoid dissenting voices, or select allies who preserve the existing story. The protective impulse is understandable. Trusted sameness feels safer than a disruptive perspective. Yet transformation often requires the very perspectives the protective system excludes.

Increasing conscious interpretation through Enlist Allies requires intentionally building the conditions for truthful participation. This means identifying people who can bring evidence, memory, challenge, legitimacy, care, implementation knowledge, and decision authority. It also means distinguishing allies from audiences. An audience observes the change. An ally carries responsibility for helping the change become real.

The practice question is therefore:

Who must be enlisted to help us see, hold, challenge, resource, and carry the change?

When practiced well, Enlist Allies shifts the social conditions of transformation work. The work moves from private insight to shared capacity. It becomes harder for a system to retreat into silence, blame, isolation, or symbolic action because the right people are now connected to the diagnosis, the decisions, and the conditions required for implementation.

Adopt Change

Movement Four: Forward

Adopt Change begins the forward movement by converting insight into intentional action. Many transformation efforts fail at this stage. People understand the issue, name the pattern, gather support, and still return to inherited behavior because the new response has not been adopted through practice, structure, accountability, and repeated use.

Implementation science provides a strong foundation for this practice. The updated Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research emphasizes that implementation depends on more than the quality of the innovation itself. It is shaped by context, recipients, inner setting, outer setting, processes, and implementation determinants (Damschroder et al., 2022). This matters because change does not become real through acceptance of an idea alone. It becomes real when the conditions that shape behavior are addressed.

Proctor and colleagues' work on implementation outcomes also helps clarify the practice. They distinguish outcomes such as acceptability, adoption, appropriateness, feasibility, fidelity, cost, penetration, and sustainability (Proctor et al., 2011). Adoption is therefore a measurable implementation outcome, not just a mindset. A change can be admired but not adopted, announced but not used, approved but not embedded, or piloted but not sustained.

From a psychological perspective, Adopt Change also addresses the gap between intention and behavior. Kegan and Lahey's work on immunity to change shows that people can sincerely commit to change while simultaneously protecting competing commitments that maintain the old behavior (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). In this sense, adoption requires more than motivation. It requires identifying what the old pattern continues to protect.

Dialogic and generative change scholarship adds that adoption is strengthened when people engage with new meanings, not only new instructions. Bushe and Marshak's work emphasizes that change can occur through shifts in conversation, narrative, and generative images that alter what people notice and how they enact it. This matters because people often adopt what they can see themselves in. If the new direction has no meaning, identity, language, or relational legitimacy, it remains procedural.

Reducing unconscious protection through Adopt Change requires identifying where the old response still receives reward. A system may claim commitment to collaboration while promoting individual heroics. It may claim commitment to equity while rewarding informal access. It may claim commitment to innovation while punishing intelligent failure. It may claim commitment to redesign while leaving decision rights untouched. The old pattern survives because something still feeds it.

Increasing conscious interpretation through Adopt Change requires translating the new response into observable commitments. Leaders can ask what behavior must change, what decision rights must shift, what routines must be redesigned, what support people will need, what will be measured, what will no longer be rewarded, and what will be practiced until the new response becomes consistent and usable.

The practice question is therefore:

What new response must be adopted, practiced, and reinforced so the old pattern loses power?

When applied effectively, Adopt Change ensures that transformation does not remain at the level of ideas. It shifts behavior inside the system so that new patterns begin to replace old ones in real situations. The system starts to respond differently in moments where the previous pattern would have taken over. Adoption becomes the link between understanding and execution. It moves the work from recognizing change to living it in practice.

Design Wholeness

Movement Four: Forward

Design Wholeness is the integrating practice. It asks whether the new response has become coherent across the system in identity, structure, relationships, governance, routines, decision rights, resources, accountability, and implementation. The question is no longer only whether change has begun. It is whether the conditions now support a more holistic way of operating.

Socio-technical systems theory provides an important foundation for this practice. Trist and Bamforth's work showed that work systems must be understood through the interaction of social and technical conditions rather than through technical redesign alone (Trist & Bamforth, 1951). This insight remains central to transformation work. A system cannot become whole when strategy, structure, people, technology, culture, and governance are redesigned in isolation.

Systems thinking strengthens this point. Meadows argues that systems are shaped by interrelationships, feedback loops, delays, information flows, rules, goals, and paradigms (Meadows, 2008). Design Wholeness, therefore, asks leaders to examine the deeper architecture that continues producing the current outcomes. The goal is coherence, meaning alignment between purpose, behavior, structure, and conditions.

Depth psychology also gives wholeness a psychological meaning. Jung's concept of individuation refers to the integration of divided or unconscious aspects of the psyche into a more conscious relationship with the whole (Jung, 1969). In organizational terms, this does not mean treating an organization as a person. It means recognizing that systems become fragmented when stated values, hidden fears, formal structures, informal practices, and lived experiences are in conflict. Wholeness requires integration.

Organizational design and implementation research make the practice more concrete. The updated CFIR emphasizes that context influences whether implementation succeeds, including the setting, the individuals involved, the implementation process, and equity-related determinants (Damschroder et al., 2022). Proctor and colleagues also emphasize sustainability as a distinct implementation outcome (Proctor et al., 2011). Design Wholeness, therefore, asks whether the redesigned response can be sustained under the system's real conditions.

Reducing unconscious protection through Design Wholeness requires exposing fragmentation. An organization may proclaim trust while maintaining opaque decision making. It may claim to be innovative while punishing risk. It may claim inclusion while concentrating authority. It may claim transformation while preserving the incentives that maintain the old pattern. Fragmentation allows the system to tell one story while operating from another.

Increasing conscious interpretation through Design Wholeness requires redesigning the operating conditions that carry the new response. Leaders can ask whether structures align with the future they are naming. They can ask whether routines reinforce the new pattern. They can examine whether policies create the right balance of authority and accountability. They can assess whether relationships hold enough trust to sustain the work. They can consider whether governance supports transformation or protects the old system.

The practice question is, therefore:

What conditions must be redesigned so the new response becomes coherent, sustainable, and whole?

When practiced well, Design Wholeness prevents transformation from becoming a temporary intervention. Instead, the work becomes integrated into how the system thinks, decides, relates, governs, learns, and acts. Wholeness is not perfection. It is coherence, the capacity of the system to carry its purpose through aligned conditions, conscious practice, and sustained implementation.

OVERVIEW OF T-H-R-E-A-D

Practice 1
THINK DEEPLY

Name what is beneath the visible issue.

Practice 2
HARVEST WISDOM

Recover insight from data, memory, and lived experience.

Practice 3
RELEASE PATTERNS

Stop carrying what no longer serves the future.

Practice 4
ENLIST ALLIES

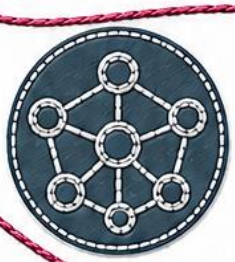
Build the trust and support the work requires.

Practice 5
ADOPT CHANGE

Practice aligned choices until momentum forms.

Practice 6
DESIGN WHOLENESS

Redesign conditions so coherence can hold.



Applications of T.H.R.E.A.D. System™

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ extends beyond individual reflection and can be applied across multiple levels of human and organizational life. Because it engages conscious interpretation, unconscious protection, repeated response patterns, and intentional redesign, it is relevant to self-management, education and training, coaching, leadership development, organizational systems, youth development, women's transformation, and community change.

The system is particularly useful in environments where individuals or institutions are under sustained pressure, repeating familiar responses, and require a structured way to examine what is happening, what is being protected, what the pattern is costing, and what needs to be redesigned. Its value lies in supporting the shift from reaction to interpretation, from inherited patterns to intentional choices, and from fragmented responses to more coherent, integrated transformation.

Application to Self-Management

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ helps individuals examine their responses under pressure. Many people experience disruption as urgency, fear, confusion, anger, withdrawal, over-functioning, or a need to control. Without an interpretive framework, these responses are often mistaken for personality traits, weaknesses, motivations, or simple preferences. The system offers a different lens. A response may be protecting something that needs to be named before it can be redesigned.

The practices help individuals slow their first impulse to explain, draw wisdom from past experience, identify recurring patterns, enlist wise support, adopt intentional change, and design a more coherent way forward. This has direct implications for decision making, stress management, emotional regulation, identity transition, and personal leadership. For example, a person who repeatedly avoids difficult conversations may discover that the behavior is protecting a sense of belonging or reducing the risk of rejection. Once the protective function is named, the work shifts from self-criticism to redesign. What new condition, support, language, or practice would make a different response possible?

The system also strengthens self-management by giving people a vocabulary for what often goes unnamed. Instead of saying, "I am stuck," the person can ask, "What pattern keeps returning?" Instead of saying, "I am failing," the person can ask, "What is this response protecting?" Instead of forcing change through willpower alone, the person can redesign the conditions that make a new response more sustainable.

Application to Education and Training

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ also has implications for education, training, facilitation, and adult learning. Learning requires more than content delivery. It requires conditions where learners can examine assumptions, tolerate uncertainty, make meaning from experience, test new responses, and integrate what they are learning into practice. When learners feel exposed, dismissed, confused, shamed, or disconnected, unconscious protection can reduce curiosity, risk-taking, retention, and participation.

Educators, trainers, and facilitators can use the system to design learning environments that reduce defensive responses and increase reflective capacity. Think Deeply strengthens inquiry before premature conclusions form. Harvest Wisdom honors lived experience as a valid source of knowledge. Release Patterns helps learners identify repeated responses that no longer serve their development. Enlist Allies builds relational conditions that support learning. Adopt Change moves learning into applied practice.

Design Wholeness supports integrating insight into a more coherent way of operating.

This approach is especially relevant in leadership education, workforce development, trauma-informed learning environments, and programs serving youth and adults in transition. The system offers a structure for helping learners connect what they are studying with what they are carrying, repeating, protecting, and ready to redesign.

Coaching and Advising

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ can also inform coaching, advising, mentoring, and executive development. Coaching is often effective because it creates a structured space where a person can slow interpretation, examine repeated patterns, test assumptions, and choose more intentional responses. T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ provides a clear architecture for this process.

In coaching practice, Think Deeply supports the client in examining the presenting issue without becoming trapped in the first explanation. Harvest Wisdom draws from prior experience, strengths, failures, inherited knowledge, and lessons already earned. Release Patterns help identify what recurs and how much it costs over time. Enlist Allies clarifies who must be involved, what support is needed, and which relational conditions matter most. Adopt Change translates insight into practical action. Design Wholeness assesses whether the new response can be sustained across identity, behavior, relationships, work, and purpose.

This system is especially useful in coaching leaders, women in transition, emerging professionals, and individuals navigating identity shifts, career changes, caregiving complexities, grief, public pressure, or reinvention. It helps coaching move beyond goal setting to deeper pattern diagnosis and intentional redesign.

Application to Leadership Development

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ has direct implications for leadership development because leaders shape the conditions under which others interpret pressure. A leader's response can deepen protection or increase conscious interpretation. When leaders move too quickly into explanation, control, correction, or certainty, they may unintentionally intensify the very patterns they are trying to change. They may silence dissent, reward compliance, centralize authority, avoid deeper diagnosis, or mistake activity for transformation.

The system helps leaders build the capacity to recognize which pressures are active in themselves and in the people they lead. Think Deeply strengthens diagnostic judgment. Harvest Wisdom supports learning from lived and institutional experience. Release Patterns helps leaders identify inherited behaviors that no longer serve future needs. Enlist Allies strengthens sponsorship, trust, candor, and shared responsibility. Adopt Change moves leadership insight into observable behavior. Design Wholeness aligns leadership practice with operating conditions.

Leadership development grounded in this system focuses less on style and more on response capacity. It considers how leaders interpret pressure, recognize protection, engage others, redesign conditions, and sustain transformation beyond the moment of insight.

Application to Organizational Systems

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ also carries implications for organizational design, culture, governance, strategy, implementation, and performance. Organizations often respond to pressure by repeating the very patterns that created or preserved their current state. They may centralize control while calling for innovation, protect hierarchy while calling for

collaboration, preserve informal power while calling for equity, or introduce a new strategy while leaving old incentives unchanged.

The system provides a diagnostic sequence for these contradictions. It begins by examining the presenting issue alongside the underlying pattern. It draws on institutional memory and stakeholder evidence, identifies the costs of repetition, clarifies the authority and accountability needed for change, and translates insights into routines, decisions, practices, measures, and operating conditions that support a more coherent future.

This approach has implications for strategic planning, culture change, mergers or restructuring, leadership transitions, workforce development, accreditation readiness, equity initiatives, governance reform, implementation planning, and organizational transformation. It helps organizations move beyond surface-level correction toward redesigning the conditions that continuously reproduce the same outcomes.

Application to Youth Development

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ also creates a foundation for youth development through FutureWoven™, a structured youth leadership and future-readiness program built on the T.H.R.E.A.D. System™. Young people are often expected to make decisions about identity, education, work, belonging, leadership, and the future while carrying pressure from family systems, school systems, social media, trauma, inequity, economic uncertainty, and cultural expectations. Without a structured way to interpret these pressures, many may internalize their challenges as personal failures rather than recognizing the patterns that shape their responses.

FutureWoven translates the system into youth-centered language and practice. Think Deeply helps young people pause and name what is happening. Harvest Wisdom helps them recognize what they have already survived, learned, and carried. Release Patterns helps them identify responses that may have once protected them but now limit their future. Enlist Allies helps them build networks of trustworthy adults, peers, mentors, educators, and community partners. Adopt Change helps them practice new choices in real situations. Design Wholeness helps them imagine and build a future self with greater coherence, agency, and purpose.

The broader implication is that future readiness requires more than career exposure or skill training. It requires the ability to interpret pressure, recognize patterns, access support, make intentional choices, and design a future that holds identity, purpose, work, and wellbeing together.

Application to Women's Transformation

The system also applies to women navigating transitions, reinvention, leadership pressure, caregiving complexity, professional identity, grief, ambition, visibility, and future design. Women often carry pressures that are both personal and structural: expectations to over-function, remain agreeable, absorb emotional labor, protect their sense of belonging, manage their appearance, navigate bias, and succeed without appearing disruptive. These conditions can create patterned responses that look competent on the surface while carrying exhaustion, silence, self-abandonment, or limited authority.

The WAIT program (Women Achieving Intentional Transformation™) uses the T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ to help women examine which pressures have been activated, what has been protected, which patterns have become costly, and what the future requires. Think Deeply creates space to name the real issue. Harvest Wisdom treats lived experience as a form of intelligence. Release Patterns examines inherited scripts and protective adaptations. Enlist

Allies identifies the relationships, sponsorship, truth-telling, and accountability needed for change. Adopt Change moves the woman from insight into aligned action. Design Wholeness supports the creation of a life, leadership path, or future that is coherent rather than fragmented.

The implication is clear. Transformation for women should not be reduced to confidence, mindset, or resilience. It must include pattern recognition, structural awareness, relational support, redesigned conditions, and intentional authority over the future being built.

Application to Community Change

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ can also be used in communities, coalitions, civic initiatives, schools, nonprofits, public agencies, and cross-sector partnerships. Community change often fails when partners respond to complex issues with fragmented programs, short-term funding cycles, symbolic engagement, or surface-level consensus. Communities carry histories, mistrust, grief, exclusion, resilience, informal knowledge, and protective responses that shape whether change can take root.

The system offers communities a shared language for examining pressure without reducing complexity. Think Deeply explores what is really happening beneath the surface of the visible issue. Harvest Wisdom gathers lived experience, historical memory, and local knowledge. Release Patterns identifies recurring dynamics that perpetuate harm or fragmentation. Enlist Allies builds the relational and institutional infrastructure needed for coordinated action. Adopt Change moves commitments into practice. Design Wholeness aligns resources, governance, accountability, and community voice around a more coherent future.

In this setting, the system functions as a civic and relational practice architecture. It supports partners in moving from episodic response to sustained capacity, from fragmented intervention to shared diagnosis, and from isolated effort to more integrated transformation.

Synthesis of Implications

Across these applications, *T.H.R.E.A.D. System™* points to a central principle: transformation requires more than motivation, insight, strategy, or technical skill. It requires the capacity to see how pressure activates response, how response reveals protection, how protection becomes patterned, how the pattern creates cost, and how redesigned conditions make a different future possible.

The wider value of the system is practical and developmental. It provides individuals, leaders, organizations, youth, women, and communities with a way to examine what is happening beneath the pressure and to act with greater consciousness, coherence, and intention. Its purpose is not only to help people understand change but to help them design the conditions through which intentional transformation can be lived, led, implemented, and sustained.

Summary and Synthesis

The six practices of T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ work together as a coherent practice architecture. Each practice addresses a distinct point in the movement from automatic protection to intentional transformation, strengthening the capacity of individuals, leaders, teams, organizations, and communities to interpret pressure before repetition governs judgment, learning, collaboration, redesign, and implementation.

The system's central contribution is practical. It gives language and structure to what often remains hidden

during change. Pressure activates a response. Response reveals protection. Protection becomes patterned through repetition and reinforcement. Pattern creates cost. Cost clarifies what must be redesigned. Through the six practices—Think Deeply, Harvest Wisdom, Release Patterns, Enlist Allies, Adopt Change, and Design Wholeness—people and systems are guided through a disciplined process to examine what is happening beneath the presenting issue and to design more coherent conditions for transformation.

The four movements of the system—Inward, Backward, Outward, and Forward—also matter. They prevent transformation from being reduced to immediate action. The Inward movement strengthens the capacity to interpret pressure before reacting. The Backward movement gathers wisdom and examines inherited patterns. The Outward movement builds the relational and institutional conditions needed for change. The Forward movement translates insight into practice and integrates new conditions into a more coherent way of operating.

The system applies across personal transition, leadership development, coaching, education, youth future readiness, women's transformation, organizational redesign, governance, workforce development, community change, and cross-sector transformation. Across these contexts, the core inquiry remains consistent: What response is being repeated under pressure, what is it protecting, what is it costing, and what must be redesigned so a different future can emerge?

At a time when individuals and institutions face accelerating disruption, the need is not only for more strategy, technology, planning, or performance pressure. The deeper need is the capacity to see the patterns that shape response and to redesign the conditions that sustain them. T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ offers a single practice architecture for that work. Its purpose is not only to help people understand transformation but to help them live, lead, implement, and sustain it with greater consciousness, coherence, and intention.

Directions for Future Research

An initial research agenda for T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ includes the following questions:

- Which of the six practices produces the strongest perceived shift in conscious interpretation, unconscious protection, and intentional action?
- Which practices have the greatest effect on judgment, learning, collaboration, redesign, implementation, and sustained transformation?
- How do the four movements—Inward, Backward, Outward, and Forward—operate across individual, team, organizational, and community contexts?
- Which forms of pressure most strongly activate unconscious protective responses in individuals, teams, organizations, and communities?
- What is the relationship between repeated response patterns and organizational outcomes such as trust, psychological safety, implementation quality, employee engagement, retention, innovation, and adaptive capacity?
- How do identity, race, gender, culture, role, authority, and social location shape how people experience pressure, interpret patterns, and engage in transformation practice?
- How can T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ be operationalized into validated assessment tools, reflective instruments, facilitation protocols, leadership development curricula, and organizational diagnostic methods.
- Which practices are most effective for helping individuals and organizations identify what a

repeated response is protecting and what it is costing?

- How does the system function in youth development and future readiness contexts, particularly through FutureWoven?
- How does the system function for women navigating transition, reinvention, leadership pressure, caregiving complexity, career change, and intentional transformation?
- What are the organizational implications of applying T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ to strategy, governance, culture, workforce development, implementation, and systems redesign?
- How might the model be tested through case studies, mixed methods research, longitudinal studies, program evaluation, or randomized pilot designs?
- What evidence would demonstrate that the system improves not only insight but also behavior change, coherence, and sustained transformation?

Acknowledgements

T.H.R.E.A.D. System™ emerges from scholarly inquiry, lived experience, leadership practice, cultural memory, and years of work across education, public systems, nonprofit leadership, organizational transformation, workforce development, research administration, and community change. Its development is shaped by the author's autoethnographic reflection, professional practice, ancestral and spiritual inheritance, and a sustained commitment to helping individuals and institutions recognize the patterns that shape responses under pressure.

The author acknowledges the many loved ones and family members, leaders, students, colleagues, communities, organizations, and public systems whose experiences have informed this work. Their questions, conflicts, resilience, resistance, wisdom, and courage have revealed the need for a practice architecture that honors both human complexity and organizational consequences.

The author also acknowledges the intellectual traditions that make this work possible, including depth psychology, post-Jungian thought, organizational development, systems thinking, organizational learning, implementation science, Black feminist thought, and African American textile and quilting traditions. These bodies of work provide essential foundations for understanding unconscious patterning, situated knowledge, collective memory, relational systems, adaptive learning, and the redesign of conditions that enable transformation.

"See the Pattern. Shift the Story. Weave the Future."

About the Author

Dr. Leonie H. Mattison is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of The Thread Movement and the creator of The T.H.R.E.A.D. System. She is an organizational development scholar-practitioner whose work integrates systems thinking, leadership development, institutional change, depth-informed interpretation, and practice-based transformation across individuals, teams, organizations, and communities.

Her executive and cross-sector experience spans higher education leadership, public systems service, research and grant leadership, community-centered innovation, and organizational transformation. Her work focuses on helping people and institutions diagnose the patterns beneath pressure, redesign the conditions that shape behavior, and build more coherent futures.

The Thread Movement

The Thread Movement develops frameworks, writings, tools, learning experiences, and organizational transformation practices grounded in the conviction that people and systems can recognize patterns, shift the story, and weave the future.

www.thethreadmovement.com

References

Adams, T. E., Jones, S. H., & Ellis, C. (2014). *Autoethnography: Understanding qualitative research*. Oxford University Press.

Argyris, C. (1990). *Overcoming organizational defenses: Facilitating organizational learning*. Allyn and Bacon.

Argyris, C., & Schön, D. A. (1978). *Organizational learning: A theory-of-action perspective*. Addison-Wesley.

Auqui-Caceres, M.-V., & Furlan, A. (2023). "Revitalizing double-loop learning in organizational contexts: A systematic review and research agenda." *European Management Review, 20*(4), 785–800. https://doi.org/10.1111/emre.12615

Bandura, A. (2000). "Exercise of human agency through collective efficacy." *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 9*(3), 75–78. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8721.00064

Bargh, J. A., & Chartrand, T. L. (1999). "The unbearable automaticity of being." *American Psychologist, 54*(7), 462–479. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.54.7.462

Bell, E. L. J., & Nkomo, S. M. (2001). *Our separate ways: Black and White women and the struggle for professional identity*. Harvard Business School Press.

Benberry, C. (1992). *Always there: The African-American presence in American quilts*. Kentucky Quilt Project.

Bion, W. R. (1968). *Experiences in Groups: and Other Papers*. Routledge.

Borgatti, S. P., & Foster, P. C. (2003). "The network paradigm in organizational research: A review and typology." *Journal of Management, 29*(6), 991–1013. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(03)00087-4

Borgatti, S. P., Brass, D. J., & Halgin, D. S. (2014). "Social network research: Confusions, criticisms, and controversies." *Research in the Sociology of Organizations, 40*, 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1108/S0733-558X(2014)0000040001

Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). "The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(4), 822–848. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.4.822

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Harvard University Press.

Burke, W. W. (2017). *Organization change: Theory and practice* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Bushe, G. R., & Marshak, R. J. (Eds.). (2015). *Dialogic organization development: The theory and practice of transformational change*. Berrett-Koehler.

Cajete, G. (1999). *Native science: Natural laws of interdependence*. Clear Light Publishers.

Cohen, S., & Wills, T. A. (1985). "Stress, social support, and the buffering hypothesis." *Psychological Bulletin, 98*(2), 310–357. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.98.2.310

Collins, P. H. (1999). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Collins, P. H. (2019). *Intersectionality as critical social theory*. Duke University Press.

Corlett, J. G., & Pearson, C. S. (2003). *Mapping the organizational psyche: A Jungian theory of organizational dynamics and change*. Center for Applications of Psychological Type.

Cummings, T. G., & Worley, C. G. (2014). *Organization development and change* (10th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Damschroder, L. J., Reardon, C. M., Opra Widerquist, M. A., & Lowery, J. (2022). "The updated Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research based on user feedback."

Implementation Science, 17, Article 75. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-022-01245-0

Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*(2), 350–383. https://doi.org/10.2307/2666999

Edmondson, A. C. (2018). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation, and growth*. John Wiley & Sons.

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). "Autoethnography: An overview." *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 12*(1), Article 10. https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-12.1.1589

Fraher, A. L. (2004). *A history of group study and psychodynamic organizations*. Free Assn Books.

Fry, G.-M. (2002). *Stitched from the soul: Slave quilts from the antebellum South*. The University of North Carolina Press.

Gittell, J. H. (2002). Coordinating mechanisms in care provider groups: Relational coordination as a mediator and input uncertainty as a moderator of performance effects. *Management Science, 48*(11), 1408–1426. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.48.11.1408.268

Gittell, J. H. (2016). *Transforming relationships for high performance: The power of relational coordination*. Stanford University Press.

Günel, G., Varma, S., & Watanabe, C. (2020). "A manifesto for patchwork ethnography." *Member Voices, Fieldsights*. Society for Cultural Anthropology. https://culanth.org/fieldsights/a-manifesto-for-patchwork-ethnography

Hagger, M. S., Wood, C., Stiff, C., & Chatzisarantis, N. L. D. (2010). "Ego depletion and the strength model of self-control: A meta-analysis." *Psychological Bulletin, 136*(4), 495–525. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019486

Heifetz, R. A. (1998). *Leadership without easy answers*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Heifetz, R. A., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Harvard Business Press.

Hillman, J. (1977). *Re-visioning psychology: A groundbreaking exploration of the soul-making process and life-soul connections*. William Morrow Paperbacks.

Hillman, J. (2017). *The soul's code: In search of character and calling*. Ballantine Books.

Holt-Lunstad, J., Smith, T. B., & Layton, J. B. (2010). "Social relationships and mortality risk: A meta-analytic review." *PLOS Medicine, 7*(7), Article e1000316. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316

hooks, b. (1990). *Yearning: Race, gender, and cultural politics*. South End Pr.

Jung, C. G. (1969). The archetypes and the collective unconscious (2nd ed., R. F. C. Hull, Trans.). In *Collected works* (Vol. 9i). Princeton University Press.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness* (Rev. ed.). Little, Brown Book Group.

Kahn, W. A. (2001). Holding environments at work. The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 37(3), 260–279. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886301373001

Kahneman, D. (2013). *Thinking, fast and slow*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Kegan, R., & Lahey, L. L. (2009). *Immunity to change: How to overcome it and unlock the potential in yourself and your organization*. Harvard Business Press.

Keng, S. L., Smoski, M. J., & Robins, C. J. (2011). "Effects of mindfulness on psychological health: A review of empirical studies." *Clinical Psychology Review, 31*(6), 1041–1056. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2011.04.006

Kolb, A. Y., & Kolb, D. A. (2017). *The experiential educator: Principles and practices of experiential learning*. EBLS Press.

Kolb, D. A. (1983). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Prentice Hall.

Kovach, M. (2021). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts* (2nd ed.). University of Toronto Press.

Krantz, J. (2010). Social defences and twenty-first century organizations. British Journal of Psychotherapy, 26(2), 192–201. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0118.2010.01173.x

Maitlis, S., & Christianson, M. (2014). Sensemaking in organizations: Taking stock and moving forward. *Academy of Management Annals, 8*(1), 57–125. https://doi.org/10.5465/19416520.2014.873177

Mazloomi, C. L. (1998). *Spirits of the cloth: Contemporary African American quilts*. Clarkson Potter.

Mazzei, M. J., DeBode, J., Gangloff, K. A., & Song, R. (2024). "Old habits die hard: A review and assessment of the threat-rigidity literature." *Journal of Management, 51*(6), 2154–2181. https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063241286493

McAdams, D. P. (2001). "The psychology of life stories." *Review of General Psychology, 5*(2), 100–122. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.5.2.100

McAdams, D. P., & McLean, K. C. (2013). "Narrative identity. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 22*(3), 233–238." https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721413475622

Meadows, D. H. (2008). *Thinking in systems: A primer*. Chelsea Green Publishing.

Menzies Lyth, I. E. P. (1960). "Social systems as a defence against anxiety." *Human Relations, 13*(2), 95–121. https://doi.org/10.1177/001872676001300201

Nisbett, R. E., & Wilson, T. D. (1977). "Telling more than we can know: Verbal reports on mental processes." *Psychological Review, 84*(3), 231–259. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.3.231

Nkomo, S. M. (1992). "The emperor has no clothes: Rewriting race in organizations." *Academy of Management Review, 17*(3), 487–513. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1992.4281983

Nkomo, S. M. (2021). "Reflections on the continued silencing of Black scholars in management and organization studies." *Gender, Work & Organization, 28*(4), 1441–1449. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12646

Parker, R. (2019). *The subversive stitch: Embroidery and the making of the feminine* (Reprint). Bloomsbury Visual Arts.

Pasmore, W., Winby, S., Mohrman, S. A., & Vanasse, R. (2019). "Reflections: Sociotechnical systems design and organization change." *Journal of Change Management, 19*(2), 67–85. https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2018.1553761

Pearson, C. S. (2015). *Persephone rising: Awakening the heroine within*. HarperOne.

Powell, B. J., Waltz, T. J., Chinman, M. J., Damschroder, L. J., Smith, J. L., Matthieu, M. M., Proctor, E. K., & Kirchner, J. E. (2015). "A refined compilation of implementation strategies: Results from the Expert Recommendations for Implementing Change (ERIC) project." *Implementation Science, 10*, Article 21. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-015-0209-1

Proctor, E., Silmere, H., Raghavan, R., Hovmand, P., Aarons, G., Bunger, A., Griffey, R., & Hensley, M. (2011). "Outcomes for implementation research: Conceptual distinctions, measurement challenges, and research agenda." *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research, 38*, 65–76. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-010-0319-7

Pronin, E. (2009). "The introspection illusion." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 41*, 1–67. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)00401-2

Raelin, J. A. (2008). *Work-based learning: Bridging knowledge and action in the workplace* (Revised ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Roberts, L. M., & Mayo, A. J. (Eds.). (2019). *Race, work, and leadership: New perspectives on the Black experience*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Samuels, A. (1986). *Jung and the post-Jungians*. Routledge.

Samuels, A. (2015). *A new therapy for politics?* Routledge.

Schön, D. A. (1984). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. Basic Books.

Senge, P. M. (2006). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (Rev. ed.). Doubleday.

Stajkovic, A. D., Bandura, A., Locke, E. A., Lee, D., & Sergent, K. (2018). "Test of three conceptual models of influence of the big five personality traits and self-efficacy on academic performance." *Personality and Individual Differences, 120*, 238–245. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2017.08.014

Staw, B. M., Sandelands, L. E., & Dutton, J. E. (1981). "Threat-rigidity effects in organizational behavior: A multilevel analysis." *Administrative Science Quarterly, 26*(4), 501–524. https://doi.org/10.2307/2392337

Stein, M. (2014). *Minding the self: Jungian meditations on contemporary spirituality*. Routledge.

Trist, E. L., & Bamforth, K. W. (1951). "Some social and psychological consequences of the longwall method of coal-getting: An examination of the psychological situation and defences of a work group in relation to the social structure and technological content of the work system." *Human Relations, 4*(1), 3–38. https://doi.org/10.1177/001872675100400101

Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society, 1*(1), 1–40.

Wahlman, M. S. (2001). *Signs and symbols: African images in African American quilts* (2nd ed.). Tinwood Books.

Wahlman, M. S. (2020). "African textiles in African American quilts." *African Arts, 53*(4), 8–19. https://doi.org/10.1162/afar_a_00545

Wall, S. (2008). "Easier said than done: Writing an autoethnography." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 7*(1), 38–53. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690800700103

Weick, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. SAGE Publications.

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Fernwood Publishing.

Winnicott, D. W. (1961). The theory of the parent-infant relationship. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, 41*, 585–595.

World Economic Forum. (2025). *The future of jobs report 2025*. World Economic Forum.