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*EVERY MONTH ATTRACTORS SHARES TIPS AND TOOLS FROM HUMAN SYSTEMS DYNAMICS. IN THIS MONTH'S EDITION, GLENDA EOYANG TALKS ABOUT NATURAL PRACTITIONERS.*

THE NATURALS

The first time I ever talked about complexity in public, a woman in the audience approached me afterward with tears in her eyes, "I never knew there were words for the way I see the world! It is as if you looked inside my head."

She was the first of a long line of wise practitioners who see themselves in the theory and practice of human systems dynamics.

Laura, a project coordinator who convened cross functional teams to improve how sexual assaults are handled by medical, law enforcement, victim advocates, and courts, realized the need to **focus on the differences that make a difference** between professionals who must work closely together.

Dan, an executive who inherited a recently-merged organization, managed planning and action to **establish a new container** that was greater than the sum of the previous parts.

Kris, who rocketed up through the organization, **used a variety of adaptive and transforming exchanges** as she worked with and for the organization and her clients.

Each of these wise practitioners saw the patterns that emerged around them and based options and actions on what they saw. They could play in and with chaotic situations because they had developed—over many years of trial and error—the insights and habits they needed to respond in rapidly changing and turbulent situations.

You, too, may be one of the many who have your own way of seeing and influencing the individuals and teams who surround you. If you have these deep understandings and intuitions, you may wonder what all this "human systems dynamics stuff" is about.

It is about going beyond your own intuition. It is about taking effective action when you have moved outside the range of the familiar. No matter how well developed your uncommon, common sense is, you will find yourself in a time and place where the best path is not immediately obvious to you. Many circumstances can move you beyond intuitive responses. Perhaps:

- You move into a new business where the “rules of the road” are radically different than before.
- Your clients or your products change dramatically, and the new market brings in surprises.
- The scope of your work expands or contracts unexpectedly.
- New technologies change the fundamental nature of your work.
- Your demand for human resources outstrips the supply, and you begin to hire employees who have different experiences, backgrounds, habits, and expectations.
- Stronger regulations or weaker economics shift your organization and your self.
- Ethical or business decisions of others put you out of a job and into the job market overnight.

You supply the scenario, but surely you and your colleagues have faced such emergent and disruptive experiences in the recent past. If not, get ready, because you will certainly experience them in future.

When the old rules of the past are no longer relevant; when your world turns upside down; when you look around and everything you see is strange and surprising—that is when you need the language, concepts, and tools of human systems dynamics (HSD).

HSD (and the sciences of chaos and complexity from which it is derived) is not rocket science. It is a way to see the patterns that appear naturally when different people interact over time. New ways of seeing can open doors to new ways to speak and innovative ways to act. When you see a pattern, you can choose to use its power and reinforce its direction or to stand firm and oppose it. Naming the pattern means that you can share your questions and emerging answers with others. Responding to change, then, becomes a collaborative rather than a solo endeavor.

Laura, Dan, and Kris used their intuitive insights to respond in times of change. They also realized that intuition has its limits. They needed to be able to be explicit with themselves, their customers, employees, and peers about what they saw, how they decided, and why they acted when and how they did. For each of them, HSD language and tools leveraged what they knew and prepared them for the unknown.

Are you a natural? If so, take steps to leverage your own intuitions.

- Reflect on how and what you see around you.
- Talk with peers about how and why you decide.
- Dip into the rich literature in chaos, complexity, nonlinear dynamics, and human systems dynamics.
- Join a network of research/practitioners who are taking the journey of discovery together—HSD Institute [www.hsdinstitute.org](http://www.hsdinstitute.org).