CAPLOR HORIZONS

RIPPLE PAPERS

...creating ripples of change

The Caplor House:
Differences and Diagonals

Ann Alder

Experiential Learning Advisor

Learning differently

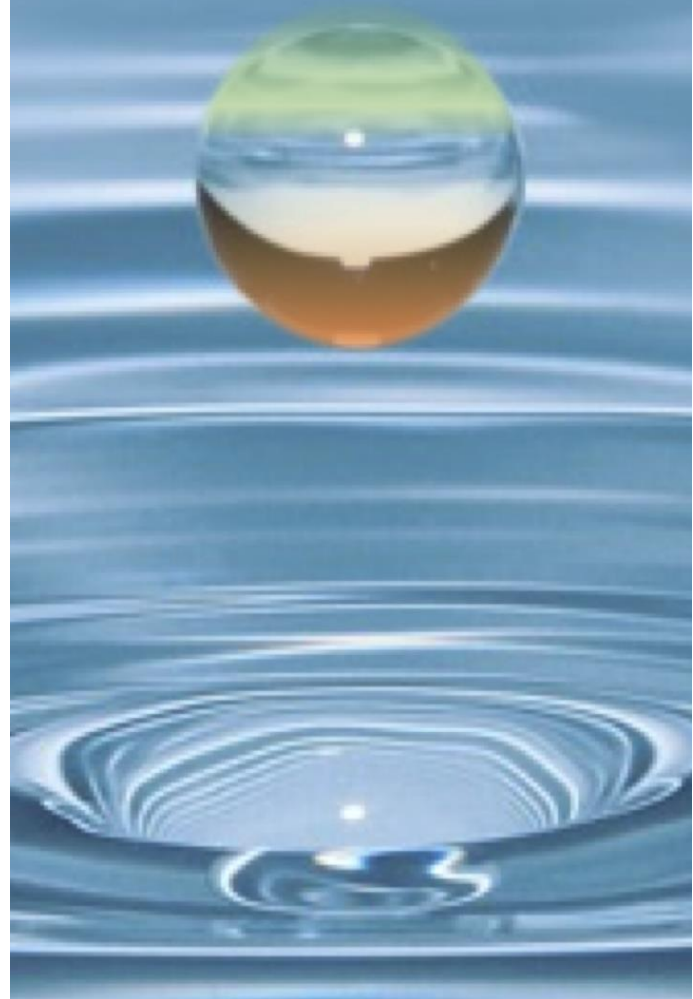*Thinking differently*

Acting differently

The Caplor House: Differences and Diagonals

_____

Using the Caplor House to understand aspects of individual difference

Our Preferences

The Caplor House gives insights into our preferences.

These relate to behaviours in each of the rooms: The Kitchen, Family Room, Observatory and Library.

We are all capable of functioning in each of the four rooms, and we move between them rapidly, consciously or unconsciously.
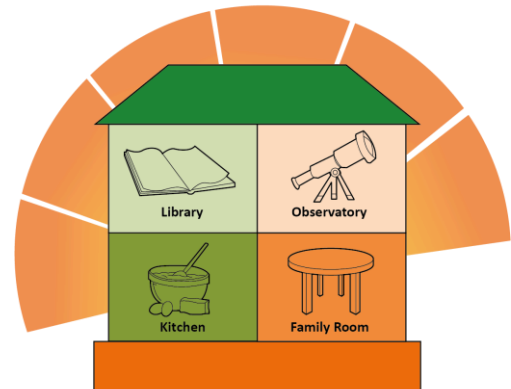
However, we tend to have preferences - there are some rooms we would rather spend time in, if given free choice. As with most things, the more time we spend doing something, the more practised we become. The more practised we become the more we trust our abilities and the more comfortable we become at using them. This tends to develop stronger preferences for some 'rooms' than others. And our preferences become obvious in the language we use and the behaviours we adopt.

Being aware of our preferences can enable us to move more consciously around the House - this helps us be more effective.

Diversity of Preference

The different preferences that people demonstrate can lead to great collaboration and creativity or they can lead to friction and tension.

In many processes, such as problem-solving and innovation, change management and process improvement we need to work in all of the rooms. Teamwork allows us to find people who are most comfortable in each room and to use their strength to identify strong solutions. Different individuals can 'balance' each other and compensate for each other's least preferred ways of working.

However, it can sometimes be difficult to make decisions or work effectively if very strong preferences come into conflict. This can happen within an individual (when they experience different 'pulls' from different rooms) or between people whose strength of preferences leads them to prioritise and sequence things differently.

Working with the Diagonals

The diagonal lines between rooms suggest the greatest diversity or difference and the most potential for tension, indecisiveness or conflict. The two diagonal lines that are particularly significant run between:

The Library and the Family Room: the difference between reason and emotion, head and heart, logic and intuition.
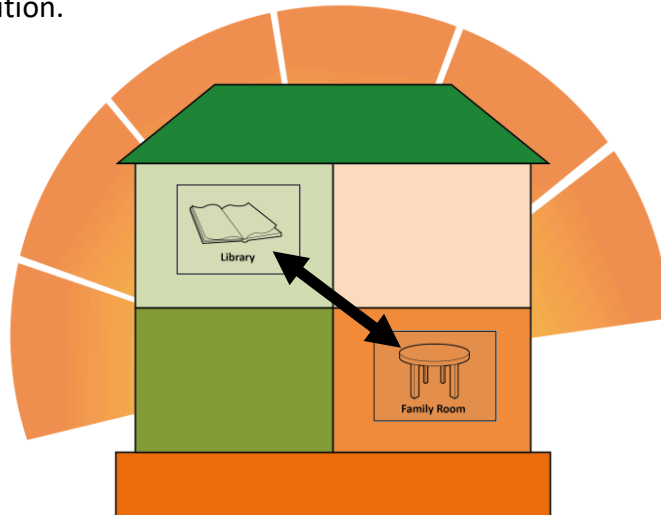
And the Observatory and the Kitchen: the difference between big picture and detail, future and present, risk and security.
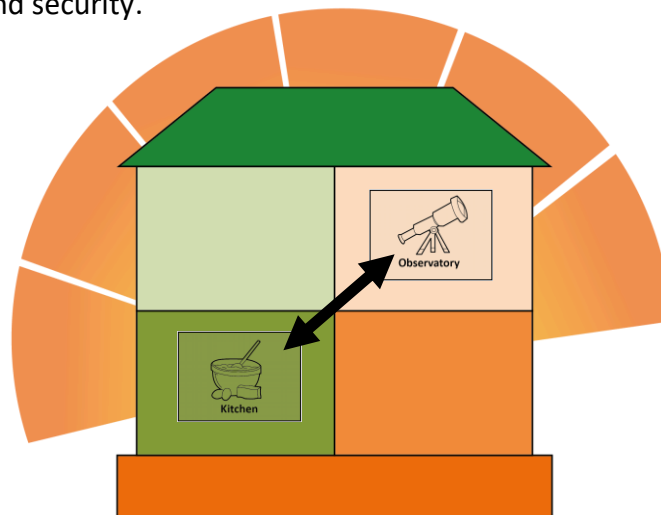

Differences in our preferences - How do we help people to resolve tensions, indecisiveness and conflict?

When we encounter tension, arising from the conflict between the prioritisation of activity and behaviour in each of the rooms, it may be necessary to break an established pattern or position by moving into another space.

For an individual, this may require a conscious effort to move to another 'room' in order to get a different perspective on the situation.

The individual is likely to move to the available room that they feel most comfortable in.

However, if the conflict is between two people, the most successful outcome will be achieved if they move to the available room that both parties feel most comfortable in.
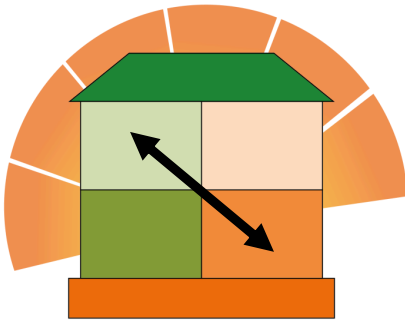
The tension here comes from the difficulty of aligning a rational argument **(Library)** with an emotional response **(Family Room)**.

This is typical of someone understanding the need for change, but resisting at an emotional level.
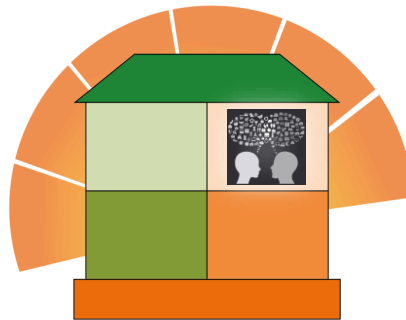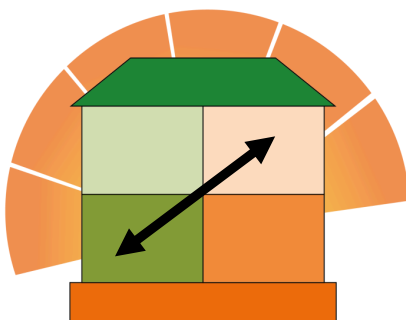
One solution is to move to the **Observatory** and look for another option:

"Let's pause for a while and go and look for some other options. What else can you suggest that might work? Can you see any similarities between your two different ideas?"
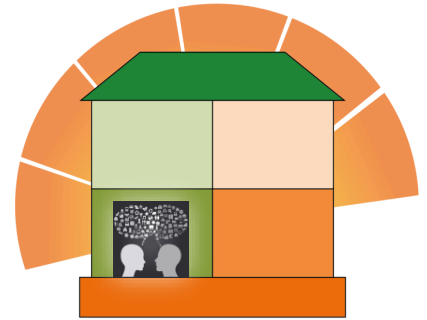
An alternative solution is to move to the **Kitchen** to identify any practical, operational things that can be done:

"What can we agree we need to get on with? What can we be doing whilst we continue to try to resolve the challenge?"

The tension here comes from a need for safety and control **(Kitchen)** clashing with a need for risk and excitement **(Observatory).**

Or from an abstract and imaginative idea that does not satisfy a need for detail and structure.
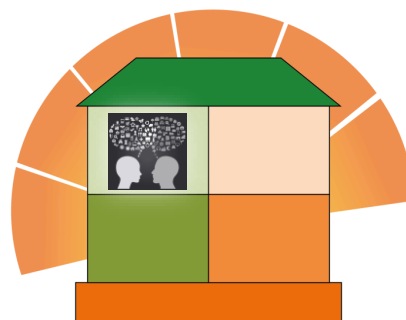
One solution is to move to the **Library** and go back to purpose and the reason why something is being proposed:

"Let's go back a step or two and check what it is we are actually trying to achieve? What is your understanding and what do we need to put in place to make progress?"
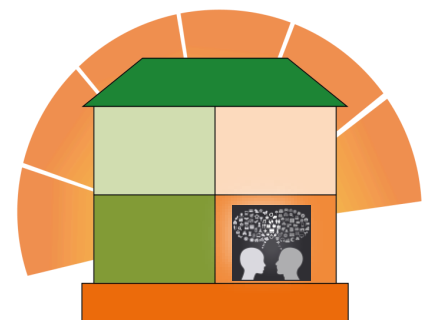
An alternative solution is to move the **Family Room** to identify what is really important to each person:

"What really matters? How does this make you feel? Can you understand what each person needs to help us move on?"

Caplor Horizons – Background

Established in 2014, Caplor Horizons is an independent charity. We work with other charities and responsible businesses and now have over 50 Advisors. These are outstanding people that bring specialist knowledge and experience. They contribute their time on a voluntary basis, or at reduced rates, so that Caplor Horizons can provide high quality and distinctive services at an accessible cost.

Working locally, nationally and internationally, we help other organisations think differently about themselves and the new horizons that they face. We support them in strengthening their leadership, renewing their strategy and improving their influence.

We want to encourage and assist a new generation of organisations that are committed to making a positive and lasting impact. We believe that if we are to achieve real, sustainable change, we need to inspire and enable people to learn differently, think differently and act differently.

Our vision is: *A world where leaders deliver a sustainable future for all*

Our purpose is: *To be courageous, compassionate and creative in facilitating transformational change*

Our values are:

- **Courage** – We are courageous change makers committed to challenging assumptions, taking risks and having difficult conversations

- **Compassion** – We are open, understanding and heartfelt, encouraging the nourishment of our whole selves and others

- **Creativity** – We learn, think and act differently, and are innovative and resilient in an ever-changing world

Our beliefs are:

- Through diversity we ignite dynamic innovation

- Collaboration helps achieve greater impact

- Everyone matters

- We are all leaders in our individual and collective ways – we are all change makers!

- Learning is more effective if it is fun, engaging and creative

- Building on people's strengths creates greater resilience

Our strategic goals:

- Goal 1: Transforming Leadership

- Goal 2: Strengthening Resilience

- Goal 3: Increasing Collaboration

Learning differently
Thinking differently
Acting differently