

## Framework: **Comfort Zone**

One of the hallmarks of our work at Common Ground is asking and pushing participants to step outside of their comfort zones and embrace the sense of awe, excitement, and opportunity that comes with facing one's fears—organizational or individual. We work systematically to create safe spaces where questions are encouraged, differences are celebrated, and conflict is viewed as a natural and requisite component of any change process.

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In order to understand how the comfort zone concept is integrated into our work, we use the metaphor of the bubble, which surrounds and moves with us, protects and shields us, and keeps us feeling safe. The fluidity of the bubble allows us to move through our day interacting with people and situations through the safety of our comfort zone. As we navigate our often stressful lives, this approach helps us to be productive, feel connected to those we care about, and maintain our personal status quo.



Usually, when we get involved with people, it is because the status quo is no longer working or “the bubble” has become too limiting. Sometimes we become so comfortable that our organizations stop innovating—stop growing. Even worse, maybe they have begun to wither; or in our personal lives, we feel ourselves “burning out.” Perhaps we are approaching our work with less passion, or it has become more difficult for you to remain competitive with your colleagues or excite about the challenges of your mission-critical work.

In these moments, we work to address the systemic issues; and then, perhaps more importantly, we begin to push. We help you to create space for difficult conversations; address the issues that are creating personal or organizational blocks; and uncover and discover hidden skills, talents, and other assets. We create strategies for risk-taking that allows your comfort zone bubble to expand and adapt to changing conditions. We help you to increase your flexibility, regain your passion, become more competitive and more efficient, and embrace the life you want for yourself.

Often in the social-profit sector, our personal and professional lives can become blurred. This is normal and can be expected when people with a passion for making a difference in the world manage to find an organization that can help them do it. We believe that all of us can take steps daily to expand our own comfort zones, and that this will make us better able to deal with conflict and all of the other day-to-day events which can create anxiety and negatively affect our quality of life.