

EMERGENT STRATEGY

The world is full of beauty, magic, miracles, and patterns that induce wonders. [...]

Emergence is one of the best concepts I have learned for discussing this wow, this wonder.

“Emergence is the way complex systems and patterns arise out of a multiplicity of relatively simple interactions.” [...]

Emergence emphasizes critical connections over critical mass, building authentic relationships, listening with all the senses of the body and the mind.

With our human gift of reasoning, we have tried to control or overcome the emergent processes that are our own nature, the processes of the planet we live on, and the universe we call home. The result is crisis at each scale we are aware of, from our deepest inner moral sensibilities to the collective scale of climate and planetary health and beyond, to our species in relation to space and time.

The crisis is everywhere, massive massive massive.

And we are small.

But emergence notices the way small actions and connections create complex systems, patterns that become ecosystems and societies. Emergence is our inheritance as a part of this universe; it is how we change. Emergent strategy is how we intentionally change in ways that grow our capacity to embody the just and liberated worlds we long for.

adriene maree brown, Emergent Strategy (AK Press 2017), p. 3;
(italics = Nick Obolensky)



FIGURE 4-1

Habits of Effective Dialogue (Lent 2006)

- Respect is bedrock.
- Judgment is suspended.
- Listening is paired with empathy and understanding.
- Examination of issues trumps defense of viewpoints.
- Inquiry guides questions and comments.
- Silence is accepted.
- Assumptions are reexamined.
- Spontaneity is encouraged.
- Control is diminished.
- Perspectives are broadened.
- Ambiguity is expected.
- Differences are respected.

*Evergreen is
an institution &
a community
that continues to
organize itself so
that it can clear
away obstacles
to learning.*

[first sentence of the "[Social Contract](#)" of The Evergreen State College]



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