



Team Balance

	We have problem people hindering our teamwork	How do we turn this atmosphere around?		
We're too odd a mix to be a real Home Team		My partner keeps complaining, so what can I do?		If only they were more like me... then we'd be perfectly matched
I'm the realist - I don't see how this plan will fly				How do we turn the negatives into positives?
I'm angry at the kids for how they are behaving in the project			I'm the dreamer - but my partner does not appreciate it	

Achieving Team Balance

Inside many of us is the idea, ‘I must be like everyone else.’ And, ‘Everyone else must be like me.’

Well, this comes from spending many years in grade school, where we were socialized to respond to our peers in a way that would allow us to fit in. Thankfully nowadays, kids are taught to be tolerant and to accept diversity – but they will probably grow up with the similar notion that everyone is just like them anyway. It is just normal to think this. But – the truth is – we actually are all unique, and team’s strength depends on this. So, in order to function well, your team needs to understand all of its members’ various talents, and blend them in such a way that will enable the team to move on toward its goals.

Who are the ‘critters’ on your team?

Despite our polished exteriors, inside each of us is an assortment of styles, some are grown up and other parts are little kids. When we get on a project, we can let loose a variety of inner energies – almost personalities. If we understand who these are, we can be more accepting of each other. I lovingly refer to them here as ‘critters.’ It can be helpful for the Home Team to assess its members like an inventory, ever holding them in respectful love in your heart, but realistically looking at the strengths and limitations that can accompany each type of personality ‘critter.’

To know what you have in your team’s toolbox, you will need to identify the special contributions made by each of your members. Here is a little catalogue of ‘critters’ that may help you out by reminding you what types of ‘little critters’ are among your own team members. It can be good to play around with this a bit, because it will encourage some thinking, and get you talking about how these diverse talents fit together. It is also good to talk about the natural tangles. Try some of these methods to turn around the negatives and to create a good blend out of the collection of critters assembled for your team.

Want to bring out the best in all your team members?

All coins have two sides. One side can be a strength, and the other – a detriment, just depending upon the opportunities and how one rallies to them. See if you recognize some of the types of folks below and, as you do, you will see that many characteristics are the flip side of some wonderful strengths. As the Home Team, you want to bring out the best in each of

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your members, so see if some folks you know show up below, even on the negative side – and if so, use your imagination and the suggestions here to help turn their contributions positive. It can be a real good time for them to finally find a way to fit in and use the gifts they were given rather than stumbling with them. They will be pleased too, to have assistance and the vision from you to help them see a way out for themselves.

Who's on your team?


Looking through the catalogue of *Critters* in this chapter – do you see the positives in your team members? Even if we are not always at our best, we can contribute these strengths to the team if we know that others value them. And, telling your teammates about the good things you see inside them can be a boost personally, and a motivator to make that effort again.

Do you have some problems that are also in this list? No surprise; no one is perfect. SO, all the more reason to sit down and talk about how each one contributes to the team's strength. All assets are two-edged. We can be extra smart and yet miss-tie our shoes; you know the stories of geniuses who can't find their way home – well, the same is true for all types of strengths: there is always another side to it that needs to be tempered in order to balance the person. The energetic person may tend to overlook the quiet moments. Or, the dreamer may not see the practical limitations. Once we understand that each of us has only a piece of the puzzle and not the whole picture, we can see where we fit in and will look to others for completion, asking them to add their pieces, too. When we understand that it is about addition and not subtraction – then we are not afraid to see the pieces come together, making a new picture of the project or the family.

How to Read the Catalogue of 'Critters' - a key or legend

Here is the critter's name or "type"		Team role-setting
	don't leave it negative - reach for the vision and encourage them!	
In this darker box a positive essence is described about this 'critter's' better side	The middle section describes how it might look if you didn't know about their positive side - if you have a problem, just look in the middle boxes to see which ones describe your 'problem critter.' Yes, some negatives can be the flip side of <u>any</u> type of gift.	In the right hand section is a vision of how this 'critter' may enhance a team - their place in the flow, their special contribution.
Below that, some examples of practical results of their gifts when applied positively		
These wider rows show <u>how</u> to turn it positive if it has gone sour - If they get into their negative side, some ways to turn it around.		

Who's on your team? It is important to know who the critters are on your team in order to form a network that reflects your own particular blend of talents. Negatives can be turned positive – if you just give them a chance. You will give up total control, but create better teamwork. You will have a new blend, with new outcomes – and that is the point of families and improvements – to experience a renewal.


“Practical Realist”		 <i>don't leave it negative</i>	<i>Team role-setting</i>
<i>sees realistic limitations</i>	Keeps plans on track.	May overlook creative options.	
Remind them that each member will make a special contribution that might not be apparent quite yet; that there is value in dreamers, as well as doers, and chroniclers.			
<i>is sensitive to time constraints</i>	Knows when to quit.	May not see the energy flowing in others to create & produce.	The pragmatist is a fantastic asset to the team. They will be an important part of success. Yet they also need to know that they are not the only part of the team, and that the whole team will contribute many special things to the outcome of the project and the improvement of the home and family.
Point out the practical value of letting the work or talking continue in order to get a positive result.			

Practical Realist

Gets a bad rap as a spoil sport

But really has so much grounding to offer the creative process - this person will really help the project succeed by being a gateway to better ideas and plans. Give this person the clock and the checkbook and they will keep it in balance, on budget, and on time! Likely they will also help oversee a safe worksite too. Don't be rebellious against this one's reluctant energy - learn from their perspectives. It may take some convincing to get them to tell you about their reasons, but it will be a great education!

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“Creative Artistic”		 <i>don't leave it negative</i>	<i>Constructive Team role</i>
<i>is an idea person</i>		a Dreamer can go too far a field.	
Supplies the dream.			
TURN it POSITIVE -- Nicely remind them that they are over the edge (do not worry – they are used to hearing this).			
<i>adds beauty to home</i>		may be dissatisfied when things become messy or ugly for a practical reason.	
Appealing results.			
Reassure them that the overall goal will reflect the beauty of the vision, and that this is necessary and temporary.			
<i>is expressive of feelings</i>		their expressiveness can be overwhelming to some folks, or at times when we need to suck it up and just accomplish the task rather than vent about it.	
Expresses feelings on behalf of family. Shares the heart of the family – is the family emotional barometer.			
Provide alternatives for expression (perhaps demolition or music), so that feelings do not show all the time. Help them become aware that their views may be real, but that there is a time and a place for the expression of their feelings.			

Tell them about the value of their dreams and artistic visions to the project, the home, and the family. Remind them that they are unique and that their visions will enable others to strive for something special. And that others will also have valuable additions to the vision – that the home will represent the merging of several visions in this process. Let them know they will need to ask for special consideration if they really, really need something to go their way due to artistic sensitivities – see chapter on Deep Communication.
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Creative Artistic

Tends to be labeled unusual or self absorbed

But if you listen, you can see the value in their unusual ideas. Like this book for instance - kinda different - but helpful. As long as you are polite to the artist-critter, they do not mind that you may not use their whole idea. They find value in spurring others to better solutions, using little pieces of many ideas. Let them know if you got an inspiration from what they said and they will be fascinated by how you wove it together with your knowledge and practical considerations to solve a problem.


“Encourager”		 <i>don't leave it negative</i>	<i>Team role-setting</i>
<i>is a Motivator</i>	<p>When positive - Can get folks involved: “Catch the spirit!” They are almost a cheer leader with a narrative of the work, the accomplishments, and the goals.</p>	<p>Can bring down others’ moods, if negative. Can be loud, obnoxious, expressive, and contagious. You may notice that they are negatively affecting everyone around them.</p>	<p>This person can motivate others and so likely has leadership qualities. If they are acting up, it doesn’t mean they are not interested; indeed, they may act negative, but are likely very interested in improving the home life. Let them know that you see their potential, and give them feedback about how they can positively affect others. Employ or assign them to helpful tasks, and involve them in sequence planning for work and break times.</p>
<p>Help them with constructive outlets for their feelings. Suggest places they can have difficult feelings where it won’t pollute the home site. Be nice – they may have real feelings, but need to understand that negative tones are expressive too, and can be loud transmitters that affect others.</p>			
<i>is helpful to people’s Physical needs</i>	<p>Can interfere with physical atmosphere – loud, bad music, ruined snacks, messy spills.</p>		
<p>Helps people with food, drink, and rest.</p>			
<p>Let them know nicely about how the jobsite can be made more conducive to work. Ask them to lend a hand in providing positive work music, assembling timely snacks, and helping take things to the dump.</p>			

The Encourager


May need to discover their Encouraging side!

This ‘critter’ can be very connected and emotional. Somehow it seems that they catch everyone’s cold or damp mood. Their empathy can be a weighty burden - especially for a young one. Be sure to give them soothing and a chance to contribute to the positive mood - uplifting spirits of others, perhaps by getting cool drinks. They can be surprised to discover that they have a good impact on others when they help out.

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“Facilitator”		 <i>don't leave it negative</i>	Team role-setting
<i>is emotionally tuned to others</i>			Give permission to the Facilitator to play a role in smoothing things when they are ruffled. Appreciate and validate these wonderful gestures and the striving for peace. Discuss how it is important some times for conflict to be faced and resolved. Develop some signals and limits by asking them to restrain themselves when others indicate that they do need to stand in the wind and face each other. Reassure them that peace is around the corner and everyone is committed to respectful conflict resolution.
Sees people's needs and responds to them with helpful gestures. Brings important information forward about how folks are feeling and what is not being said, but needs to be known.	may react to others' moods and may demonstrate or boil with their discontent. may take on everyone's gripes as their own.		
Let them know you are interested in keeping track of how others are doing, and that this person's special sense of these things will be important for planning and turning the process toward a positive direction. So, invite them to find a way of sharing this with the Home Team.			
<i>is a peacemaker</i>			
Brings loose ends together and smoothes conflicts.	May get frustrated when conflict is necessary for the sorting process.		
Make sure that the process is going well and that no one is scared. But explain that sharing passions is part of life and that different ideas assertively stated is healthy in sorting out the options.			

Facilitator
Is highly aware of the interactions of others
 When negative, they can magnify the awkward interactions that come with the project site
 - but if they understand the process, they can really help folks get along and dovetail together as a great team. You really want to involve this one in the planning of flow and assigning of help and supply lines. Either way, they will often give you excellent feedback about the healthy flow of teamwork.


“Energizer Bunny”		 <i>don’t leave it negative</i>	<i>Team role-setting</i>
<i>Inertia-breaker</i>	May have much trouble talking about or sitting still for some of the processes in this book. May jump the gun on projects.		
Helps team get going when others would be sitting still.			
Use signals and structures from these chapters; be sure that results are agreed upon and as a team write down the next step.			
<i>is a multi-tasker</i>	Can have problems focusing – losing track of what to do, and might not finish tasks.	With all this energy and willingness, this person is like nuclear fuel – it can propel the boat, yet needs structure and a clear pathway to vent its powerful work-steam. This person can make things happen – but will need to understand and agree to the lists, structures, andground rules you develop together in order to help them succeed in their contributions.	
Can get involved in several projects at once.			
Discussion and list making, with step-wise ordering of tasks. Check to see if the resulting list will work for them.			
<i>doesn’t give up</i>	May initiate many active work sites, causing others to fall over the plentiful projects. May get off-task, off-list, lost, & overwhelmed.		
May be very responsive to on-the-spot requests and seeks to please, stopping at nothing to make it happen.			
Discuss the investment of energy and time, and together make a decision about what is best worth their efforts.			

Energizer Bunny

Boy do they go!

Rest is not in their vocabulary. It may seem that they are simply unable to sit down. OK. Just get them to stay in the room and give them something to do while you get to talk about project plans and decision making. Be sure you are very clear in giving the green light for action. It might not seem they are listening but ask them about it - they will repeat the points and outcome to you!

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“The Accountant”		 <i>don't leave it negative</i>	<i>Team role-setting</i>
<i>tracks value in money</i>	May not value the intrinsic benefits of some projects.		The accountant will be an asset by striving for an orderly outcome that is on budget. But they will also need to understand the value of their opposite – the artist. These two ends of the continuum will need to develop a common language and an appreciation of how they need each other. This can be new to both, since they may usually avoid each other. Activity suggestion: Both choose and prepare to buy finish details such as fabrics, tiles, and railings – using the chapters of the book as a framework.
Will keep the project within budget.			
Name the intrinsic features of the project and translate these values to some kind of weighting that may be quantified, even if it is subjective. Not all currency is money.			
<i>avoids gambling on a weak horse</i>	May not be able to invest when the vision is beyond them.		
Will not be putting money down on tasks that won't succeed.			
Will need more clear communication of the vision and what factors will make it likely to succeed.			


The Accountant

May think others are just like them

Until they discover we are not and we have already spent too much; this can make them mad. So, try to identify this ‘critter’ early on and help them understand the assets for each of the ‘critter’ types. They can understand a list and so will like to see it in those terms.


Having this one on the team, like the practical realist, will make budgeting come up right - if you put them in that task. They can be very good also at organizing bids, materials delivery and schedules of all sorts. Their eye for detail and organization makes them a great librarian for the project.

“The Wizard – Professor”			Team role-setting
		don't leave it negative	
knows how to do wonderful magic	May be over-confident, even in areas about which they know little Can seem like a know-it-all.	Assign the wizard to the expert role, but give them a set of signals and expectations for when to chime in. The Wizard also needs to understand the students among the Home Team's members. So take some time for each person to describe their strengths and gaps in knowledge -- all around the table, students and Wizard alike. This needs to be done very respectfully for all concerned, especially if the wizard is an elder and not part of the immediate family.	
Knows the proper professional methods for many project tasks and details – what a help.			
Tell them you appreciate their knowledge. Respectfully ask them for sources when they seem to be talking through their hat. Reassure them that you value them even when they don't know the answer, and that you are glad when they admit it.			
is a wise teacher	May try teaching someone something they already know; and so might create bad feeling.		
Patient and takes time to instruct folks in how to perform new tasks.			
Tell the Wizard about the background and experiences of the other people, and affirm how they may add to each other's font of knowledge.			



The Wizard - Professor
Dazzles us
 Many of us can be intimidated by the Wizard. Yet they want to be a part of things like anyone else. They just happen to know a lot.
 Try to give them an outlet. When you explain the different talents of the team to them, they will really get it!


The Entertainer
Not just the clown
 They can be very Contagious in their mood and gestures. Having them on board may seem like work, but is worth it - as they will keep things rolling and provide team spirit in their little antics and sharing of stories, tunes, and jokes.

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“The Entertainer”		 <i>don't leave it negative</i>	Team role-setting
<i>keeps the flow smooth – like watching a dancer</i>	It's just fun to watch how they work and sing while working – others catch on	May be show-off or goofy, dangerous or wasteful	
Talk about the risks in goofing off and the care that went into your budget. They probably do not want to squander your time & money, and will simmer down.			
<i>brings fun extras to the scene</i>	Always has a little smile or joke; shares things, and loans or gives items	May bring off-color humor, may be sarcastic or tease someone who does not like it	
Explain how their humor hurts the other person, and they are likely to stop. Let them know that the teased person is not going to address them directly, but to please honor their feelings and let things turn more positive. Then the relationship will likely move on and improve.			
<i>is a storyteller</i>	Can teach and entertain with stories about anything	May occupy too much time talking; or may tell inappropriate stories	
Explain the need to work and the sensitivities of the various folks present – ask them to keep specific types of stories to themselves. Give clear signals when break times end, be sure to have someone start the next task with a flourish.			
<i>lives life with the music on!</i>	Sings, whistles, has great tunes	May be too loud, play bad music with unwelcome lyrics	
Very important NOT to insult their music. Just help them understand the tastes of the other listeners and everyone's responsibilities regarding common spaces.			

This person can help the team have fun, and need to be made aware of how to accomplish that. Give them the inside scoop on what makes your team laugh and enjoy themselves. Maybe the whole team might talk about their sources of enjoyment and relaxation. Team players can even suggest types of music this person can bring. Be sure to keep it positive with the team, giving lots of details about likes, and only short lists of dislikes. If it is a teenager, assigning or employing them to provide music and entertainment can be a great investment.

“The Captain”		 <i>don't leave it negative</i>	<i>Team role-setting</i>
<i>Appreciates the variety in members' talents</i>	May complain about negative traits in others or a bad mix of people, or gaps in talents.		The Captain needs to know about their impact on the team. They can be a true leader in tone and vision. A leader does not have to be in charge to set a positive tone and hold a true vision. Others will follow the tone they set and the courage they show. These character skills will develop as people follow their lead. Eventually, they will be put in charge of more tasks, and will help their teams succeed.
Blends talents well for good task accomplishment, nice atmosphere.			
Ask The Captain to identify the Team's gaps and look for folks who could fill them. Ask The Captain to help you turn those negatives around in the other team critters.			
<i>Sets tone and vision</i>	If a complainer and doomsayer, others may walk off the job.		
Upbeat, has good humor, sees what is ahead.			
Have a good sit-down and talk together about a positive vision for the site. Ask for The Captain's help in bringing that vision to light with the team. Give feedback about the tones and humor that you like in their style and ask them to share it with the team – that it will improve the overall mood of the group.			


The Captain

May not know they are a leader

This 'critter' sees the system - the work now and even down the line. They can be discontent if it is not planned well, but their vision and perspective can be most helpful in solving just the problems they complain about.

They may not be a shiny leader, but can often recruit folks on a task or team because they see the whole picture and can help others see their place in it. All people want to contribute their special gifts, and the Captain will help them know just where they can do that.

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“Worker bee”		 <i>don't leave it negative</i>	Team role-setting
<i>is happy to work</i>	Keeps tone work-oriented.	May not like to wait & plan or delay work to talk.	
Point out the value of the next step needed if inserting another step will delay the actual “work.” Give specifics about how steps of communication or planning could impact the project that day – in terms of tools, materials, or sequencing.			
<i>is eager to use strength & energy</i>	Gets things done.	Can hurt themselves if overeager.	
Stretching and sustenance are good preventers of injuries and ruined materials. Asking for help, even if you have to wait, is worth it in the long run.			
<i>keeps up pace</i>	Everyone moves along with this bee.	May tire others out, or not stop to see what needs fixing.	
Be sure to ring the ‘bell’ for clear break times – specifying what the break is for.			

This person will be the dynamo driving on to the goal. Steady and effective workers really make the job a pleasure. Let them know their value. Some things may need individual effort – be sure to thank them for those times. But also let them know they are not carrying the whole team, and that assistance can be found for anything if necessary. They need to realize they are part of a pulling team, but only by working in tandem with the rest will things blend together well.

Worker Bee

Gets to work and sticks with it till it is done

Wow, they are very popular on a job site.

Let them teach you about the rhythm of their work - but be sure not to take advantage or for granted. They can be so efficient and humble

- even asking for more to do, that you have absorbed their summer

before either of you know it.

So, if you have such a team member - watch out for their needs - food, leisure, money - and offer to help offset their contributions by helping them with your talents.


The Journalist
 ↓ **We have seen their notes & their lists**

They have a long memory and let you know so much. It can be overwhelming - but yet that talent can be channeled for the sake of the team's cooperative mission - to accomplish something. This one can really help us understand our own purpose and identity if we only listen and help them add their perspectives to the **Home Team.**


Houdini →

Can be such a wonder!

But the surprises can be mystifying. Be careful if they bolt ahead - they will be making things happen in no time - communication with this critter is a real key - but just don't ask them to explain how they do what they do - it must be some kind of trade secret - but don't worry, if they understand the task - they will make your wish their goal.

“Journalist”		 <i>don't leave it negative</i>	Team role-setting
<i>keeps track of events</i>	Historian – knows what happened when – can keep notes, take pictures and even videos, notices progressions.	May list off the negative history of the project and life itself; teens may be especially prone to this.	No matter the age, the historian can be intimidating, but is always an important part of figuring out where you are from & where you’ve come. Ask them to officially fill the role of journalist/ historian on the team; give them an awareness of the importance of their chronicling and additions to the whole project.
Listen to their input. Subtract the tone (ask them if they could?) and hear them out peacefully.			
<i>provides perspectives</i>	Can seem critical; may get pessimistic or disheartened.		
Can help team see the whole picture – not swept up in the middle of things – can see progress, tight spots, corrections.			
Add some heart to their view and remind them of the reasons for it all.			

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<p>“Houdini”</p>		<p>Team role-setting</p>
<p><i>is a strategic planner</i></p>	<p><i>don't leave it negative</i></p>	
<p>Sorts tasks into steps and puts them in order.</p>	<p>Can take too long to get started if tasks do not need planning.</p>	<p>Assign certain planning tasks to this person to organize and share with team. In return, ask them to trust the others to name the times when planning or materials will get in the way.</p>
<p>Help them decide which tasks do not need a plan.</p>		
<p><i>specializes in procurement</i></p>		
<p>Can spot material needs and find where to get things. May be able to locate lost items.</p>	<p>Can get too much stuff ahead of the game – can produce gridlock.</p>	
<p>Arrange but Wait - Ask them to arrange plans and bids, but to wait on contracts, delivery, and payment.</p>		

Practice overflows into the Home

Practicing your team balance will overflow into your home life. Seeing the negatives as flip sides of a positive strength will yield answers to many dead ends. Especially in a home, families need to be encouraged to bring out each member's strengths since you know each other so very well. And who will take greater joy in seeing your members grow into their gifts? Of course those who love them.

As you sort through these discussions together, many skills will deepen. You will improve team problem solving and an interchange of ideas that can be very fruitful in a family. All of this is the engine that solves problems. The methods used here can be applied to many other areas of life: dealing with kids' curfews, an overspent budget, and even Granny falling ill. You will build good skills and find many new resources in the ways in which you learn how to deal with the variety of viewpoints and gifts supplied by your family's members.

Notes from Team Balance

Ok - time to check out the critters on YOUR Home Team!

Inventory time!

1. Go through the catalogue and look at the positives - only~

Put initials next to positive critter types you see on your **Home Team**

2. Now, alone with your partner,

Are there any negative traits in critters on your team?

Now, using the catalogue, write down what that person would be doing if they used that gift positively

Read what it says about how to turn it around. Write down how that would happen in your **Home Team**

3. Look for the positives to manifest in all your critters

Talk about it with your partner

Pray for them

Visualize

Encourage these positives

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