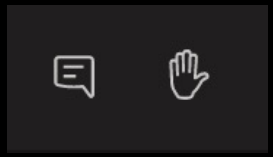
Managing Conflict

ELM Module : Vital conversations

Ready for the session..

Find the Chatbox and Hands Up controls



Mute any background notifications and phones

Learning outcomes

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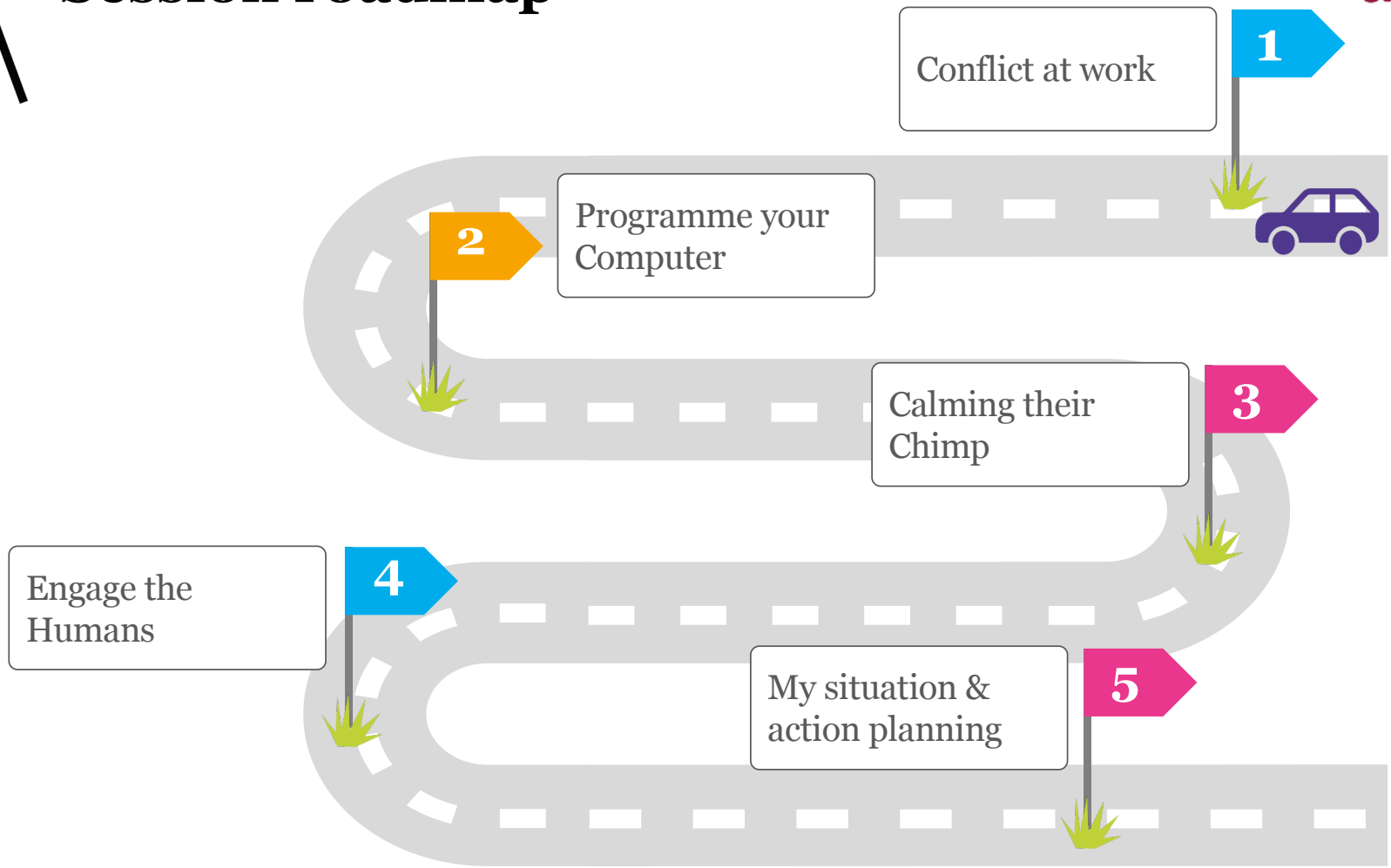
Understand what drives conflict and why we see difficult behaviour	Adopt a structured approach to keeping difficult conversations on track

Session roadmap



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Why does conflict happen?

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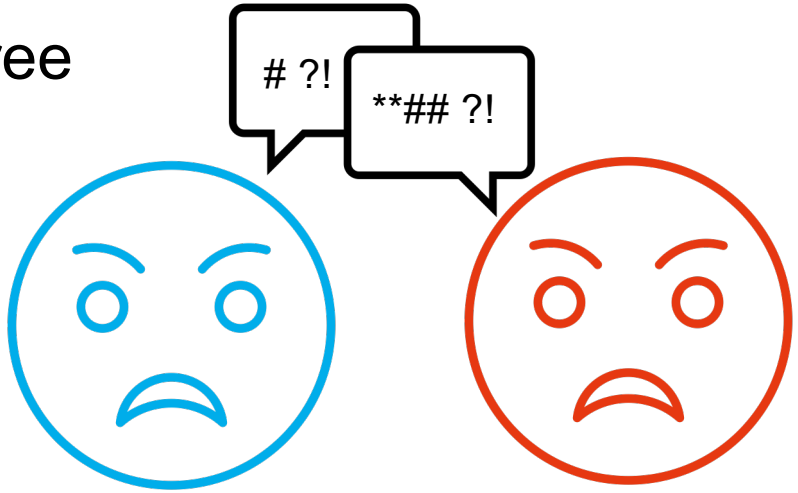
What sparks conflict at work?

Conflict happens when we have three factors converging:

- Stakes are high
- Opinions differ
- Emotions are strong



In the brain : The different characters

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Human

Seeks purpose

Logical thinking

Links Past/Present/Future

Chimp

Survival and threat

Black & white emotional thinking

In the NOW

More powerful than Human

5 x faster than Human

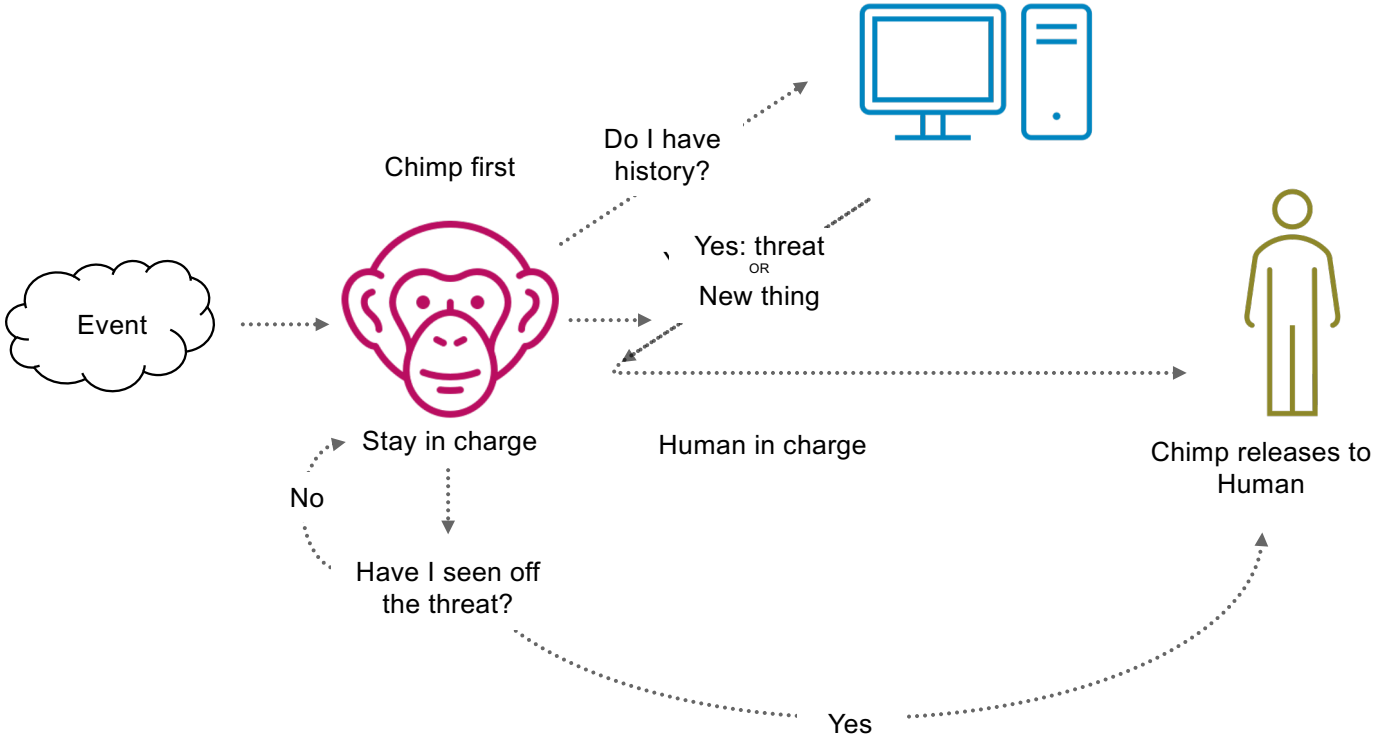
Computer

Automatic acts and thoughts

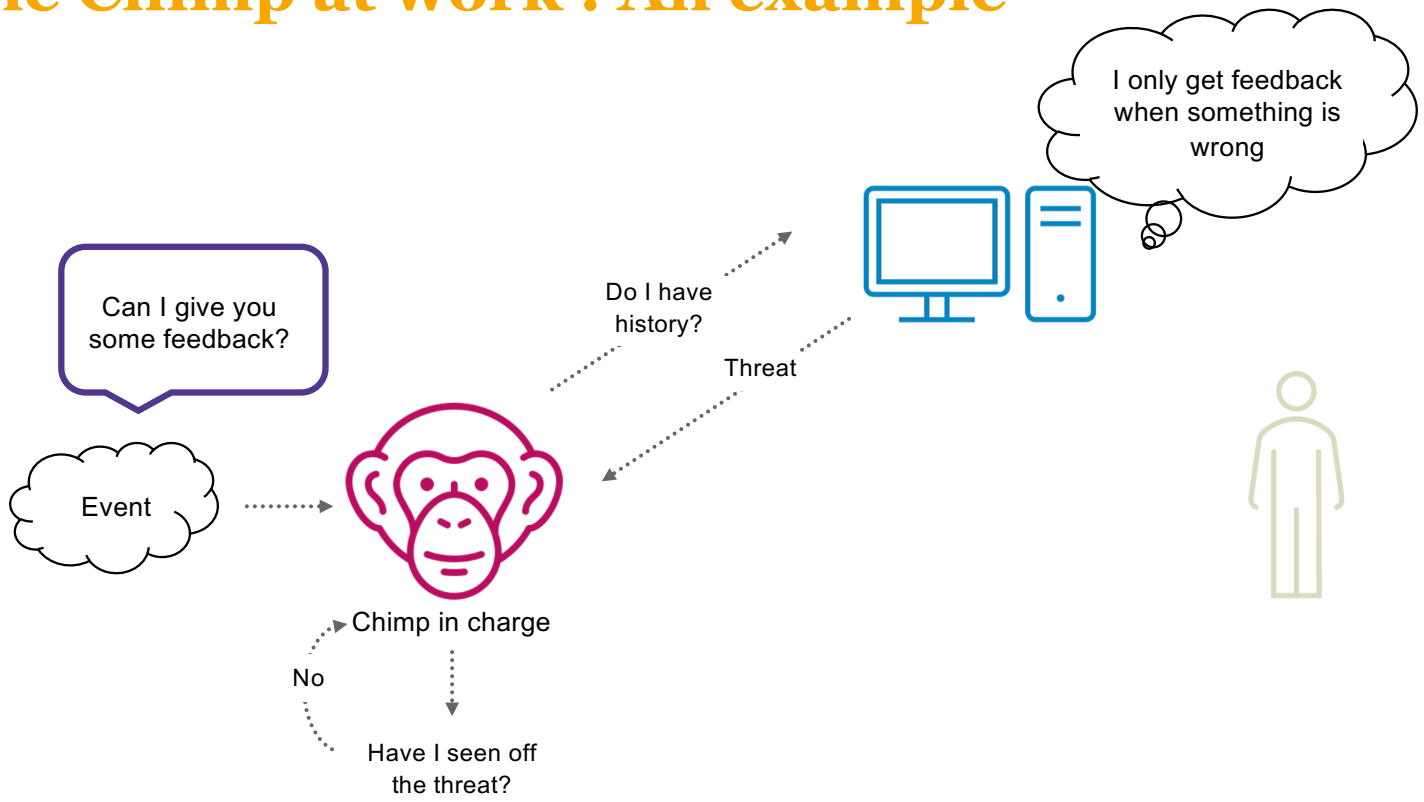
Reference source for information, beliefs and values

20 x faster than Human

In the brain : How we react to events



The Chimp at work : An example



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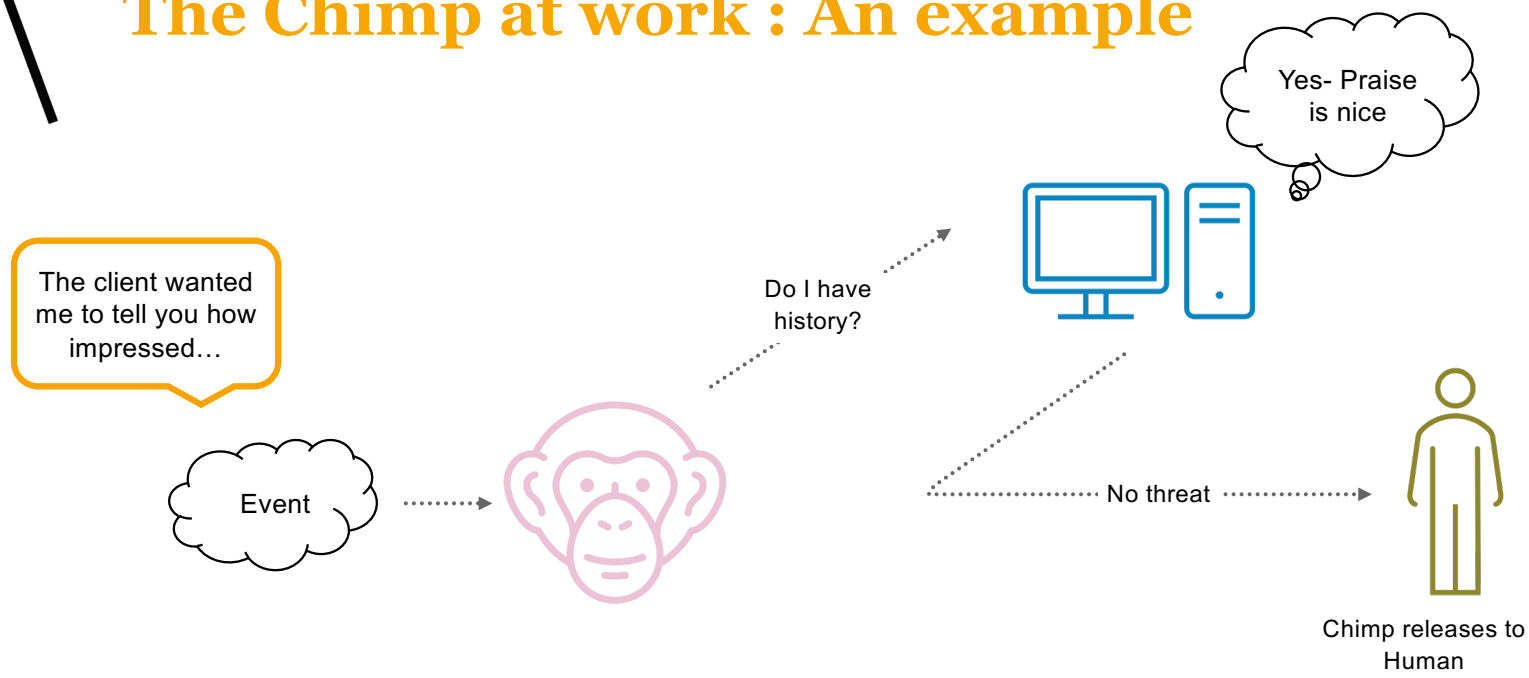

Conflict at work : using the model

How to change our approach to conflict:

Me

Programme our Computer

Them

Calm their Chimp

Us

Engage the Humans

Programme our Computer

Conflict at work : What's in your Computer?

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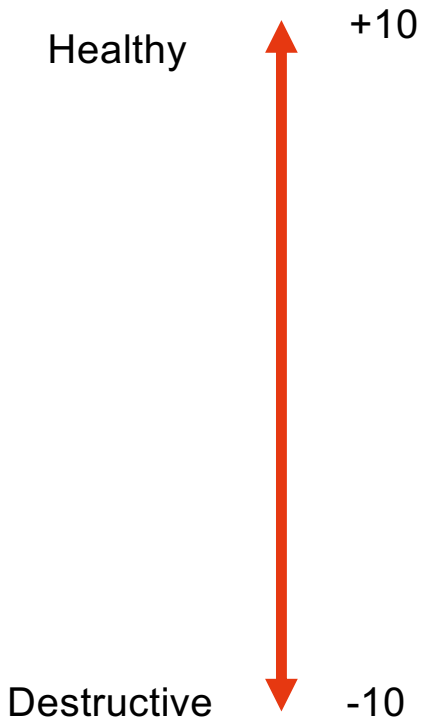
How do you *feel* about conflict?



Conflict at work : What's in your Computer?

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How do you feel when you are *in* conflict?

Conflict at work : What's in your Computer?

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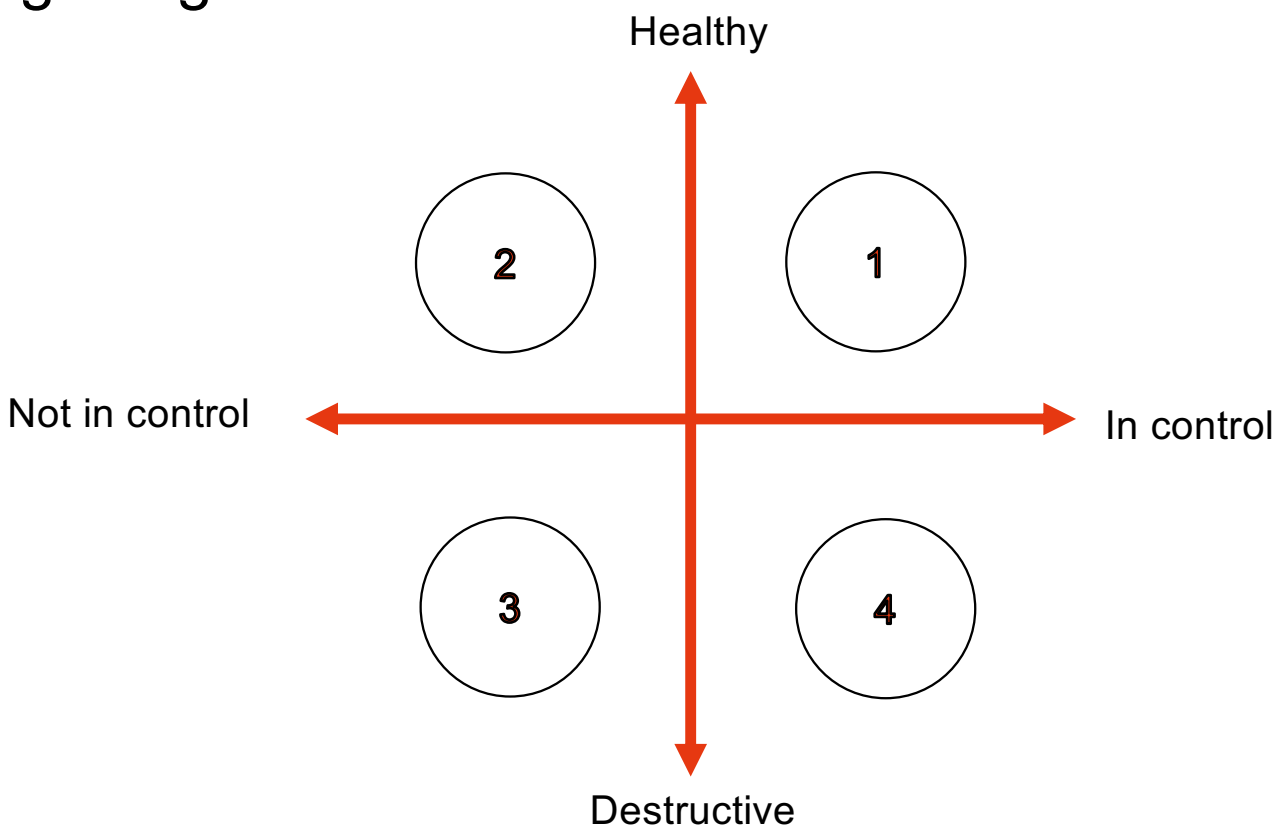
Putting it together



Programme : Healthy conflict

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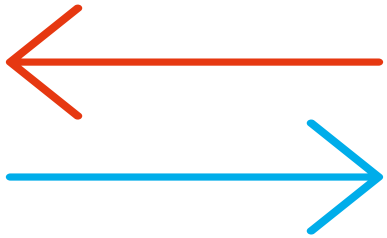
What are the benefits of healthy conflict?

Conflict gives me the chance to..

- Clear the air
- Solve problems
- Improve relationships
- Clarify issues
- (Re)set expectations



Programme : Feeling in control

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Create a procedure that your Chimp will find in the Computer

The power of **if….then**

- If.. [difficult situation] then.. I will [thought and behaviour]

e.g.

- If.. Bob raises his voice then.. I will breathe and remind myself he never does it for long
- If.. Sam closes down then.. I will count to 30 to give her space

Note: Use if…then to give you freedom to act, not to place yourself in harm's way

Programme : Feeling in control

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Breakout

- You're about to go into breakout exercise
- Each group will have a different situation that we can face in conflict
- Use the **if…then** model to pre-think your thoughts and behaviours

Conflict at work : Feeling in control

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If…	Then..
I'm blamed	I will remember They have their truth and I have mine
I get solutions thrown at me	I don't have to accept their solutions, I can just listen and then investigate them I will remember that good ideas can come from anywhere
I am told I've caused hurt	I can have empathy without taking blame I will remember it's not my job to fix him/her
I get a barrage of questions	I will remember I don't have to have all the answers I will ask questions to find priorities and concerns
Any situation	**I can listen without agreeing** **I will work out how this makes sense from their point of view**

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Calming their Chimp

The Chimp : reactions

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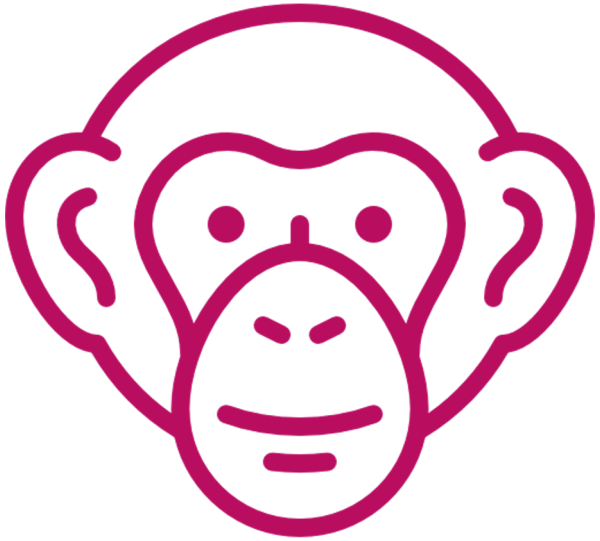
To understand what might trigger other people's chimp, lets think about what triggers ours?

- Not being heard
- Lack of respect
- Territory (non-physical too)
- Not understood
- Losing control
- Lack of certainty



The Chimp : Reactivity

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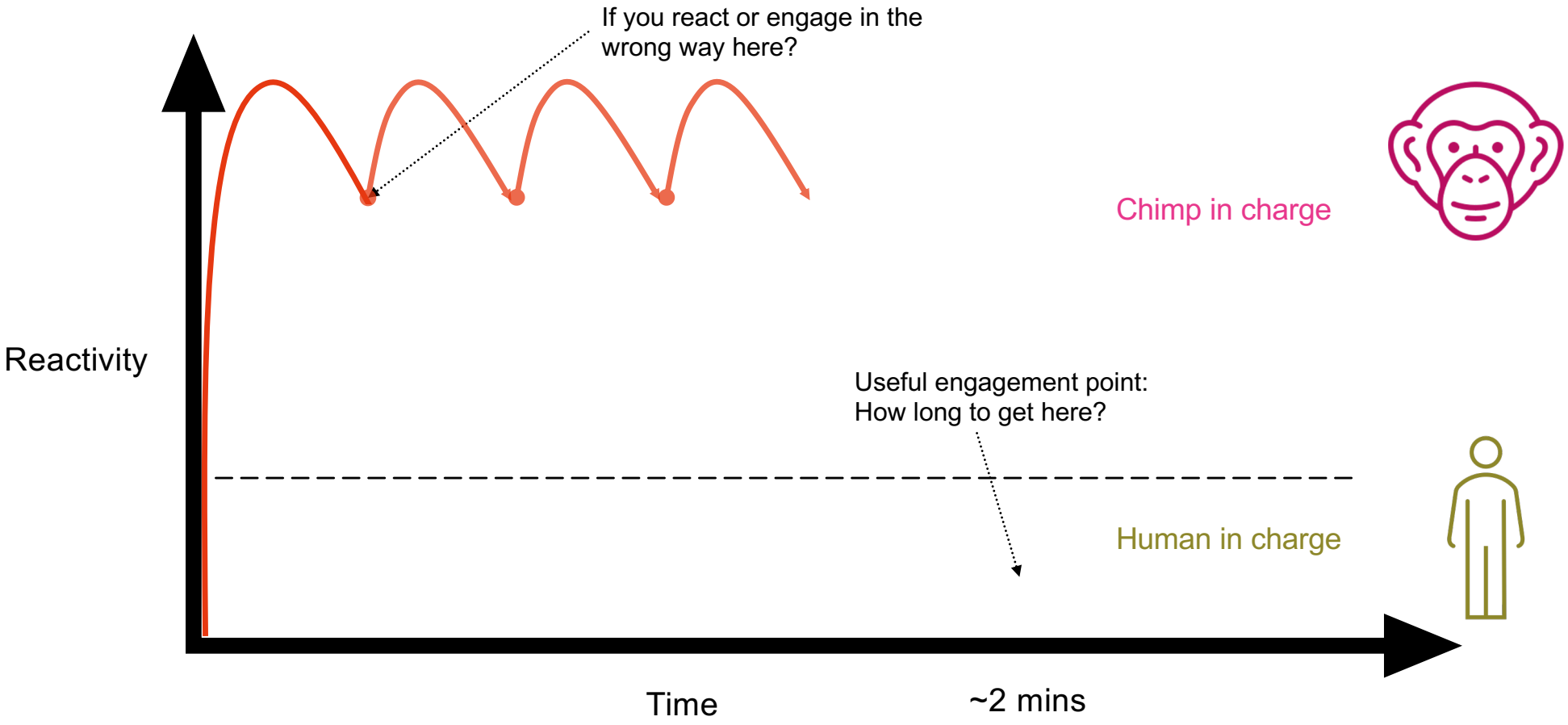

The Chimp : Manage the reactivity

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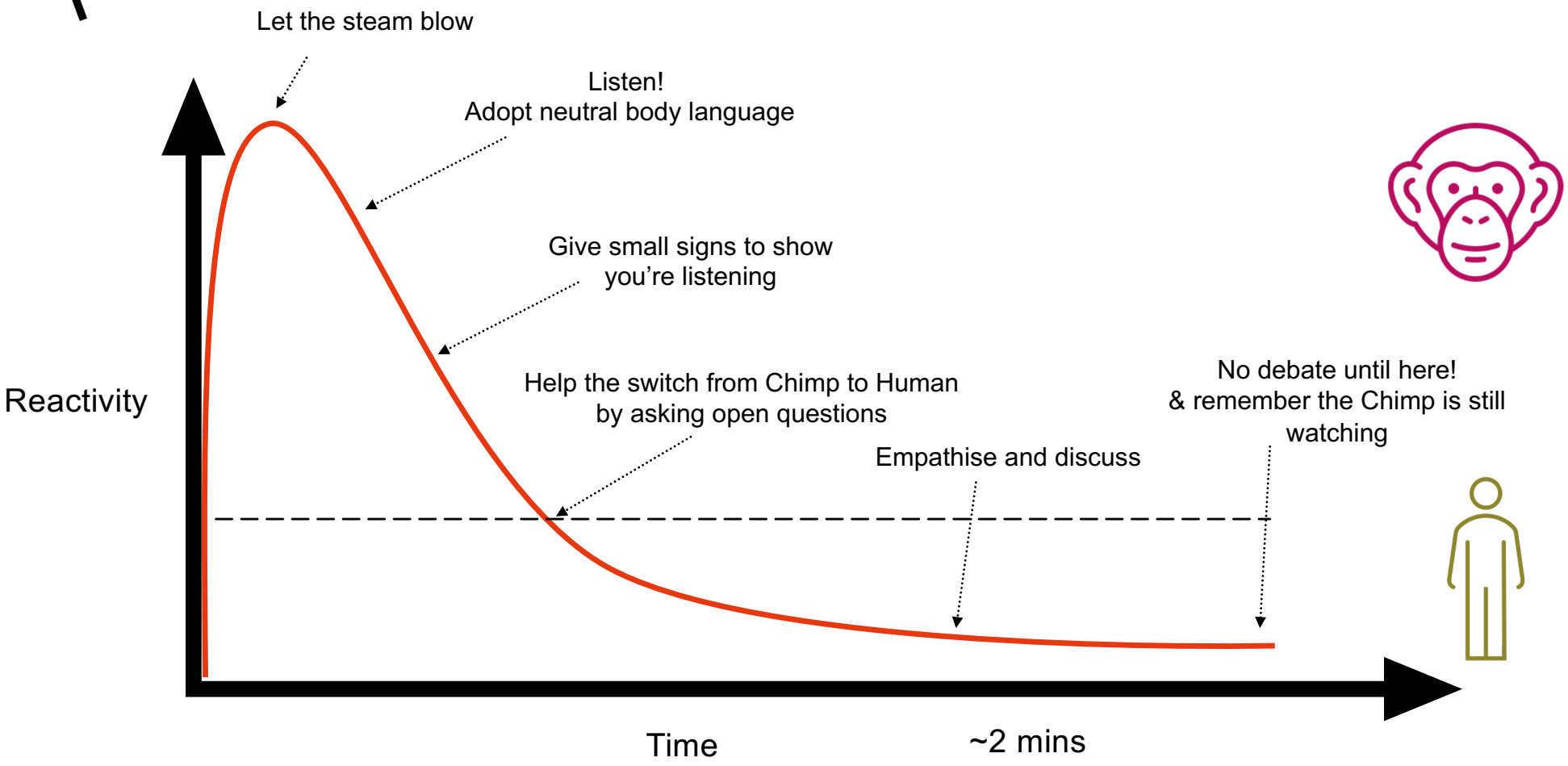

Chimp to Human : Manage the transition

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When reactivity is dropping, we can step in and speed up the process.

These two approaches both push the Human to respond, while also showing the Chimp that the threat has passed

Radical agreement:

- Listen to what they say and find a key point/approach/intention that you agree with and give a robust and strong recognition of it

Acknowledge before disagreeing:

- Where there is no point you agree on, then take time to acknowledge and repeat back what you think you've heard. Check for agreement. Now give your side of the argument. *Allow space for their Human first*
- Otherwise, they will not feel heard and will likely keep saying their bit

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Engaging the Humans

The Human : Engage

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When reactivity is under control you need to keep the Humans engaged:

These two approaches help maintain Human to Human interaction:

Work towards solutions:

- Assume and voice positive intent “I know we both want to sort this"
- State alternatives clearly and give choice to receiver
- For each option, state its probability of success
- Create certainty – e.g. when you will follow up, when they can expect progress, show them how this doesn’t effect the overall programme etc

Follow Up

- Write down clearly what the problem is, that you both agreed upon
- State options discussed and which one you both agreed upon
- State next steps and how you will monitor progress and put a date in for a review

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My situation & action planning

Managing conflict : my situation

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Breakout

- Think of a recent or current conflict:
- Break it down using the model: Computer - Chimp - Human
- Where do you think it went wrong off track?
- With hindsight, and using the model, what could you have done differently?

Learning outcomes

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Understand what drives conflict and why we see difficult behaviour	Adopt a structured approach to keeping difficult conversations on track

Managing Conflict: Action planning

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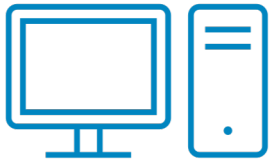

Define what healthy conflict is for you and aim for it

Remember the Chimp is always ready to take over

Prepare. It will keep your Human side in charge

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Wrap Up