

THE DISRUPTIVE COACH



TEAM PARABLE

A leadership team had been meeting every Tuesday for months to address what they called “the engagement problem.”

Productivity was slipping. People were quieter in meetings. Deadlines were being met, but barely. The CEO wanted answers.

So the team did what competent leaders do.

They analyzed data.

They clarified roles.

They revised goals.

They hired a consultant to run a culture survey.

They talked about mindset.

Still, nothing changed.

One Tuesday, a new coach was invited to observe the meeting. She said very little. Mostly, she watched.

She noticed the silence. She noticed how quickly the CEO spoke and how few pauses were in the space. She noticed contracted and tense bodies, shallow breathing, eyes flicking to laptops. She noticed that when ideas were presented they were met with a counterpoint before it had fully landed.

At the end of the meeting, the CEO asked her, “So... what do you think the problem is?”

The coach didn’t answer right away.

Instead, she said, “Before I answer, would you be willing to try something?”

Reluctantly, they agreed.

She asked everyone to put their laptops away. To place both feet on the floor. To take three slow breaths together. No fixing. No discussing. Just noticing.

The room changed.

Not dramatically — but enough.

When she finally spoke, she said, “I don’t think you have an engagement problem.”

“I think you have a field problem.”

Silence.

She continued. “The way you are relating to one another right now makes disengagement the most intelligent response.”

No one argued. They could feel it.

She explained that nothing anyone had said in the meeting was wrong. The goals were reasonable. The strategy was sound. The people were capable.

“But,” she said, “the quality of energy in this room is tight, rushed, and self-protective. And energy shapes behavior long before intention does.”

After a long pause, someone finally asked, “So what do we do?”

The coach replied, “First, notice how you are participating in creating this experience — not as individuals, but collectively.”

And, they began to see it.

How the pressure they carried showed up as urgency.

How urgency turned into interruption.

How interruption created withdrawal.

How withdrawal was then labeled ‘low engagement.’

They hadn’t been observing reality.

They had been co-creating it.

Over the next few weeks, they experimented — not with new policies, but with new ways of being together.

They slowed the start of meetings.

They named what was in the room before solving anything.

They paid attention to how decisions felt in their bodies, not just how they sounded.

They allowed silence without rushing to fill it.

Something unexpected happened.

People spoke more honestly.

Conflict surfaced earlier.

Decisions took less time, not more.

Energy returned — not because anyone tried to “be engaged,” but because the field supported it.

Months later, the CEO reflected, “We thought we needed better answers. What we needed was a different relationship to how our reality was being created.”

The team started tending to the conditions in which people worked.

They realized something essential:

The work was never just about what they were doing.

The coach knew it was about how consciousness, relationship, embodiment, energy, and action were shaping their shared reality — moment by moment.