



Cath BISHOP



# Shaping Your Club for the Future:

*What makes your club special?*



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Think of a moment in your life when you felt  
you really belonged &  
you had found your tribe...

*How did it feel?*

*How did you know?*

*Share a 2 min story with your neighbour...*

Growth

Mistakes

Resilience

Impact

Support  
for others

Joy

Stories

Learning

Belonging

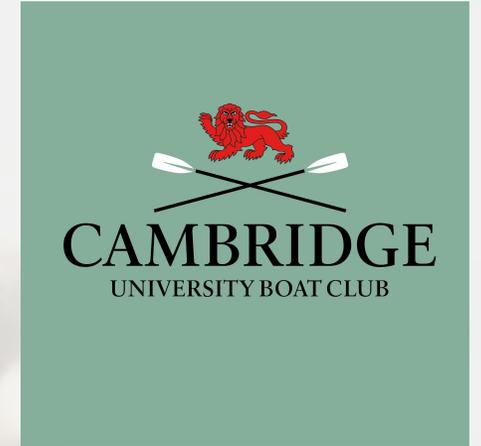
Experience

Winning

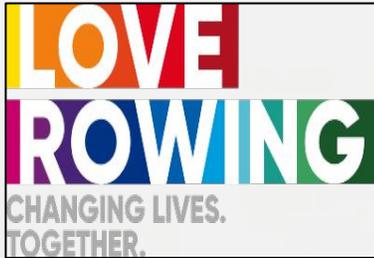
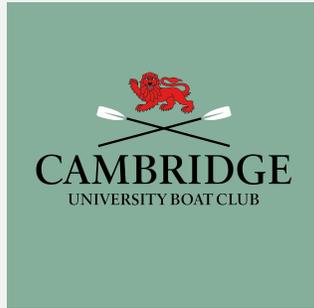
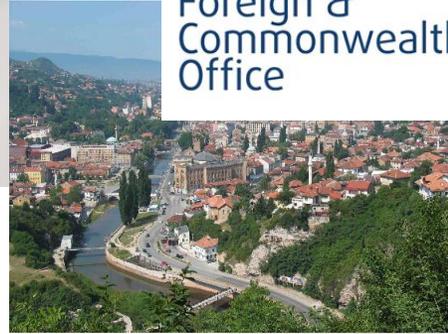
Struggle

Connection

**LOVE**  
**ROWING**  
CHANGING LIVES.  
TOGETHER.



# My journey to understanding culture



**What does success look like  
for your club –  
now & in the future?**

**In the primer for today, you were asked to observe your club as if visiting for the first time:**

*- what did you see, feel, hear...?*

**(share what you noticed for 2 mins with another neighbour...)**

Ask yourself honestly how much you know about what your club members think and feel?

How good is that evidence?

How might you get more/better information?

## Some definitions...

- “the way things are done around here” (*Schein/Deal & Kennedy, 2000*).
- Culture is based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, and written and unwritten rules that have been developed over time and are considered valid (*The Business Dictionary*).
- Culture also includes the organization’s vision, values, norms, systems, symbols, language, assumptions, beliefs, and habits (*Needle, 2004*).
- Culture is “a blend of the values, beliefs, taboos, symbols, rituals and myths” that develop over time

## *Myth-busting:*

- culture isn't soft... it definitely impacts how fast the boat goes now and in the future – *also impacts retention, resilience, motivation, wellbeing, willingness to collaborate, sustainability of performance, creativity...*
- culture isn't about a values poster on the wall
- culture can be measured... (*but not simplistically... it's more than just an annual survey...*)

**In sport,  
culture is  
everything...**



# Stories underpin sport



# Which stories underpin your clubs?

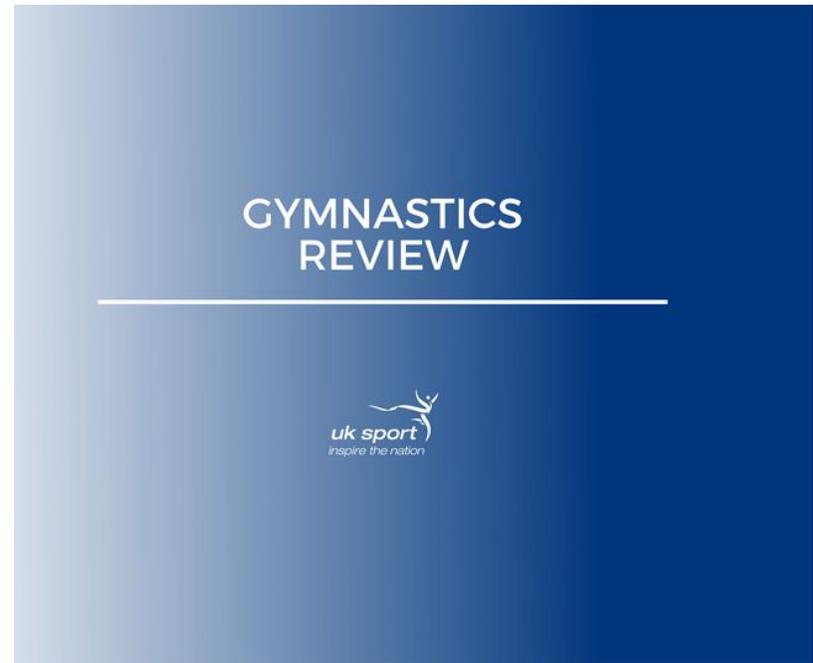
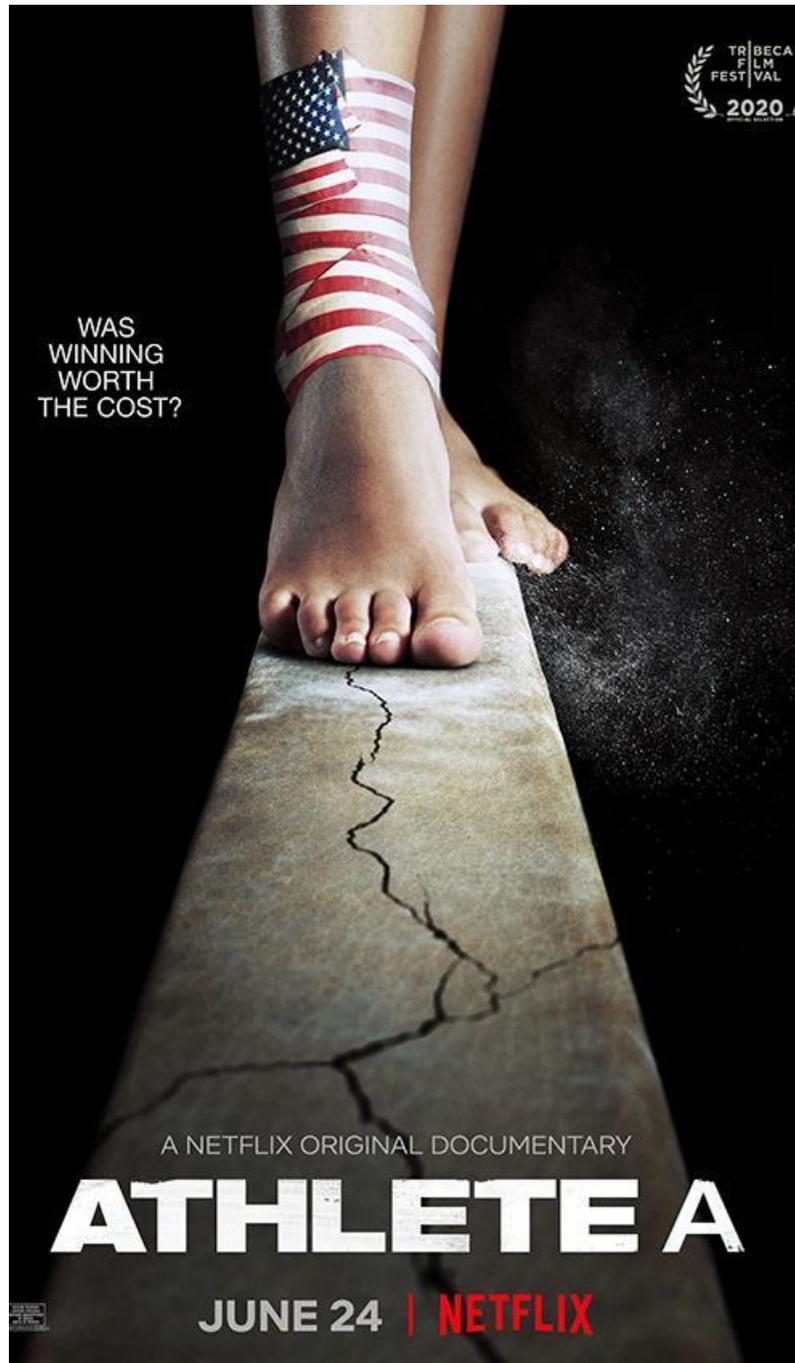


# Which stories do you want to underpin your clubs in the future?

# In sport, culture is everything



'HOW'  
MATTERS





**Medals,  
Members,  
Money**



*Less abuse, more care  
Joy, not suffering  
Why?*



**Medals,  
Members,  
Money**



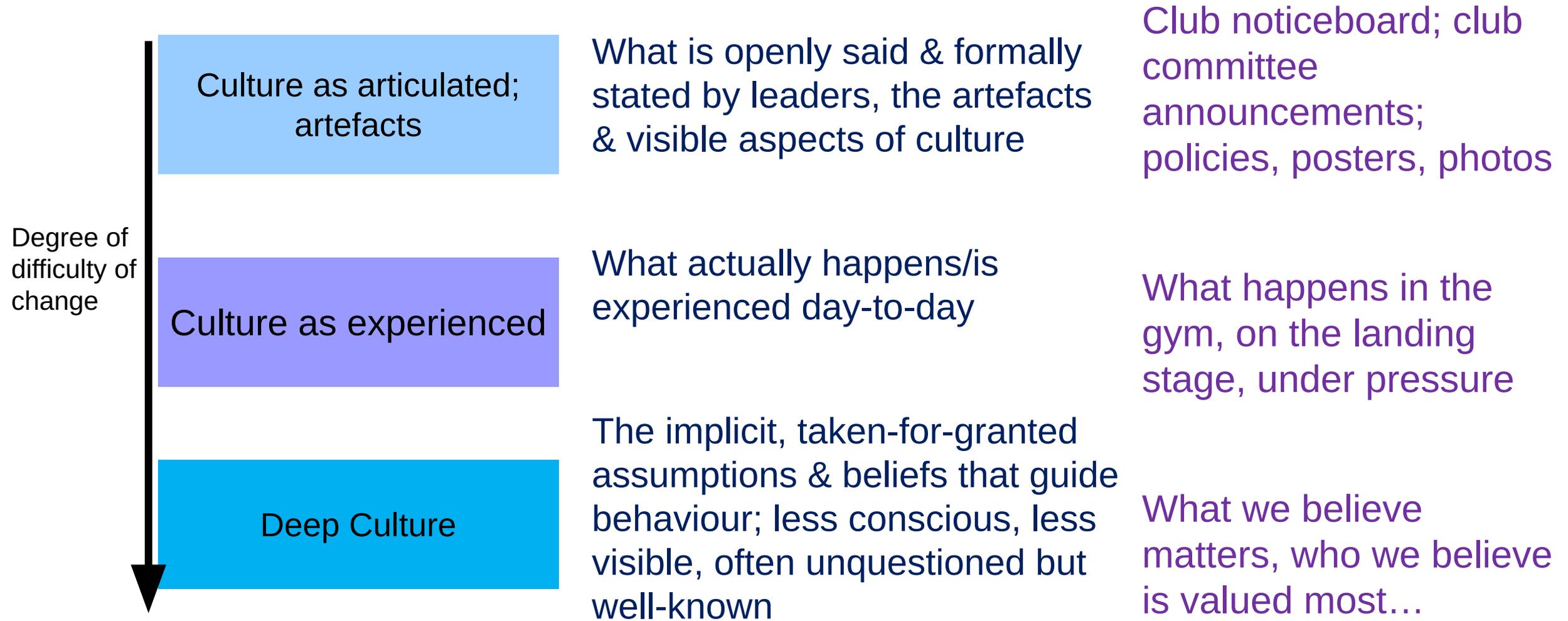
**culture change  
journey...**

**Thriving Culture  
Social Impact  
Stories...**

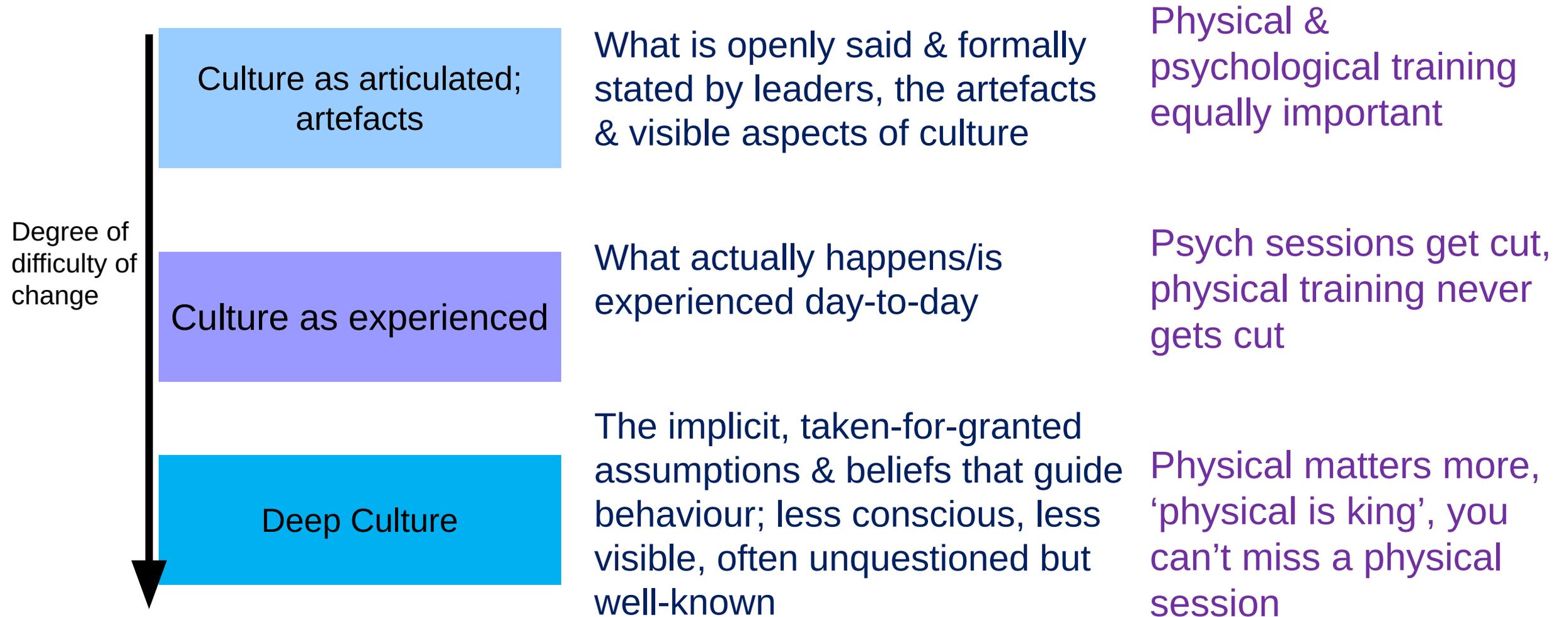
## *British Gymnastics culture change journey...*

- Why? What is culture change in service of? (*what is your purpose/social impact*)
- Listening is key (hierarchy often gets in the way)
- Focus on **impact, not inputs/actions...**

# Understanding The Levels of Culture *(based on Schein)*



# Coaching example...



Culture as articulated;  
artefacts

What is openly said & formally stated by leaders, the artefacts & visible aspects of culture

Physical & psychological training equally important

Degree of difficulty of change

Culture as experienced

What actually happens/is experienced day-to-day

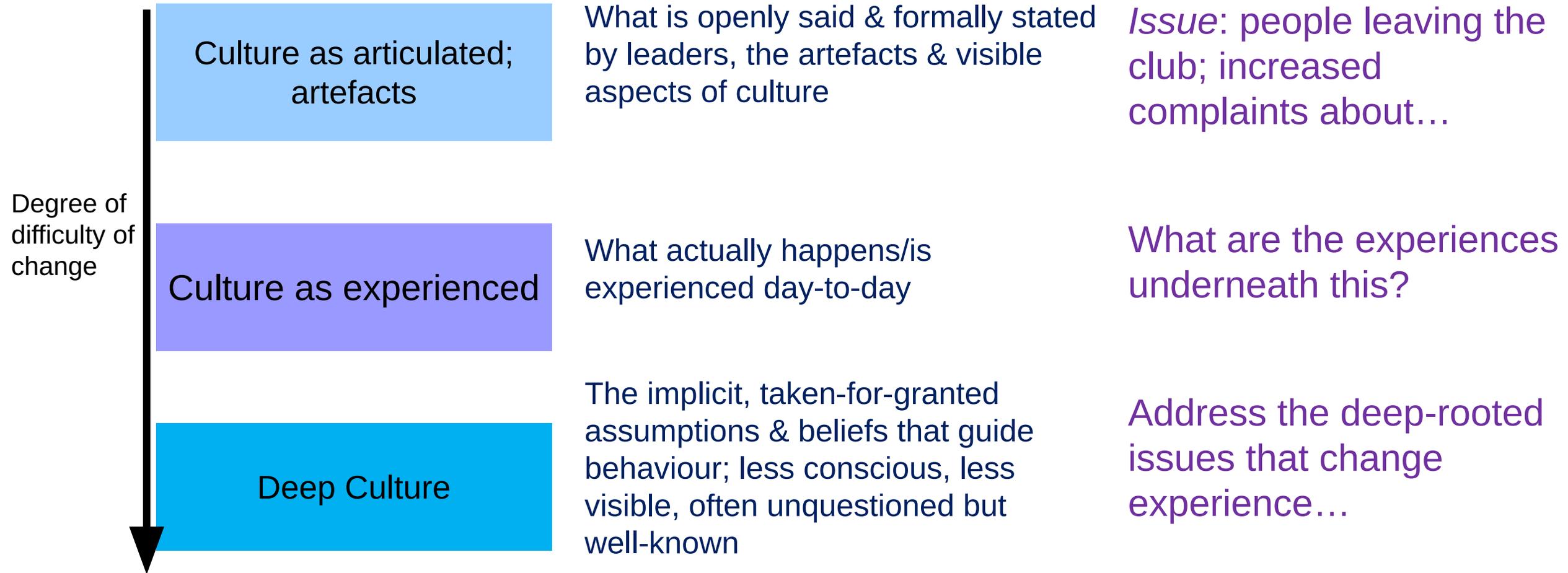
Psych sessions get cut, physical training never gets cut

Deep Culture

The implicit, taken-for-granted assumptions & beliefs that guide behaviour; less conscious, less visible, often unquestioned but well-known

Physical matters more, 'physical is king', you can't miss a physical session

# Understanding The Levels of Culture (*based on Schein*)



*How can we be competent cultural leaders in our clubs?  
Get curious about ourselves...*

- How do we show up?
- What do we (not) prioritise?
- Who/what do we (not) listen to?
- How are we seen by others in the club (*not just those closest to us*)?

## *Get curious about others...*

- How do squads treat and connect to each other?
- How do people speak to each other when they're queueing to boat on the landing stages?
- What's it like when you first turn up to the club as a young person, parent, volunteer, adult...

*Plan experiences, not just fixtures...*

## Developing our cultural antennae....

1. Describe the physical environment (pictures, photos, furniture, racks)
2. What gets sacrificed when things get tough?
3. What are the recurrent conversations over hot coffee or well-stewed tea?
4. What/who do people typically make jokes about? (When do jokes happen?)
5. Who are the heroes/villains?
6. Who are the cultural architects? (*Who makes important stuff happen at the club?*)
7. What are your key crews/squads/club rituals and routines?
8. What do coaches get praised for?
9. Who gets celebrated at the club dinner?

*For each question: what does the answer tell you about the culture of your club?*

*Notice how do you/others act/respond....*

- when they have a complaint?
- when they lose?
- when they leave?
- When others around them behave poorly?

# The 'Invisible' forces of culture...

- What are the unwritten rules in your club? (*Who do they serve?*)
- What are the 'secrets' everyone knows?
- What do people stay silent about? (*psychological safety, trust*)

*Do you remember Candid Camera...*

# Culture building blocks....

Stories

Behaviours

Assumptions

Habits

Conversations

Actions

Beliefs

Language

Attitude

Listening

Biases

Questions

Which of these could you understand better or use differently in service of your club's culture...

## So how do we measure culture...

- Not in spreadsheets
- Not just in surveys
- Not by a ranking or score

## We find culture in

- Conversations
- Questions
- Stories....

## Top tips:

Be **mindful**, aware, notice, observe...

Stay **curious** (*not judgemental... or at least get curious about your judgements!*)

Think in **stories**... (*what are the stories you heard at the weekend...*)

**You can't be neutral about culture... you're always shaping it...**

**You can't be neutral about culture -**

**You're always shaping it...**

*And we want to bring our rowers, coaches, volunteers, parents, supporters along with us to shape our communities to create meaningful stories that will be told for years to come!*

# WHAT MAKES YOUR CLUB SPECIAL



**How we show up**



**Lasting success**





Let's explore what's possible, together

Cath BISHOP