

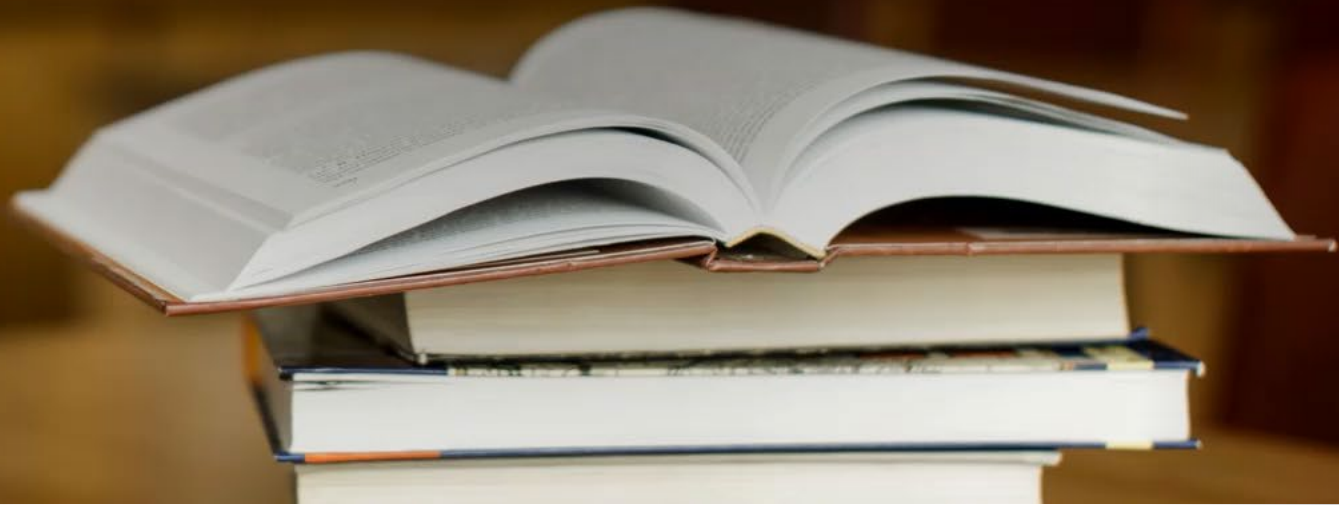
Library Leader⁰ Lessons Learned: Speed Up Your Career

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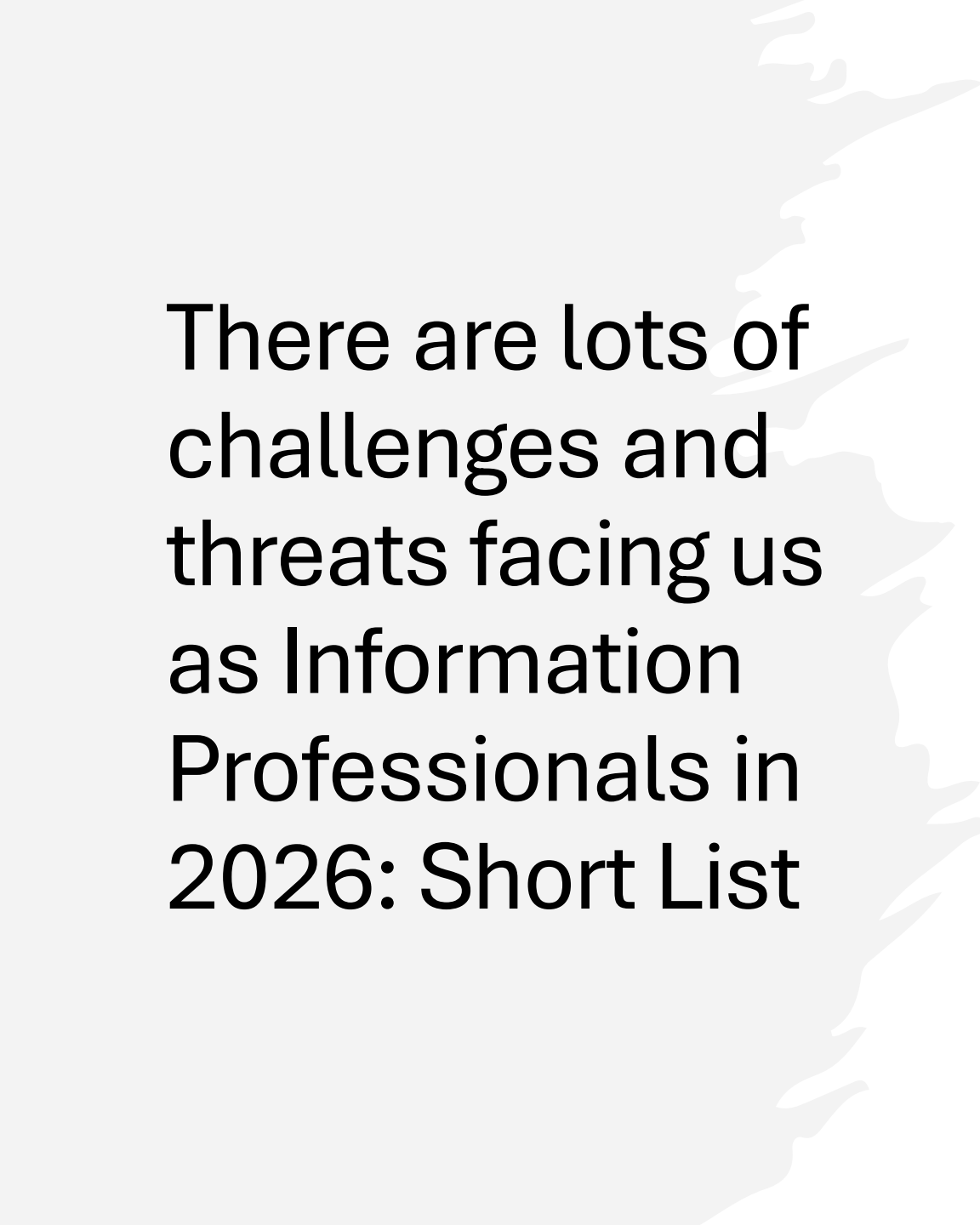
Stephen Abram, MLS

Lighthouse Consulting, Inc.

March 19, 2026







There are lots of challenges and threats facing us as Information Professionals in 2026: Short List

- Existential Threats from Administrations that are:
 - Anti-inclusion and DEI, Anti-women, Anti-BIPOC, anti-Indigenous, ...
 - Anti-professions like academics, teaching, librarianship, etc. though criminalizing our work
 - Anti-Research and Information Access and sharing (Content Disappearances like ERIC, CIA Factbook, Digital Archives, and too many more to accurately predict, harvest and protect)
 - Taxonomy and Ontology threats and actions
- Existential Threats to our Institutions including:
 - IMLS, ALA, NIH, Military Libraries, library boards, etc.
 - Academia and Academic Freedom
 - Curriculum Changes
 - Research Enterprises
- Threats to our Shared Values
 - Democracy
 - Freedom to Read
 - Balance in Copyright
 - Anti-Book bans and Censorship
 - Diversity, Migration, Labour mobility
 - Education
 - Critical Thinking versus Doctrine Education
 - Privacy (Palantir, OpenAI/Anthropic and Military guardrails)
 - Freedom of Faith and Religion
 - Freedom of Expression

Some Associations Have Stepped Up Well

- ALA
- PEN
- EveryLibrary (note CC sharing)
- MLA
- AALL
- Brewster Kahle and Internet Archive (and the other protectors / harvesters)
- *Some have not:*
- SLA in the 5 years before dissolving and merging with
- ASIS&T
- Library Association Federal Government Relations Positions in Difficult Times: SLA, ASIST, ALA, AALL, MLA, EveryLibrary . . .
- <https://stephenslighthouse.com/?p=62218>

So, how do we thrive in this environment?



SUMMARY



OFFICE AND
PROFESSIONAL POLITICS



BALANCE IN LIFE IS NOT
AN EVERYDAY THING



WINE, WHINE, AND
WISDOM



CRITICAL THINKING AND
COGNITIVE BIAS AS CORE
TO INFORMATION
FLUENCY



TRADITIONS AS BOAT
ANCHORS



RE-IMAGINIZATION



Politics is a game, not really . . .

Games are fun to play and teach strategies

Politics has real consequences and is ongoing – sort of like playing
Monopoly through to the end . . .

10 Brutal Rules of Work Politics I Learned

They didn't teach me this in school:

1. Perception beats performance

People promote who they trust,
Not just who deliver.
How you're seen > what you do

2. The real decisions happen before the meeting

Most rooms are just theater.
Influence happens behind
closed doors

3. Loyalty is transactional

It's not personal, it's positional.
Don't confuse company values
With job security

4. Power protects power

People in charge defend their
seat first. Be aware of the hierarchy
Even when it's unspoken

6. Allies matter more than arguments

Influence flows through
relationships. The right support
can move mountains quietly

5. Silence is strategy

Sometimes the smartest play is
no play. You don't need to join
Every argument you're invited to



9. Not everyone wants you to win

Growth triggers discomfort in
others. Keep rising anyway

7. Information is currency

What you know can help, or hurt,
you. Share wisely, not widely

8. Your reputation moves faster than your resume

People talk, good or bad. Make
sure the version of you in the room
Matches the one outside it

10. Politics are unavoidable

It's not dirty. It's real.
Navigating power is part of
leadership

**Don't ignore politics. Understand it.
Then use it to protect your team and your growth.**

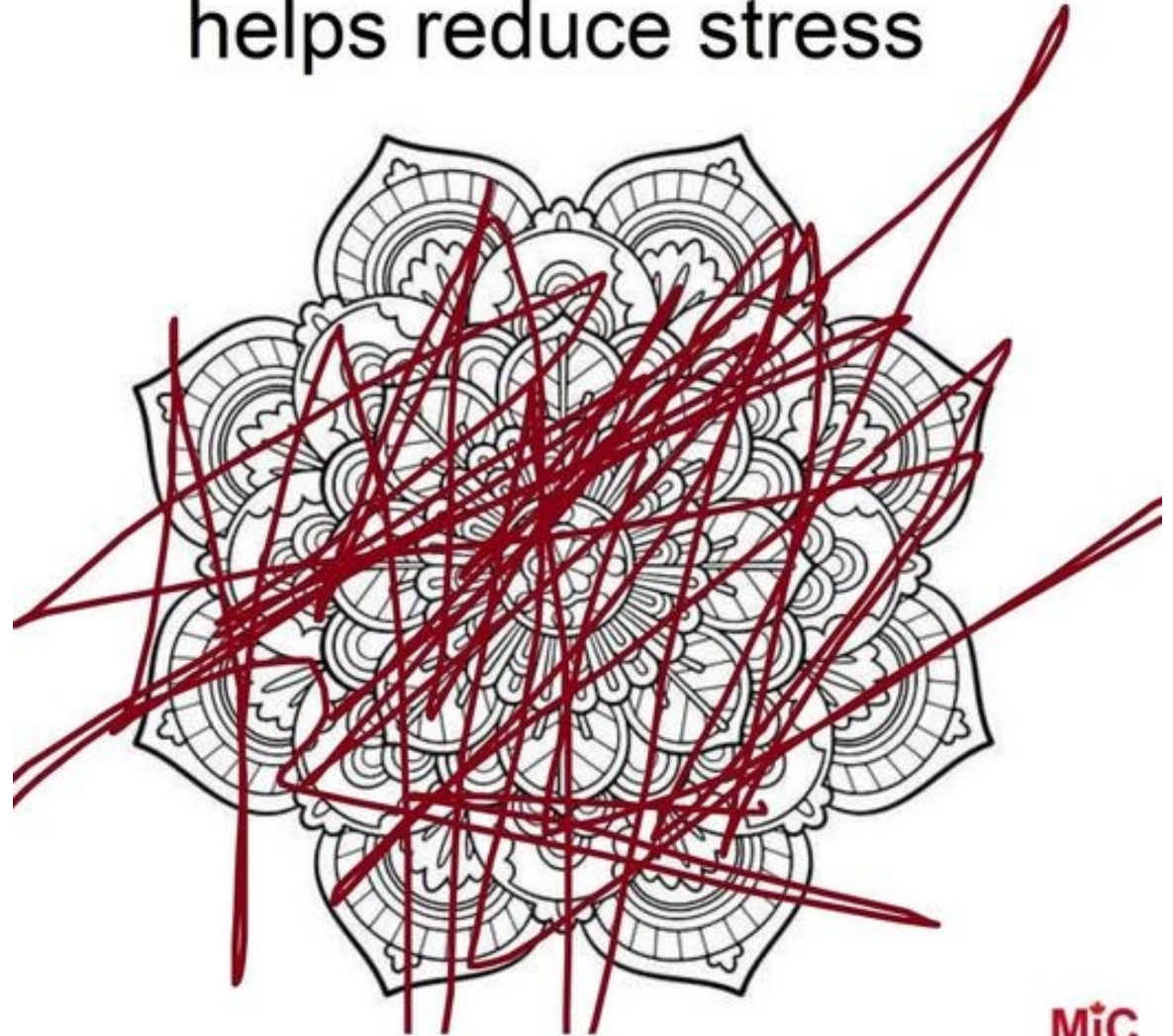
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Balance



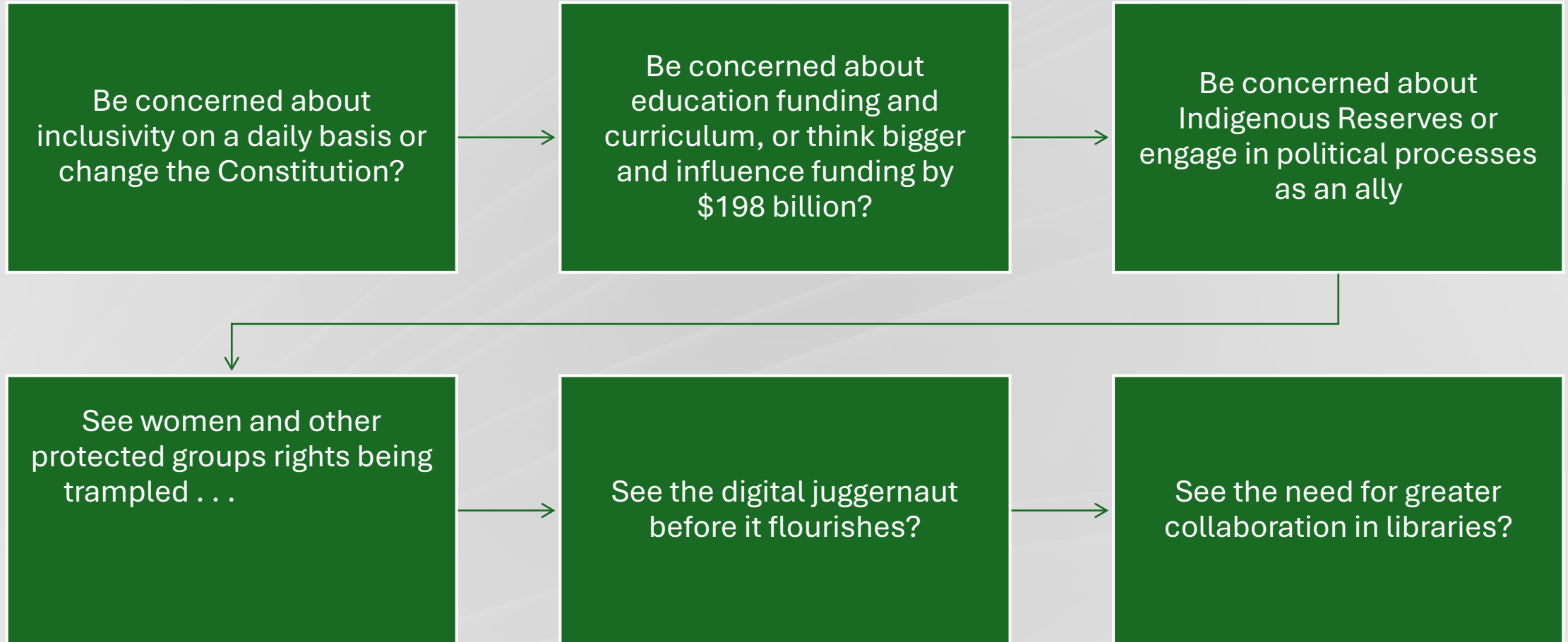
Success
Doesn't Come
from
Colouring in
the Lines

I've found colouring really
helps reduce stress



MiC

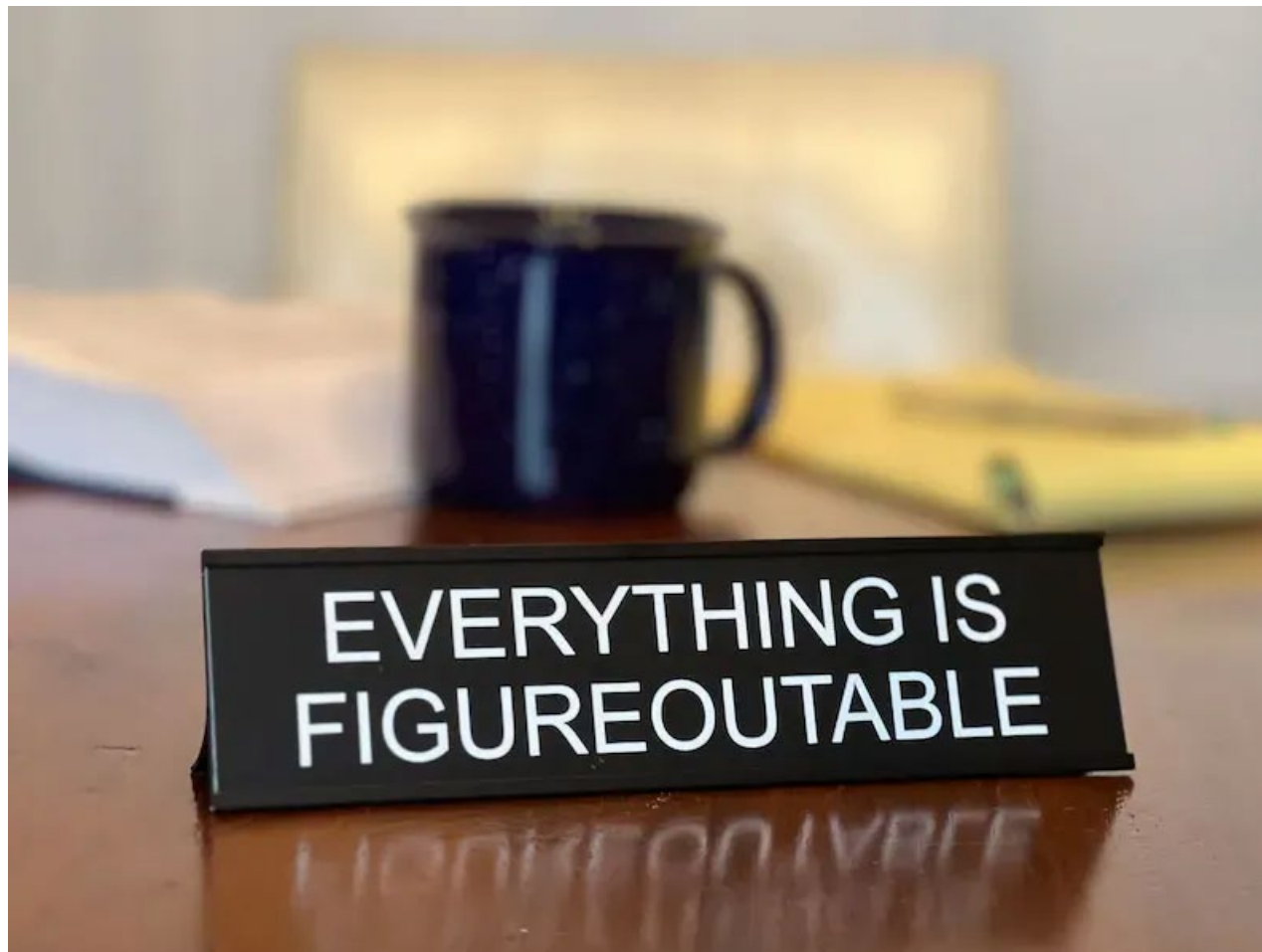
Think Bigger



Your Trauma(s) Are Your Strength



FAFO



PTSD versus PTSI

- Help me understand post traumatic stress injuries versus PTSD
- <https://stephenslighthouse.com/?p=68374>

Take Every Self-Understanding Test You Can

- Reflection is a strength
- Daily Random Astrology Reflection
- MBTI
- DISC
- Colours
- CBT
- Advanced executive testing
- IQ, EQ, SQ, . . .
- ADD, ADHD, and other spectrums





**WINE WHINE
AND WISDOM**

Re- Imaginization

GARETH MORGAN

Author of the International Bestseller **IMAGES OF ORGANIZATION**

Imagin·i·zation

New Mindsets for
Seeing,
Organizing,
and Managing

"Imaginization shows that management is as much art form as science, providing many useful ways to tap the most important resource for competitiveness: brainpower."

—Rosabeth Moss Kanter

Professor, Harvard Business School, author of *The Change Masters*

Traditions as Boat Anchors

What do you do on a ship in a Tsunami?



**Anchors
Aweigh!**

**IT WILL WORK IF
YOU FORGET ALL
THE REASONS WHY
IT WON'T.**

THE HAPPY SNAPSHOT

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a hand holding a dark glass. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours of the hand and the rim of the glass. The background is dark and textured. Overlaid on the image is a list of emotions in white, sans-serif font.

Don't tamp down
Being Triggered
Being Frustrated
Being Angered

Emotions are clues and symptoms of
your soul telling you to do something.

My Five Lessons

- Understand **YOU**: Lean into yourself, your passions, your faults and your strengths
 - Whine with intent . . . With your tribe of likeminded folks
 - Think Bigger and bring folks along the way, followership is a skill
 - Reimagine the future and create the path step-by-step
 - Play politics, play with the new stuff, play with your tribe, learn for life
-
- ***If you don't the future will happen to you instead of with you.***