ROOTED IN GENTLENESS

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WELCOME EVERYONE







WHERE IT BEGAN (1994):

- Closure of the Woodlands Institution in New Westminster.
- H.O.M.E. Society stepped forward to welcome the final 16 individuals—those for whom traditional community options had not worked.
- Founding Executive Director Cam Dore's vision: recognizing that traditional approaches were exhausted and turning to Dr. John McGee's philosophy of Gentle Teaching to build H.O.M.E. Society from the ground up on unconditional love, safety, and relationship-building.

A MESSAGE FROM JOHN



EXPANDING GENTLENESS ACROSS THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION

- **Beyond Service Delivery:** Gentleness operates as an all-encompassing organizational culture across every level.
- **Persons Served & Families:** Fostering relational safety, unconditional support, and transparent partnership.
- **Caregivers & Management:** Leading with warmth, empathy, vulnerability, and psychological safety.
- **Operations & Community:** An inclusive culture spanning maintenance, admin, union, and community partners.



GENTLENESS AS AN ECOSYSTEM

- **The People Supported:** Delivering unconditional safety and relational support rather than behavioral management.
- **Families:** Building genuine, transparent partnerships rooted in trust and shared hope.
- **Caregivers & Direct Support Staff:** Leading with warmth, empathy, and ongoing support rather than top-down monitoring.





GENTLENESS AS AN ECOSYSTEM:

- **Management & Leadership:** Practicing vulnerability, active listening, and leading by serving the team.
- **Administrative, Maintenance & Cleaning Staff:** Ensuring every team member—regardless of role—understands they are an integral part of the culture of gentleness.
- **Community Partners & Stakeholders:** Modeling gentle practices in external relationships, advocacy, and collaborative work.







INTENTIONALITY & SUCCESSION PLANNING

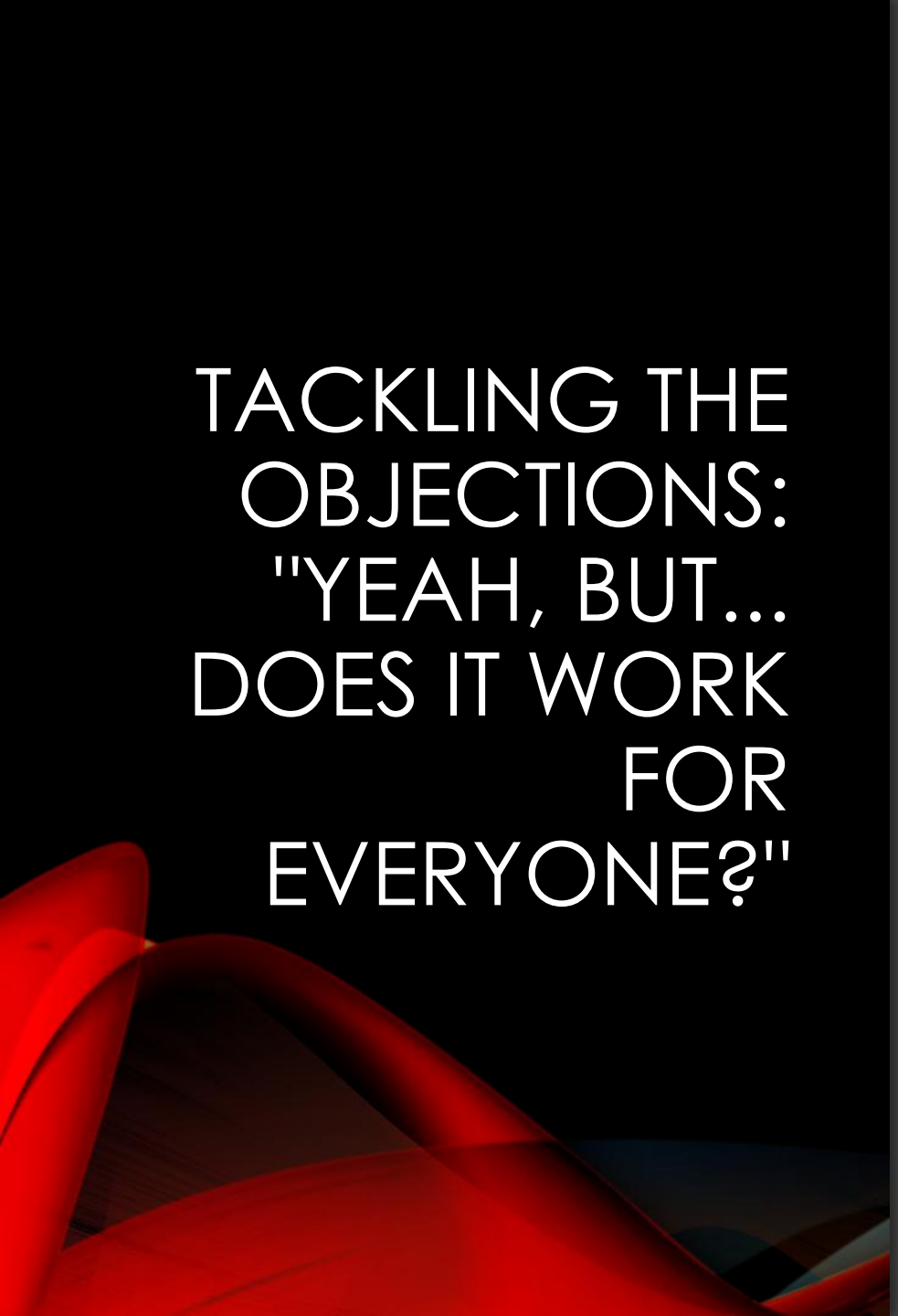
- One of the greatest risks to an organization's values is leadership transition. If you hire externally for senior roles based purely on administrative resumes without a deep, lived commitment to Gentle Teaching, the culture degrades into compliance management. We intentionally cultivate talent from within. When a Coordinator or Director has started as a support worker, practiced Gentle Teaching in challenging moments, and been mentored internally, they carry the organizational memory and values forward seamlessly."

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT OVER EXTERNAL HIRING:

- **Preserving Culture Intentionally:** Culture does not survive leadership transitions by accident; it requires active stewardship.
- **Growing from Within:** Prioritizing internal promotions over external hiring to safeguard core values in leadership roles.
- **Lived Experience:** Ensuring leaders have walked in the shoes of direct support workers and practiced principles directly.
- **Mentorship & Onboarding:** Embedding Gentle Teaching deeply into every stage of professional development and training.



TACKLING THE OBJECTIONS: "YEAH, BUT... DOES IT WORK FOR EVERYONE?"



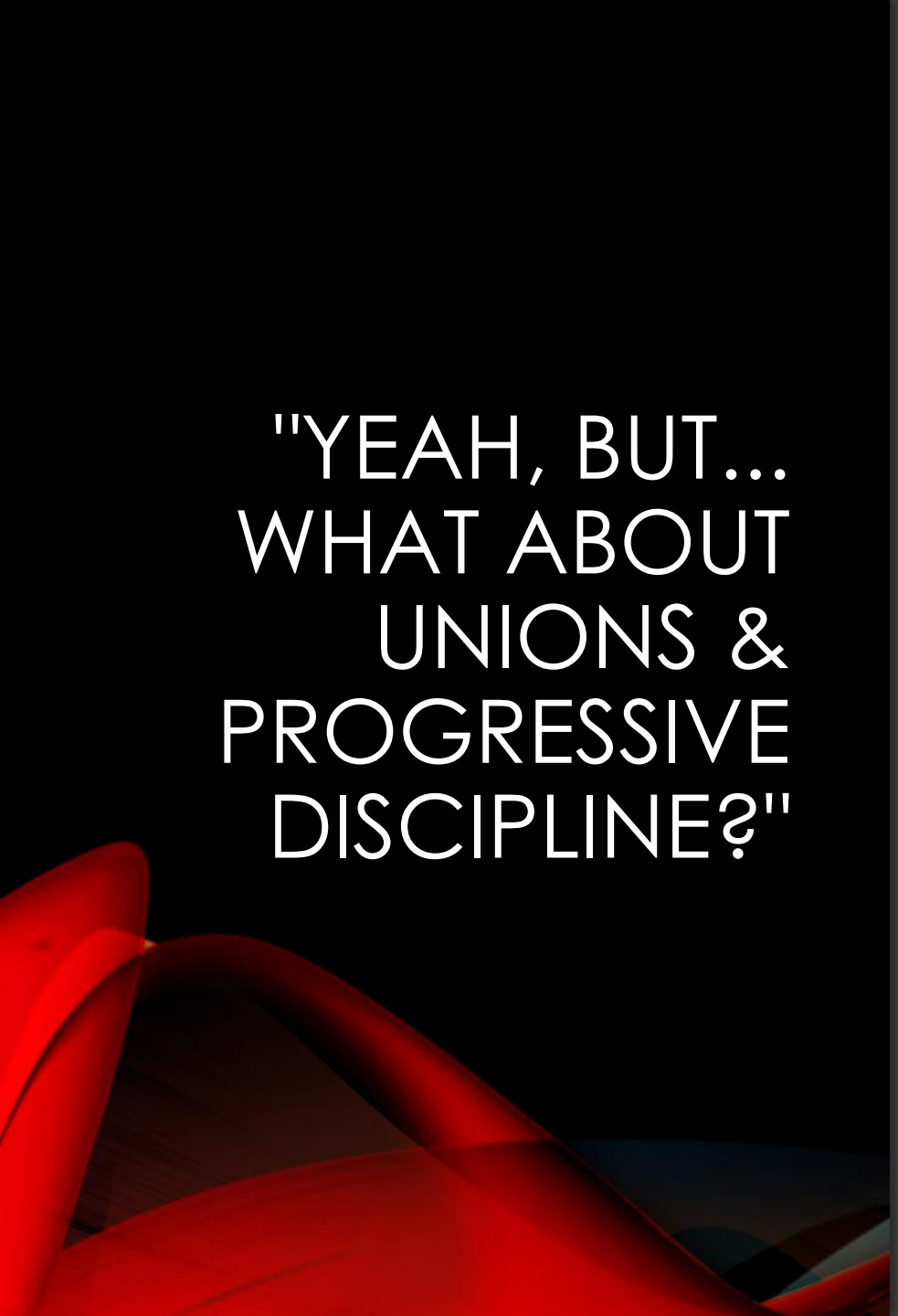
- **The Objection:** "*Gentle Teaching is nice, but it doesn't work for every behavior.*"
- **The Reality:** Gentle Teaching is an ethical baseline for human dignity, not a temporary behavior modification tactic.
- **Core Commitment:** Human dignity is non-negotiable. Intense challenges signal a need for more relational safety, not more control.

YEAH, BUT... HOW DO YOU HOLD PEOPLE ACCOUNTABLE?"



- **The Objection:** *"How can you run a gentle culture and still hold staff accountable?"*
- **Separating Worth from Performance:** Gentleness is not permissiveness or softness. Holding staff accountable means separating personal worth from performance gaps.
- **Restorative Accountability:** Addressing performance issues with clarity, support, and dignity rather than punitive measures or shame.

"YEAH, BUT... WHAT ABOUT UNIONS & PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE?"



- **Shared Values:** Labor rights and Gentle Teaching both prioritize fairness, safety, equity, and mutual respect.
- **Progressive Discipline Redefined:** Approached as a transparent, restorative process focused on clarity, training, and support.
- **Dignified Transitions:** If an employee is not the right fit, transitioning them out can—and must—still be done with kindness.

"YEAH, BUT... HOW DO YOU HANDLE TOXIC BEHAVIOR?"



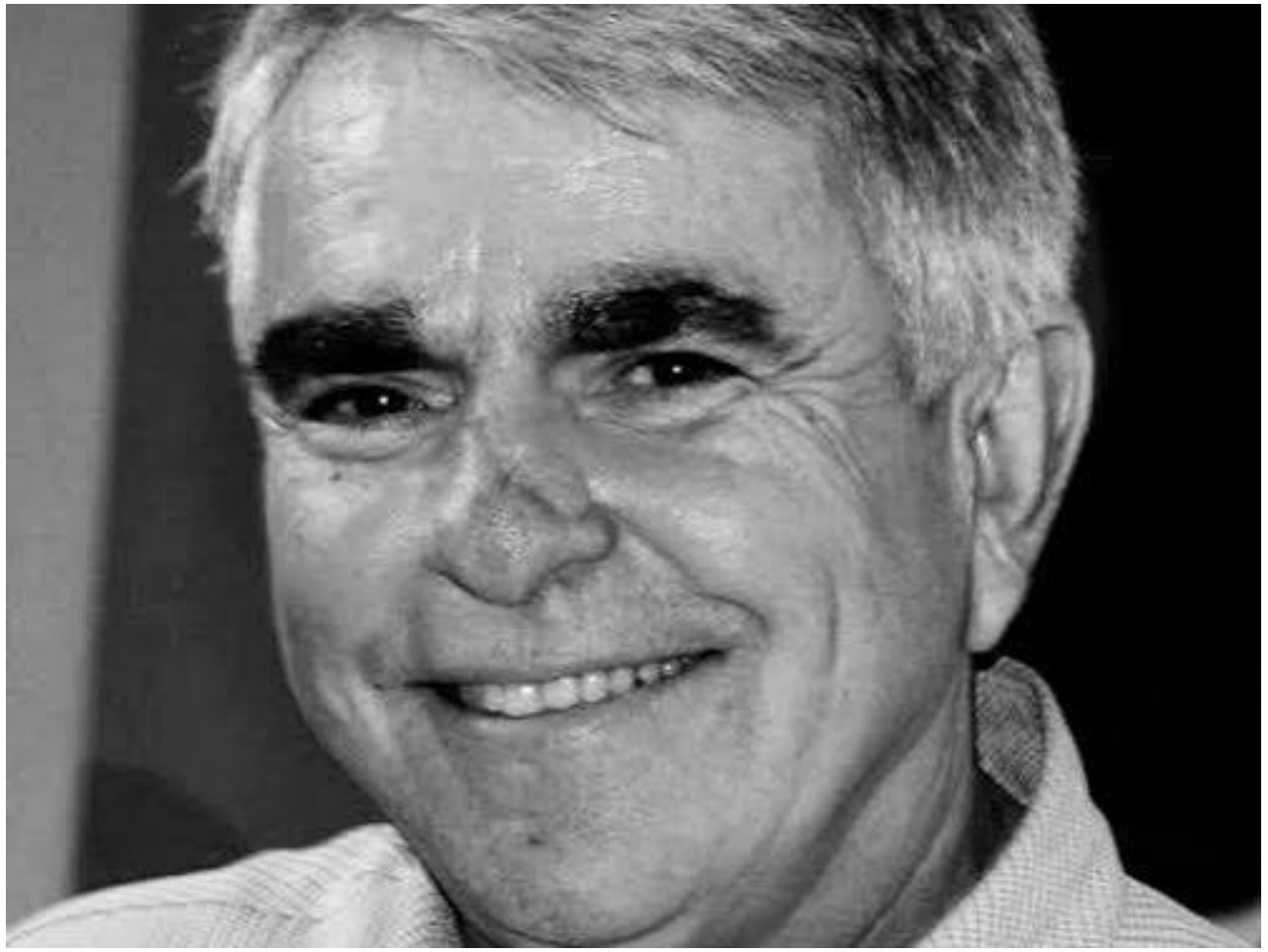
- **The Objection:** *"How do you respond gently to real toxicity or hostiles?"*
- **Understanding Root Causes:** Recognizing that hostile or toxic workplace behaviors usually stem from burnout, fear, or past trauma.
- **Gentle Boundaries:** Maintaining calm, firm limits without escalating conflict, accepting abuse, or dehumanizing others.



CONCLUSION & THE PATH FORWARD

- **Culture is Built Daily:** Shaped by small, intentional micro-interactions—how we greet, listen, and support each other every day.
- **Stewardship:** Building an organization so deeply rooted in gentleness that the culture flourishes long into future generations.
- **Final Thought:** "*The culture we nurture today becomes the safety and home of tomorrow.*"

FINAL WORDS FROM JOHN



THANKYOU!

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H.O.M.E.S.