

Myths About Partnership

A frequent misconception is that partnership is just another term for working together or collaboration. But you can probably think of many examples of ways in which collaboration happens in domination systems: Terrorists collaborate to commit atrocities; regressive politicians collaborate to pass policies and laws that reinforce male supremacy and white supremacy, etc.

Here’s a chart which identifies some common myths about Partnership, and demonstrates the salient distinctions between the realities of partnership and domination systems.

Myth: In a partnership world...	Domination System	Partnership System
It will all be cooperation	In-group versus out-group cooperation	Trust and reciprocity-based cooperation
There won’t be any competition	Fear and attack driven competition	Achievement driven competition
There won’t be any conflict	Conflict used to win at all costs	Conflict used to arrive at solutions
There will be no need for leaders or managers	Leadership based on power over : man who gives orders to subordinates that must be unquestioningly obeyed	Leadership based on power to (woman or man who nurtures and supports productivity and creativity) AND/OR power with (encourages and participates in teamwork)
There is no hierarchy	Hierarchies of domination: rigid pecking orders maintained by fear and disempowerment of others	Hierarchies of actualization: fluid hierarchies that empower others for optimal functioning
The women will take over. (A battle of the sexes is inevitable, so if it isn't patriarchy, it must be matriarchy.)	The devaluation of women and the “feminine” (e.g., caring & nonviolence) distorts organizational structure and culture	“Feminine” traits and activities are valued in women, men, and social policy