

IJPLC International Journal of Presencing Leadership & Coaching

PRESENCING AS A WAY OF BEING:

Inhabiting Fourth-Person Knowing in Dynamic Presencing Coaching

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Abstract: This article responds to the fourth-person perspective introduced by Scharmer and Pomeroy (2024), which positions the social field as a new epistemological category of collective knowing. In contrast, it introduces Dynamic Presencing Coaching (DPC) (Gunnlaugson, 2024a–2025) in contributing to evolving development of fourth-person knowing by offering a fully embodied and inhabitable approach to presencing in both individual and collective coaching contexts. Central to this contribution is the presencing self-sense—a lived, phenomenological orientation that functions as a dynamic conduit of presence. In DPC, this self-sense is enacted through the coach’s inner presencing body as it connects their presencing self in the presencing field as a living, self-generating circulation and flow of presence. From this perspective, the accessibility and depth of fourth-person knowing emerges through an inner enactment of five dimensional, embodied level-depths of presence. To support this reframing, the article articulates five critical contributions of DPC: (1) recasting embodied participation in relation to the presencing field; (2) providing a cohesive ontological framework for field engagement; (3) integrating individual and collective dynamics through presence; (4) reconfiguring the temporal architecture of presencing to integrate past, present, emerging future, and eternal dimensions of deep time; and (5) restoring practitioner agency as a co-creative force in shaping the field. These contributions build upon the ontological foundations of Dynamic Presencing (DP) (Gunnlaugson, 2020–2025), which affirms the presencing field as an emergent, immanent dimension of presence. Overall, Dynamic Presencing Coaching contributes to a reframing of fourth-person knowing as an embodied generative way of presencing within coaching and the whole of daily life.

Key words: presencing, fourth-person perspective, ontological presencing, field-based presencing

I. Introduction

Scharmer and Pomeroy (2024) recently introduced "fourth-person knowing" as an extension beyond traditional first-, second-, and third-person perspectives. This emerging category establishes a new epistemological orientation by legitimating the collective interiority of social systems as a valid space of knowledge creation. This advances a trans-subjective view that integrates intersubjective and objective dimensions of knowing (Scharmer and Pomeroy, 2024). According to their formulation, fourth-person knowing is marked by five distinct phenomena: (1) it emerges as something beyond the individual while simultaneously arising through individual participation; (2) it involves a decentering of perception that uniquely integrates time, space, and sensation; (3) it fosters a heightened sense of possibility; (4) it aligns individual and collective attention, intention, and agency; and (5) it activates generative social fields (Scharmer and Pomeroy, 2024). Framed through this epistemic lens, they explore how fourth-person knowing seeks to provide new pathways for societal regeneration and helpful responses to contemporary global challenges. Their contribution builds on the framework of Theory U (TU) (Scharmer 2007-2018), expanding its horizon to include a more explicit engagement with the social field as a distinct source of collective intelligence.

Dynamic Presencing (DP) (Gunnlaugson, 2020–2025) offers an ontological response to the fourth-person by reframing it through a fully inhabitable and embodied approach. While Scharmer and Pomeroy position the social field as a trans-subjective source of emergent intelligence, DP reconceives the presencing field through one individual and three collective locations, situating it in ontological terrain that co-arises through the embodied integration of the practitioner's presence and presencing nature. This reorientation emphasizes the inner conditions through which the field becomes coherently accessible and dynamically participatory—transforming presencing from a mode of knowing into a dimensional way of being.

Building upon this ontological foundation, Dynamic Presencing Coaching (DPC) (Gunnlaugson, 2024a-2025) introduces the presencing-self-sense as a developmental and phenomenological refinement of the practitioner's role within the presencing process. In DPC, this is enacted through the *inner presencing body*, coheres within the *presencing self*, and is attuned through the *presencing field* in both individual and collective coaching contexts. This integrated movement gives rise to what DPC introduces as the *presencing self-sense*: a lived, phenomenological way of structuring the presencing self that functions as a living conduit of presence that one accesses on a moment to moment basis. From the DPC perspective, the ontological conditions through which fourth-person knowing becomes coherently accessible and meaningfully embodied arise through the coherence of this emerging presencing self-sense. As a practical extension of DP, DPC offers a distinct coaching methodology and developmental apprenticeship that enacts its ontological commitments in applied

contexts, offering a living transmission of its deeper emerging wisdom through transformational presence-sourced, presencing-guided, field-attuned practice.

While Theory U has been instrumental in advancing the practice of presencing within organizational and systemic change contexts, its primary concern lies in catalyzing collective transformation, where presencing functions as a way of knowing that activates generative social fields. In contrast, Dynamic Presencing Coaching develops presencing as a generative way of being—both individually and collectively—through a dimensional integration of the practitioner’s inner presencing body, presencing self, and presencing field as noted above. This shift from epistemic activation to ontological inhabitation informs the differing onto-epistemological commitments underlying each respective approaches to presencing.

Notably, Scharmer and Pomeroy’s (2024) articulation of fourth-person knowing makes minimal reference to presencing as an individual state of being or practice. For Scharmer, presencing is primarily a way of knowing from the emerging future. Whereas for DPC, presencing is a depth-dimensional practice of being through which presencing knowing unfolds. From this standpoint, Dynamic Presencing Coaching offers a complementary yet distinct response. Rather than ground fourth-person knowing in the field as a separate intelligence, it identifies the conditions through which the field becomes an inhabitable dimension of presence, accessed through the attuned alignment of the coach’s presencing self-sense as conduit in the presencing field.

By naming the social field as a distinct dimension of awareness beyond first-, second-, and third-person perspectives, Scharmer and Pomeroy’s articulation of fourth-person knowing contributes significantly to the evolving landscape of presencing practice. Overall, this framing opens new pathways for understanding how generative knowing arises through collective and systemic dynamics, introducing a vital epistemological advance by positioning the social field as a source of emergent intelligence. At the same time, it invites deeper reflection on how such knowing becomes experientially accessible and coherently embodied, particularly when viewed through the lens of presencing as a developmental and ontological practice.

While Theory U provides a valuable though primarily epistemological orientation, Dynamic Presencing Coaching complements and deepens this view by introducing new ontological categories: the inner presencing body and presencing self as the generative condition through which the field becomes inhabitable. In DPC, the field arises co-emergently through the embodied integration of these inner dimensions enacted in and through presencing practice. This reframing foregrounds the dimensional coherence of DPC—where presence is sourced in the inner presencing body, integrates within the presencing self, and extends into subtle field attunement. From this view, any fourth-person way of knowing that seeks to unfold as a generative way of being necessarily involves a deep

ontological inhabitation for the field to become a tangible dimension of lived experience.

II. Dynamic Presencing Coaching

Dynamic Presencing Coaching both affirms and critically expands upon aspects of how the presencing field¹ is conceptualized in Scharmer and Pomeroy's (2024) recent work. Their reference to the social field as possessing an "autonomous beingness" (p. 28) gestures toward its emergent distinctiveness and subtle intelligibility. While this language points to the generative character of the field, it leaves open important questions about how such beingness comes into form and becomes inhabitable in practice. Their formulation of fourth-person knowing positions the presencing field as a distinct epistemological source of knowledge that transcends first-, second-, and third-person perspectives. Although they outline participatory pathways, the emphasis on transcendence risks obscuring the field's accessibility as an immanent, lived, and relational experience.

As presencing-based approaches continue to evolve, new methodologies are emerging that deepen the ontological accessibility of the presencing field and expand its integration into transformational practice. Dynamic Presencing Coaching integrates the presencing field as an ontologically accessible dimension of experience in individual and collective coaching contexts. Whereas Theory U frames the field as a distinct domain of emergent knowing, DPC enfoldes the field into a dynamic interplay with the coach's presencing nature and inner presencing body to form an embodied, participatory conduit. This integration gives rise to a presenced form of knowing from a way of being that arises within the coaching field,² in which first-, second-, third-, and fourth-person perspectives become directly accessible. In DPC, the coaching field is initially catalyzed through the coach's stabilized presencing, which anchors the dimensional coherence of the session and opens the field as a coaching environment. The client then gains access to this field through their own immediacy of experience. As the client's presencing deepens over time, they may begin to participate more actively in sustaining and shaping the generative dynamics of the coaching field.

Rather than positing the presencing field as an autonomous ontological entity with its own discrete beingness or intentionality—an orientation that may support its framing as a distinct epistemic category but proves limiting in practice—Dynamic Presencing Coaching understands the field as a co-arising dimension of presence, immanently accessible through the embodied participation of both coach and client. In DPC, the coaching field emerges through their shared

¹ Scharmer and Pomeroy refer to the presencing field as the social field; I use the term presencing field or field to maintain continuity with the framing of DPC.

² In DPC, the term coaching field refers to the presencing field as it becomes accessible and co-inhabited within the immediacy of the DPC coaching process. I use them interchangeably in this article depending on the theoretical or practical context.

presencing, constellating in the intersubjective space between them. While the coach's stabilized depth of presence and capacity for presencing initially activates and helps ground the field, it arises relationally with the client and becomes inhabitable through embodied integration.

While *Theory U* offers helpful participatory practices for engaging the social field, it places comparatively less emphasis on the somatic and immanent dimensions of the practitioner's presence, dimensions that DPC foregrounds as essential to the field's co-emergence. By attuning to the field in this way, DPC avoids subtly reifying or anthropomorphizing the field as a sentient transcendent entity, instead embedding it more fully within the textures of the coach and client's lived experience, where presencing knowing arises through embodied reciprocity and attuned presence.

More generally, DPC aspires to foster a seamless integration of knowing, being, and becoming within the presencing process. In this view, knowing from the field arises through the dynamic interplay of embodied first-person awareness, relational second-person attunement, and systemic third-person discernment—each offering distinct yet complementary dimension of presenced knowing. As these dimensions deepen and cohere through the presencing process, a fourth-person mode of knowing may emerge that integrates these dimensions within the coach and client's lived experience.

Whereas Scharmer and Pomeroy frame fourth-person knowing as emerging from a distinct source that transcends these core perspectives, ways of knowing and individuals within the field, DPC reorients the presencing field as an emergent dimension that integrates and deepens the field through these three perspectives from within and between each participant. Rather than a higher-order category, fourth-person knowing in DPC is understood as a participatory coherence—an integrative unfolding of depth that emerges through the embodied interplay of first-, second-, and third-person perspectives. This coherence arises through the alignment of each participant's presencing body, presencing nature, and their shared presence in the coaching field.

Rather than transcending the self to access the field as a distinct or higher category of knowing, DPC invites both coach and client to attune to the field through their presencing nature. In doing so, DPC reconfigures the presencing process by rooting generative knowing in the immediacy of ontological inhabitation. What DPC contributes is a clarifying ontological shift: presencing becomes generative not by drawing upon an external field intelligence, but through the coherence of one's presencing nature, enfolded in presence. In this sense, presencing is not accessed from beyond—it is co-inhabited and co-cultivated by coach and client as a generative capacity that deepens, stabilizes, and expresses itself through a shared way of being.

From this perspective, any knowing that arises “from the field” in DPC is always mediated

through the presencing self-sense of the coach and client—through their embodied first-person awareness, second-person attunement, and third-person discernment. This marks a key divergence from Scharmer and Pomeroy’s framing of fourth-person knowing as sourced from a domain beyond or transcendent of these perspectives. In DPC, the field’s knowing does not emerge as a transcendent or independent domain. Instead, it becomes inhabitable as an emergent dimension of who we are.

III. Integrating the Presencing Field into Lived Practice

Within Theory U, presencing is framed as a process of learning from the emerging future—a directional gesture that orients the practitioner toward sensing and actualizing what wants to arise. While this temporal framing has offered a powerful developmental metaphor, Dynamic Presencing Coaching invites a reconfiguration of how time functions within the presencing process. Rather than privileging the emerging future as the leading edge, DPC introduces a dimensional architecture in which the *emerging past*, *present*, *future*, and *the eternal* co-arise within the coaching field.

In this view, the emerging future becomes a thread within the deeper DPC process. Generativity arises from deepening into a sourced wholeness already moving *as* and *through* us. Presencing in DPC becomes a depth-dimensional way of being cultivated through the presencing self as generative conduit. Rather than orienting presencing exclusively through the emerging future, the coach indwells in the deep present as the generative locus where all modes of time—past, present, future and eternal—converge and constellate. This reorientation invites a new apprenticeship with presencing in time, one grounded in inhabiting a unified temporal wholeness that coheres through the layered depth of the present.

In DPC, the presencing field is both individually and collectively inhabitable by the coach and client. It arises through a distinct ontological pathway embedded within the coaching process. The presencing self-sense of the Coach aligns intimately with the subtle architecture of this field, revealing presencing as a participatory movement that is sourced, enacted, and deepened through attuned coaching practice. Rather than treating the field as independent and transcendent, DPC grounds it in embodied and relational immediacy. What may feel expansive or beyond the self is revealed as continuous with the coach’s and client’s own presencing. By framing the field as immanent, accessible, and dynamic, DPC offers a middle path: the generative power of the field unfolds through the coach’s capacity to sustain dimensional presence while attuning to its emergent collective intelligence. This framing preserves the field’s transformative potential while making clear that it arises through embodied participation—not as a separate or quasi-autonomous source of insight.

This re-conceptualization carries important implications for presencing practitioners. In DPC, the coaching field is catalyzed and enacted through the coach's presencing self-sense, forming the ontological ground of the session. Over time, deeper dimensions of the field may begin to constellate through the client as well, as they attune to the dimensional presence being sustained in the session. In this view, the coaching field arises first through the coach's embodiment and becomes accessible to the client through shared presence, allowing the coaching session to unfold as a space of mutual generativity grounded in ontological inhabitation.

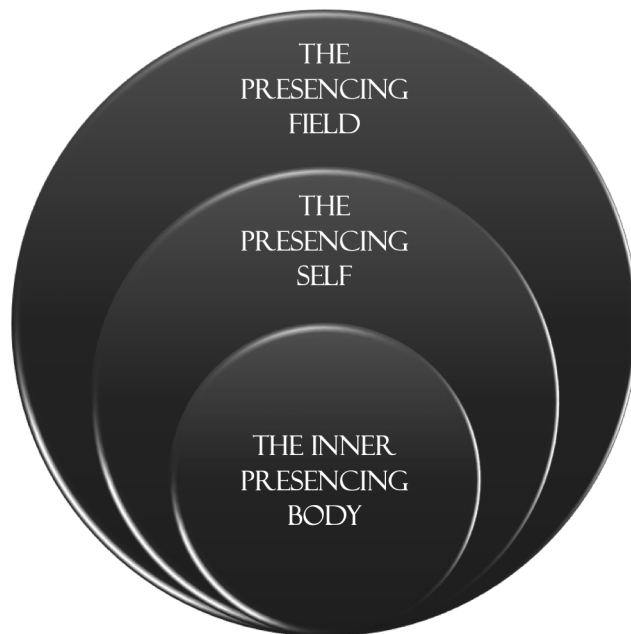


Figure 1.0: The DPC Prototype of the Presencing Self-Sense

In response to this need, Dynamic Presencing Coaching reconfigures Scharmer's fourth-person perspective by embedding the presencing field within the presencing self-sense of both coach and client. This integration forms the basis of a living conduit through which presence circulates in a self-generating movement of being. While a transcendent quality may be sensed in the coaching field, it becomes available through the coherence of this embodied presencing process. The client typically enters the coaching field with the coach through the immediacy of felt experience, where the coach's inhabitation of presence creates conditions that support the client's generative unfolding. In this view, presencing becomes an inhabitable way of being for the coach and a receptive presencing environment for the client, enabling transformational movement across personal, relational, and collective dimensions.

The DPC Prototype of the presencing self depicts three nested layers of presencing embodiment (Figure 1.0 above). At the center is the inner presencing body—the foundational

layer—where presence is anchored in the somatic immediacy of felt experience, establishing a stable seat of awareness and stillness. Surrounding this is the presencing self, the integrative layer through which embodied presence and emerging insight cohere, enabling the self to function as a dimensional conduit of presencing. Encompassing both is the presencing field, the expansive outer layer that constellates the relational and generative space shared between coach and client(s). These three layers illustrate a developmental and dimensional progression, guiding coaches to progressively attune, embody and integrate their presencing nature as indispensable to their self- and field-sense. This nested prototype supports the coach in sustaining presencing as a generative way of being while inviting the client into resonant contact with the field through the immediacy of their own lived experience.

IV. Critical Perspectives on the Fourth-Person Perspective

As we have been exploring, the presencing self-sense forms the ontological interface through which the coach apprentices with the field as a lived, inhabitable dimension of presence. From this vantage point, it becomes possible to engage more critically and generatively with the framing of fourth-person knowing introduced by Scharmer and Pomeroy (2024). Overall, their contribution offers a valuable epistemological lens for understanding how collective interiority becomes a locus for generative transformation, particularly through its emphasis on the social field as a source of emergent knowing. By situating the presencing field as a transcendent phenomenon arising from relational and systemic dynamics, the fourth-person perspective shifts focus from individual practice to broader currents of collective intelligence. While this opens important vistas, it also introduces conceptual and methodological challenges in DPC. The following section explores these tensions in greater depth, bringing them into dialogue with the methodological foundations of Dynamic Presencing (Gunnlaugson, 2020-25) and Dynamic Presencing Coaching (Gunnlaugson, 2024a-2024) to illuminate key points of convergence and divergence in the evolving ecosystem of presencing-based approaches.

IV.1 Embodiment in TU and DPC: Contrasting Approaches

A central divergence between Theory U and Dynamic Presencing Coaching lies in how each engages embodiment in relation to the presencing field. While both recognize its transformative potential, they are grounded in distinct philosophical lineages and experiential practices. In Theory U, embodiment is directed toward attunement and alignment with the presencing field, understood as a transcendent realm of intelligence arising from social and relational dynamics. Practices such as mindfulness, co-sensing, and dialogue are designed to facilitate access to this field through *letting go*

and *letting come* in order to connect with the emerging future. Here, embodiment serves as a participatory threshold to the field.

In contrast, DPC engages embodiment as an intrinsic, co-creative process through which the presencing field is enacted within the lived experience of the coach and becomes accessible to the client through the immediacy of their own experience. DPC recognizes embodiment as the interior medium through which presencing unfolds as a dimensional process of presence: sourced through the inner presencing body, cohering within the presencing self, and attuning to the presencing field in a living, self-generating circulation and flow. This integrated orientation draws together the immediacy of first-person awareness, the generative resonance of second-person engagement, the structural clarity of third-person discernment, and the field-sensitivity of fourth-person awareness. Together, these dimensions give rise to an inhabitable presencing practice that is immanent, emergent, and co-constituted within the field between coach and client(s).

This deeper integration of embodiment in DPC highlights a key limitation in Theory U's framing of the presencing field. By conceptualizing the field as a quasi-autonomous social phenomenon emerging primarily through relational interactions, TU risks sidelining or downplaying the practitioner's interiority in accessing and co-creating this space. While TU acknowledges embodiment as part of presencing, its teleological orientation toward the emerging future tends to frame embodiment as a means of access, rather than as the ontological medium through which the field unfolds. This perspective positions embodiment as a tool for connecting with the field, instead of being an intrinsic dimension of the presencing process and our presencing nature. As a result, the depth of the presencing practitioner's own embodied presence and their capacity to sustain engagement with the field remains underexplored. More critically, this orientation may subtly instrumentalize embodiment, treating it primarily as a vehicle for attunement rather than recognizing it as the inner felt region of one's presencing nature through which the presencing process emerges.

Instead of conceptualizing the presencing field as an externalized realm of intelligence to be accessed, DPC recognizes it as a living, co-creative dimension of presence that unfolds emergently through the coach and client. This perspective fosters a sustained engagement with presence, continuous in flow and integrative in orientation, where the field is internally and co-enacted. DPC practices emphasize grounding presence as a lived extension of embodied, relational, and field geographies of knowing. Supported by the coach, the client accesses the field through the immediacy of their own experience. In this view, embodiment becomes an inherent mode and function of one's way of presencing that enacts and grounds the field in our lived experience.

A key methodological distinction between TU and DPC lies in how embodiment is cultivated as a means of engaging the presencing field. In TU, the practitioner is conceptualized

primarily as a vessel for accessing wisdom and intelligence from the social field. This orientation is reflected in concepts such as the social body and Social Presencing Theater (SPT), a social art form that integrates movement, stillness, and embodied enactment to help communities sense and prototype their emerging futures (Scharmer, 2018). These practices emphasize the primacy of the social field as a construct that represents the relational, systemic, and intersubjective dimensions of awareness. TU's methodology orients embodiment toward collective attunement, framing it as a means of synchronizing with and drawing insight from the social field. This reinforces TU's broader focus on systemic transformation through shared awareness (Scharmer, 2016).

In contrast, DPC situates the coach's inner presencing body as the initial somatic interface through which individual and collective awareness is catalyzed within the coaching field. Rather than treating embodiment as a means of attuning to a transcendent social field, DPC works with the coach's presencing nature to generate a feedback loop: the more fully the coach inhabits stillness and presence within their inner presencing body, the more effectively they can engage the presencing field with and for the client. In DPC, inner, relational, and systemic attunements are enfolded expressions of a single embodied movement. By rooting presencing in the immediacy of lived experience, DPC addresses TU's tendency to prioritize a collective framing of embodiment. This reorientation helps balance and integrate the individual dimension of embodiment as a viable pathway for engaging the presencing field—particularly suited to one-on-one coaching and leadership contexts, where the coach's embodied presence serves as a generative medium for facilitating and supporting transformation.

The implications of these differing approaches to embodiment are significant. While Theory U enables practitioners to momentarily align with the generative potential of the presencing field—often through embodied practices of sensing and collective attunement—it tends to frame the field as an externalized domain to be accessed or opened to. In contrast, Dynamic Presencing Coaching reframes the presencing field as an inhabitable dimension that both coach and client engage from within. In this view, presencing in DPC shifts from a transient, state-dependent event into a sustained, embodied condition—supporting continuous generative engagement across diverse coaching and leadership contexts.

IV.2 Ontological and Methodological Divergences

Theory U's conceptualization of the social dimensions of the presencing field creates a teleological orientation to presencing, positioning the presencing self as a future prototype shaped through interaction with the collective field. While this framing opens important pathways for understanding collective dynamics, it leaves unresolved how practitioners stabilize their engagement

with the field through the immediacy of lived presence. The fourth-person framing advanced by Scharmer and Pomeroy extends this orientation by viewing the field as a trans-subjective phenomenon co-arising through relational and systemic interaction. Yet this perspective risks abstraction, reification as well as mystification, as it tends to prioritize collective resonance over the embodied interiority, developmental as well as consciousness capacity of individual practitioners.

A key distinction within Dynamic Presencing Coaching lies in its orientation toward the presencing field as a subtle, participatory dimension rather than an autonomous source with seemingly separate intentionality. Instead, DPC understands the field as co-arising through the embodied presence of the coach and is dynamically engaged in the immediacy of the coaching encounter. This framing avoids separating the field from the practitioner's consciousness as an external collective intelligence. In DPC, the field is recognized as a relational unfolding—immanently lived and continuously constellated through the coherence of the coach's presencing nature in attunement with the client's experience. In doing so, DPC sidesteps metaphysical abstraction while preserving the felt sense of vitality, coherence, and responsiveness that arises when the presencing field is anchored in and through the immediacy of presence. Rather than functioning as an autonomous source of intelligence, the field becomes an emergent extension of the presencing process itself—alive through the embodied resonance of coach and client within the depth of their shared presence.

Theory U emphasizes the field's transcendent, collective nature, highlighting how shared awareness and relational dynamics contribute to systemic transformation. On the other hand, Dynamic Presencing Coaching orients presencing through the practitioner's interior development. This grounds the process developmentally as a realizable way of being. This distinction becomes evident through five key methodological principles that differentiate DPC from Theory U.

First, DPC asserts that knowing arises through direct, embodied engagement with the presencing field. Second, it integrates ontology and epistemology, recognizing presencing knowing as inseparable from the practitioner's state, way, and depth-location of being. Third, DPC emphasizes relational and co-creative knowing, where transformation emerges through the dynamic interweaving of first-, second-, and third-person perspectives. Fourth, it adopts a pragmatic orientation, prioritizing somatic grounding to stabilize the practitioner's sustained engagement with the field. Fifth, DPC avoids abstracting the field as a separate category of knowing, instead embedding it within the immediacy of lived experience as a participatory dimension of one's presencing nature.

These methodological differences reveal deeper ontological divergences between TU and DPC. TU's framing of the presencing field as a distinct category aligns with its systems orientation,

emphasizing collective dynamics yet offering practitioners limited guidance for integrating the field within their own embodied interiority. By contrast, DPC situates the presencing field as a lived, participatory dimension—where the coach’s presence becomes the generative ground for relational engagement with the client. Practices in DPC center on aligning the coach’s inner presencing body with the unfolding coherence of the presencing field to lead and draw the client into the session. This ensures that transformation is attended to in an immediate and embodied way that opens up possibilities for integrating, sustaining, and sourcing embodiment directly in the coaching field.

DPC avoids projecting autonomous agency onto the presencing field as a way of knowing, understanding it instead as a subtle, participatory dimension that co-arises through the coach’s embodied presence rather than as a transcendent, externalized entity. Rather than conceptualizing the presencing self as a future prototype, DPC views it as a dynamic interplay of presence and becoming, cultivated through the five level-depths of presence (Gunnlaugson, 2024a, 2024b, 2025). This developmental framework bridges inner depth with relational engagement, dissolving the boundary between self and field and fostering a coherence of knowing grounded in lived immediacy. By integrating individual, relational, and field dimensions, DPC reframes the presencing field as a participatory unfolding within the coach’s and client’s shared experience. In doing so, the result is a mode of presencing that serves as both a phenomenological anchor and a generative interface for transformation across personal, relational, and collective domains of coaching practice.

IV.3 Integrating Individual and Collective Dynamics

As we have been exploring, Theory U emphasizes the autonomy and generative potential of the social field, framing it as an emergent phenomenon that practitioners engage with through alignment and relational interaction. TU conceptualizes the presencing field as possessing “its own autonomous beingness,” drawing from cosmologies and epistemologies such as Daoism and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (Scharmer and Pomeroy, 2024, p. 8). This framing is further reinforced by the metaphor of the “Circle Being,” which illustrates how the field arises through shared attention and intention yet is understood as a distinct entity with its own knowing and intentionality (Scharmer and Pomeroy, 2024, p. 12). Additionally, the experience of “something looking at me that isn’t me” is described as a core aspect of fourth-person knowing, emphasizing the presencing field’s relational, quasi-autonomous dynamics (Scharmer and Pomeroy, 2024, p. 10). These descriptions highlight how TU externalizes the presencing field as existing independently, portraying it as a transcendent phenomenon that interacts with practitioners as an intentional and source-like presence.

While this view reflects the relational and systemic dimensions of TU’s conceptualization of the social field, it risks abstracting the role of the individual, framing their engagement as one

International Journal of Presencing Leadership & Coaching | June 2025 | Vol. 2, No. 1

principally concerned with alignment rather than active embodiment and co-creation. Further, by privileging transcendent relational resonance, this collective-first orientation can overshadow the sovereignty of the presencing self and displace the embodied depth of one's immanent presencing nature. By treating the social field as possessing a quasi-autonomous presence, this framing introduces a subtle tension between embodied interiority and the relational dynamics of the field. Such a differentiation deprioritizes the developmental depth of presence, positioning transformation as something that originates in a transcendent domain rather than co-arising from within the immediacy of one's lived experience.

Dynamic Presencing Coaching resolves this imbalance by reframing the presencing field as a co-emergent phenomenon that arises through the coach's embodied presence, relational resonance, and engagement. Central to DPC's methodology is the Axis of Being Stillness, which provides a source-based framework for integrating individual and collective dimensions of presence. By working with the *Presence Point* (embodied awareness of stillness in the presencing field), *Still Point* (informing the coach's seat of presence), and *Source Point* (somatic location of one's ground of presence), the coach anchors their engagement with the field in a way that facilitates embodied coherence. This anchoring stabilizes the coach's capacity to integrate their developmental depth.

DPC's integrative approach bridges individual depth and collective resonance. By situating the presencing field within the embodied realities of both coach and client—though accessed and integrated differently—DPC establishes a continuum of engagement that spans the inner dimensions (“*I-space*”) and its relational expression in the coaching field (the “*We-space*”). Rather than treat the field as something external, this framing affirms its dynamic presence within and between the coach and client. By positioning the coach as an active catalyst and co-creator, DPC emphasizes how embodied presence informs and shapes the field, creating a generative holding environment that invites the client into their own immediate experience of presence and presencing.

Through this reframing, DPC offers a balanced and integrated presencing orientation. By restoring agency to both the coach and client, and emphasizing the co-creative nature of the presencing field, DPC counters the fourth-person tendency to abstract or separate the field from lived experience. Instead, DPC presents a perspective in which individual depth and collective dynamics mutually inform and reinforce one another. This interplay is vital in coaching and leadership practice, enabling the coach to remain fluid and responsive while engaging the client's unfolding process.

IV.4 Rethinking the Temporal Orientation of Presencing

In the Theory U approach, presencing is framed as a teleological process, emphasizing learning from the emerging future as its defining gesture of transformation. This future-oriented focus positions the presencing self as a prototype of one's highest potential—an idealized becoming that is accessed through alignment with the collective field and future possibility. While this framing highlights emergence, it can obscure the deeper generative potential that arises within the lived depths of presence. TU often treats the present as an aperture through which the future emerges, yet this orientation may under-resource both coach and client in stabilizing their awareness within the grounded fullness and depth of embodied presence. By privileging the emergent future, the subtle wisdom capacities of the present risk being bypassed, resulting in a presencing practice that orients more toward possibility than toward a deep inhabitation of the present.

The absence of a fully integrated temporal framework in Theory U raises concerns about the sustainability of its approach. By privileging alignment with the future, TU tends to underemphasize the embodied wisdom of the present, the integrative function of the past, and the enduring insight of the eternal. This forward-leaning orientation can draw practitioners out of their current depth, bypassing the coherence that emerges from fully inhabiting lived experience. As a result, engagement with the presencing field in a future-dominant mode risks fragmentation—oscillating between efforts to dissolve past conditioning and gain fleeting glimpses of the emerging future—without anchoring transformation in the immediacy, depth, and sustaining wisdom of embodied presence.

Dynamic Presencing Coaching addresses these limitations by introducing the *Four Lenses of Deep Time*—the *Past*, *Present*, *Future*, and *Eternal that Presences*—as integral dimensions of the presencing process. These lenses expand and deepen the temporal architecture of presencing, inviting a participatory dynamic through the interplay of each time modalities. Central to this reorientation is the third presencing gesture: *letting be*, bridging the gap between TU's focus on letting go and letting come. *Letting be* creates conditions for presencing practitioners to inhabit the depth-dimensions of the present, where each mode of time co-arises.

The *Past that Presences* in DPC reclaims the past as a living temporal dimension, one that holds integrity, continuity, and significance when presenced from depth. While Theory U frames the past primarily through the lens of *downloading*, emphasizing habitual memory patterns to be suspended or released, DPC affirms the past as meaningful and sacred stratum of experience. Through the *Past that Presences* lens, the past becomes a vital source of insight and guidance that supports transformation.

The *Present that Presences* emphasizes the immediacy, depth, and generative wisdom of the

living present. While Theory U positions the present as a transitional phase—a corridor through which one passes to the emerging future—DPC elevates the deep present as the central generative dimension of the presencing process. It is here that practitioners stabilize their awareness and root their presencing nature. Through practices that attune the inner presencing body to the stillness and coherence of the now, the present becomes more than a temporal waypoint. It reveals itself as a vibrant, multidimensional field where presencing actively unfolds.

The *Future that Presences* repositions the future as a participatory and emergent dimension, discerned from within the depths of embodied presence. Rather than projecting the presencing self toward a distant or idealized potential, practitioners engage the future as a subtle arising—one that unfolds through the coherence of being and becoming. In this orientation, the future presences not from ahead, but from within. DPC reframes the seeds of the future as emerging from the deep present, ensuring that transformation remains grounded, integrative, and attuned to the living immediacy of presencing.

The *Eternal that Presences* introduces a timeless and sacred dimension to presencing, connecting practitioners to the ontological ground that holds and integrates all other temporal modalities. This lens serves as an abiding ground of interconnectedness, offering access to a depth that enfolds and harmonizes the movement of past, present, and future. Engaging the eternal allows practitioners to deepen their resonance with the presencing field through a continuity of presence that transcends linear temporality. This connection strengthens their capacity to presence each temporal lens within the encompassing rhythm of the eternal, cultivating a coherence that supports transformation across all dimensions of time.

Through the *Four Lenses of Deep Time*, DPC offers a cohesive, balanced, and generative temporal framework that opens presencing to the varied wisdom expressions of the living past, present, future, and eternal dimensions. This integrated approach addresses the limitations of TU's teleological orientation by reclaiming the deeper value of often de-prioritized temporal dimensions. DPC grounds the coach in the generative presence of the now, honors the formative presence of the past, attunes to the unfolding of the future, and aligns with the timeless coherence of the eternal. From this orientation, the client is met within the immediacy of their lived experience—without needing to conceptualize or prioritize specific dimensions of time, they are invited into a more stable and whole contact with presence. By drawing from the full spectrum of temporal experience, DPC enables the coach to engage the presencing field as a living phenomenon—one constellated through the embodied coherence of their presencing nature, and attuned responsively to the relational timing and depth of the client's unfolding.

This rethinking of the temporal orientation of presencing has profound implications for

coaching and presence-based leadership. By restoring the immediacy and stability of the present while engaging the aspirational qualities of future alignment, DPC supports coaches in presencing across the full dimensionality and wisdom of deep time. They can draw from the Past that Presences to surface formative patterns and meaning; stabilize awareness in the Present that Presences to foster clarity, connection, and coherence; discern emergent possibilities through the Future that Presences to support innovation and unfolding direction; and align with the Eternal that Presences to ground vision, values, and depth orientation. This temporal integration invites the coach and client into a presencing practice that is grounded, expansive, and guided by the full living wisdom of time.

IV.5 Agency and the Hermeneutics of Trust

At the heart of Theory U lies a persistent tension with the practitioner's present self, often referred to as the ordinary self (Scharmer, 2007). By framing this ordinary self as an egoic construct that must be "let go of," TU positions aspects of the individual's interior life as obstacles to be transcended. The pathway to generativity in this framing, lies in shedding those layers of the self to align with the deeper intelligence of the presencing field. This is especially evident in TU's core gestures of *letting go* and *letting come*, which prioritize releasing one's ordinary self to access a higher order field of knowing and wisdom.

While these gestures encourage openness to collective dynamics, they also risk subtly dividing the self, framing the practitioner's present reality as something to be overcome. This framing inadvertently devalues the non-egoic, personal dimensions of the practitioner's present self, suggesting that it is inadequate and limiting in comparison to the transcendent wisdom of the social field. Such a stance introduces a hermeneutics of mistrust toward the self: positioning transformation as contingent on bypassing rather than integrating, the practitioner's lived way of being. This internal split risks undermining the practitioner's own lived presence as a generative source. What is called for, then, is a reframing of agency itself. In DPC, this involves reclaiming the ordinary self as a valid and essential ground of transformation, capable of participating creatively in the unfolding of the presencing process.

Further complicating this dynamic is TU's depiction of the social field as a quasi-autonomous phenomenon, described in mystical terms as noted previously as "something looking at me that isn't me" (Scharmer & Pomeroy, 2024, p. 45) or the "presence of the Circle Being" (Scharmer & Pomeroy, 2024, p. 52). These characterizations imply that the field possesses a distinct sentience, distinct from the practitioner's embodied presence. While these framings may evoke a sacred or reverential resonance for some, they may also invite interpretive ambiguity, particularly for

practitioners seeking a grounded and phenomenologically coherent account of presencing. The tendency to mystify or reify the social field as a metaphysical presence risks overshadowing the immediacy of presencing as a deeply embodied and relational process.

DPC responds to this ambiguity by clarifying that the vitality sensed in high-coherence states need not point to or assume a separate being, but rather reflects the vibrancy of embodied states of experience—enacted, constellated, and sustained through embodied participation. By subtly externalizing the generative process and locating agency within the social field, TU risks positioning both coach and client as passive receptors of an external intelligence rather than as active co-creative participants. Though such framings may inspire reverence, they also—at a subtle level—undermine the coach’s embodied trust in their capacity to engage the field as a dimension of their presencing nature. This, in turn, may limit the client’s capacity to discover and unfold their own emerging presence within the coaching field.

In contrast, Dynamic Presencing Coaching adopts a hermeneutics of trust toward the self, affirming the embodied interiority of both coach and client as the foundational site of transformation. While Theory U emphasizes the need to let go of conditioned aspects of the present self to access a deeper source, DPC reorients this gesture by recognizing the present self as a vital entry point into deeper presence. Rather than conceiving the presencing field as an external source of intelligence, DPC understands it as an emergent relational phenomenon—co-enacted through embodied alignment and attuned interaction. By grounding both participants in this participatory process, DPC restores agency to each, allowing the presencing process to be shaped from within while remaining dynamically responsive to the individual, relational, and field dimensions unfolding between them.

By shifting from a potential hermeneutics of mistrust toward the present self to one of grounded trust, Dynamic Presencing Coaching affirms self-trust and individual sovereignty as essential capacities for engaging the presencing field with confidence and clarity. This reorientation recognizes the generative potential of embodied depth as a living source of transformation—bridging personal sovereignty with collective resonance. In this light, DPC fosters a co-creative dynamic in which the presencing field is experienced as an accessible and integrative phenomenon—intimately connected to the unfolding presencing of both coach and client.

This shift is crucial in both coaching and leadership contexts, where self-trust forms the foundation for relational depth and transformational impact. In reclaiming agency and sovereignty, both practitioners and clients become conduits of generative presence—modeling presencing as it unfolds within, between, and through the field. While Theory U affirms the value of self-awareness, its emphasis on letting go of the present self can, at times, inadvertently fragment self-trust by

privileging access to a transcendent field over embodied coherence. In contrast, DPC offers a presencing trajectory rooted in grounded trust—reorienting the practitioner’s relationship to the field from passive receptivity to active co-creation.

V. The Presencing Self-Sense as the Ontological Interface of Fourth-Person Knowing

At the generative core of Dynamic Presencing Coaching is the emergence of a new presencing self-sense—a lived, phenomenological orientation through which coaches and clients interface with the presencing field as a participatory dimension of presencing. Drawing from Wilber’s (2000) notion of *self-sense* in *Integral Psychology*, where it denotes the felt center of identity at various developmental stages, DPC recontextualizes this term ontologically. In this view, the presencing self-sense is neither a developmental stage structure nor a developmental altitude, but a subtle, embodied structure that constellates as the inner presencing body and presencing self and presencing field begin to align generatively.

This self-sense gradually emerges as the coach learns to inhabit, source, and sustain presence as an ontological act. It functions as a dynamic interface—interior, relational, and field-aware—through which the presencing field is engaged as a lived dimension of being. While this orientation primarily develops through the coach’s deep apprenticeship into presencing, the client may begin to sense and stabilize elements of this. What follows explores how this presencing self-sense expands fourth-person knowing as a key dimension of an embodied way of coaching that unfolds within, between, and through the presencing field.

In Dynamic Presencing Coaching, the *presencing self-sense* serves as a central embodied interface that resolves key challenges associated with fourth-person framing by integrating the presencing field as an accessible, participatory, and experientially inhabitable dimension of being. First, it grounds the field within the coach’s inner presencing body, ensuring that embodied depth sufficiently anchors the presencing process. In this orientation, the coach co-activates it through their seat of presence. In DPC, the presencing self is the conductor and the presencing field is a resonant space, enacted and sustained through the interior alignment of coach and client. Second, the presencing self-sense restores agency to the coach, positioning them with the client as an active co-creator of the field’s unfolding through relational attunement and somatic presence. Third, it offers a coherent ontological structure that unifies being and becoming, resolving fragmentation in the presencing process and enabling a seamless interplay between both the coach and client’s depth and their collective emergence in the coaching field. Fourth, it integrates the past, present, future, and eternal as active dimensions of deep time, allowing both coach and client to unfold their presencing through the full temporal spectrum rather than remaining tethered to a future-oriented trajectory. Finally, it reframes the presencing field as a lived and participatory reality, dissolving

abstraction and allowing relational dynamics to emerge naturally through stabilized, embodied presence—shared, sensed and shaped in real time by both coach and client.

Taken together, these innovations support the emergence of a presencing self-sense—a phenomenological coherence that arises through sustained alignment with the inner presencing body and presencing field. This coherence opens into a new ontological orientation: a presencing way of being that integrates fourth-person knowing alongside first-, second-, and third-person ways of knowing. In this unfolding, both coach and client no longer relate to the field as something to access (whether an object or subject), but participates in its unfolding from within, as a living dimension of their embodied presencing nature. Dynamic Presencing Coaching thus affirms fourth-person knowing as a vital dimension of an emerging, integrative presencing-based way of being.

VI. Closing and Forward Looking Remarks

This article has offered both a critical and generative reframing of fourth-person knowing, expanding its relevance within contemporary presencing contexts. By foregrounding the embodied and participatory foundations of the presencing process, Dynamic Presencing Coaching advances a new trajectory for how presencing is understood, practiced, and lived.

At the generative core of this approach is the interplay between the inner presencing body, presencing self, and presencing field, which together form a dynamic and relational conduit for emergence. Unlike Theory U, which frames the social field as a transcendent collective intelligence, DPC reorients the presencing field as a participatory dimension that is immanently accessible within both individual and collective experience. This reorientation restores embodied presence of both coach and client as central to the unfolding of fourth-person knowing. By reconceiving the presencing field in this way, DPC resolves a core tension within TU's framing; the displacement of individual interiority. DPC affirms that presencing can stabilize and become actionable both in one's solitude, and in collective practice.

The article also introduced DPC's ontological response to TU's teleological emphasis on the emerging future. Through the integration of the Axis of Being Stillness, DPC anchors presence in the immediacy of the practitioner's embodied experience while remaining attuned to relational and field dynamics. This foundation is further expanded by DPC's Four Lenses of Deep Time, which reconfigure the temporal scope and architecture of presencing by reclaiming the past as a source of wisdom and meaning (versus downloading and memory), grounding in the richness of the living present, discerning pathways of future becoming, and opening to a timeless depth of the eternal. These temporal distinctions allow presencing to unfold across the full spectrum of time, restoring its generativity within the whole of one's life.

Another core contribution of DPC lies in how its integration of individual sovereignty with collective resonance. While Theory U often emphasizes the autonomy of the presencing field as a source of knowing, Dynamic Presencing Coaching positions the coach as a conscious co-creator of the field through their embodied coherence. Central to this integration is the emergence of the DPC's presencing self-sense, a prototype and orientation through which personal depth, relational immediacy, and field awareness cohere into a presencing way of being. From this interface, presencing becomes a generative process for accessing this space of becoming, grounded in lived immediacy and attuned to the unfolding dynamics of emergence. No longer confined to collective practice, the field emerges as a fluid, inhabitable dimension of reality that spans both individual and shared experience. Within the coaching process, this enables both coach and client to engage the coaching field as a shared space of transformation.

As a whole, Dynamic Presencing Coaching reframes fourth-person knowing as being part of a dimensional unfolding that coheres first-, second-, and third-person perspectives within the presencing self of the coach and client. While the field retains generative potential, any knowing that arises through it becomes intelligible and meaningful only through the embodied integration of first-person immediacy, second-person attunement, and third-person discernment. In this view, fourth-person knowing is more a convergence, a singular unfolding source of knowing from presence, through presence, as presence.

Looking ahead, Dynamic Presencing Coaching invites a new trajectory for presencing practice. By integrating the co-arising dynamic of the field with the immanent depth of the presencing self, DPC shifts presencing from a temporary state into a dynamically emerging way of being. In coaching contexts, this development supports both coach and client in entering a shared depth of contact with their presencing nature. What emerges is an expanded discourse and practice of fourth-person knowing, grounded in deep ontological coherence—a living source from which a new presencing way of experiencing, relating and transforming may unfold for those called to apprentice with the living wisdom of this coaching path and approach.

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[Google Scholar](#), [ResearchGate](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Amazon Author page](#), [Faculty Page](#)