

TOOL | BEFRIENDING YOUR NEMESIS

“Us” versus “them” is a luxury we cannot afford when we are seeking new solutions to intractable problems. We all have “shadow” aspects or parts of ourselves that we reject. We tend to react very strongly when we see those characteristics in other people

These, often unconscious reactions, can limit us from seeing the wisdom or perspective that that individual holds.

Step 1 — Consider the “shadow side” of an individual or different sector you don’t frequently work with or that you mistrust. In the first column of the worksheet, list all the bad qualities of that individual or sector...the ones that really “push your hot buttons.”

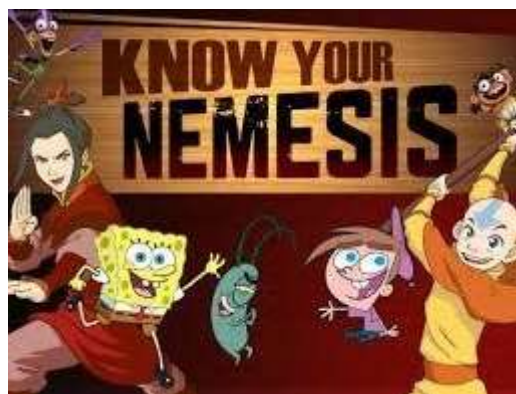
Step 2 — In the second column of the worksheet, list the opposite of each quality you named in column one.

Step 3 — In the third column, reframe each quality from column #1 as a positive. What would your nemesis call this quality?

Step 4 — In the fourth column, identify the potential benefits of each “bad quality” listed in column one.

Step 5 — Reflect on the qualities listed in the fourth column and consider the following questions:

- Can you think of situations where these qualities could help you achieve ends that you value?
- What new insights did you gain about how is your sector perceived – both positively and negatively – by others?



Source: Frances Westley & Brenda Zimmerman, Graduate Diploma in Social Innovation, U of Waterloo

RESOURCES: [Resource Library](#) - Explore Tamarack's community engagement resources - including research, articles and related links.

Befriending Your Nemesis Worksheet

What irritates me most about X?	What are the opposite attributes?	Reframe X's irritating attributes as positives	ID potential benefits of X's attributes