

Flow Together

Steph Curry is considered one of the best basketball shooters of all time, but he couldn't have done it alone. Unlike most superstar athletes in modern sports, he has been on the same team with Klay Thompson and Draymond Green for a decade, winning three championships with them. Steph and Klay are nicknamed the 'Splash Brothers' (as if their 3-pointers splash like rain) and Draymond knows where to find Steph for an uncontested shot or to create the opportunity for Klay and Steph to shoot. Draymond's assistance is what allows Steph and Klay to unleash their greatness.

The act of performing in our individual sweet spots, flow zones, or peak performances, whatever you call them, is satisfying and beautiful, but doing so as a team takes that to a higher level. My days in retained executive search, where I worked seamlessly with two of my research associates, as well as my banking operations days, are fondly remembered. My face was lit up as I drove home after the games because these were such beautiful experiences.

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Henri Matisse, the celebrated artist whose innovative use of brilliant colors depicted emotions, was hardly well received in his earlier years. His breakthrough occurred only when he invited a young painter, Andre Derain, to paint with him at Collioure. In this Southern town of France, the two artists not only painted side by side every day, but also collaborated to find a new way to portray the emotions of a place with vibrant colors. Their work was so bold and shocking they were called Fauves, or 'wild beasts', and inspired a Fauvism movement that inspired many others.

Dance I is Matisse's masterpiece in which he depicts a group of people flowing together in unison; here we see five dancers who are joined in a dance yet each is in their own element, able to move unrestrainedly and fluidly. Although we do not see the individual faces of the dancers, I think that in itself is a beauty- while individually excelling, the individual's identity loses itself to the larger group. Trancelike, the dancers appear fully engaged and flowing in their element and the group's. The hands of two of the dancers are parted, and I like one interpretation by the site HenriMatisse.org, "(the parting hands) as a source of tension that needs resolving.". Isn't that part of life and teams, regardless of how well we work together, tension will always exist that needs our attention?

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"Henri Matisse. (French, 1869-1954). Dance (I). Paris, Hôtel Biron, early 1909. Oil on canvas, 8' 6 1/2' x 12' 9 1/2' (259.7 x 390.1 cm). Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller in honor of Alfred H. Barr, Jr." by Paul Brady is licensed with CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

One of our roles as leaders is to constantly shape and craft seamless, satisfying and dreamlike team experiences. Discover your own sweet spot and strive to be a part of a team that is often in their element.

Let's chat!

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