In collaboration with

Competition vs. Collaboration

Here is a two-part guide: a self-assessment focused on identifying one's default mode (Competition vs. Collaboration), and a set of exercises designed to practice the balance of Coopetition.

Part 1: Self-Assessment - Identifying Your Default Mode

Rate your natural tendency in the following scenarios on a scale of **1 (Strongly Disagree / Least Likely)** to **5 (Strongly Agree / Most Likely)**.

Focus Area	***Statement***	**Rating (1-5)**
Mindset	1. I believe that my professional success (e.g., getting the client/promotion) often requires others to fail or fall behind.	
Information	2. When a peer asks me about a successful strategy I used, my first instinct is to share generalities rather than specific details.	
Praise/Credit	3. I find it difficult to share credit for a major success, even if others contributed, because I fear diluting my individual recognition.	
Problem-Solving	4. When facing a complex system-wide issue (e.g., a process bottleneck), I focus on how my department can work around it rather than fix it for everyone.	
Peer Feedback	5. I am more likely to frame my feedback to a peer as a way to "prove" my idea is better than to truly improve our shared work product.	
Peer Success	6. When a peer wins a highly sought-after prize or client, my first emotion is one of disappointment or *envy*, not genuine excitement for the potential value it brings to our profession/company.	
Resource Hoarding	7. I am hesitant to share internal tools, templates, or contacts with a colleague who serves a similar market/function.	

Interpretation:

- **Total Score 7-14 (Strong Collaboration/Cooperation Tendency):** You naturally lean toward cooperation and value creation. Your strength is high trust, but be mindful of ensuring you **capture** your fair share of value and don't allow others to take advantage.
- **Total Score 15-28 (Balanced Tendency):** You have a healthy blend, likely capable of switching between modes. Focus on consciously applying the Coopetition strategy to specific situations.
- **Total Score 29-35 (Strong Competition Tendency):** You default to a zero-sum (win/lose) mindset. Your strength is high drive, but you risk creating systemic friction, mistrust, and resentment, which will hurt your long-term success (the antithesis of **enlightened self-interest**).

Part 2: Coopetition Exercises (The Practice)

These exercises are designed to help life coaches, managers, and supervisors practice the dual mindset of Coopetition.

Exercise 1: The "Shared Win" Blueprint (Coaches/Managers/Supervisors)

Goal: Practice creating a larger "pie" with a peer, making the subsequent competition more valuable for both.

1. **Select Your Peer:** Choose a professional peer who is a direct competitor (e.g., another coach in your niche, another manager of a similar function).
2. **Define the Coopetition Zone (The "Pie"):** Identify a significant, systemic problem in your shared context (e.g., "Industry standards for entry-level professionals are too low," "Our company's onboarding process is weak," or "Clients don't understand the difference between coaching and therapy").
3. **Collaborative Task:** Meet for 30 minutes. Your only goal is to **jointly design a 3-point solution or standard** for this problem. You must leave with a document or blueprint that is demonstrably better than what either of you could have created alone.
4. **Define the Competition Zone (The "Slice"):** After the session, define how you will **leverage that shared blueprint** to gain a competitive advantage.
    - *Example Coach:* "We collaborated to raise the industry standard. I will now market my services by highlighting that I *exceed* those new standards, positioning myself as elite."
    - *Example Manager:* "We collaborated on the new onboarding process. I will now ensure my team's *implementation* of that process is flawless and measurable to demonstrate my superior execution."

Exercise 2: The Radical Generosity Challenge (All Roles)

Goal: Overcome the fear of giving away your "best stuff" and test the concept that generosity builds goodwill and trust, which are competitive assets.

1. **Identify a Hidden Asset:** Name a valuable, non-confidential resource that you usually keep secret because it gives you an advantage (e.g., a specific client intake template, a detailed budget tracking spreadsheet, or a highly effective meeting agenda format).
2. **The Generous Act:** Choose a peer and **voluntarily share this asset** without asking for anything in return. Send it with a brief message like, "I created this to solve X problem; maybe it can save you some time."
3. **The Mindful Reflection:** Over the next 30 days, observe and journal the results:
    - Did the peer misuse or leverage it against you? (Rarely happens)
    - Did the act build a stronger relational bridge?
    - Did the peer reciprocate with an equally valuable piece of information?
    - **Crucially:** Did the improved relationship make a future cooperative effort (Exercise 1) easier, or did the simple act of sharing reduce your own scarcity anxiety?