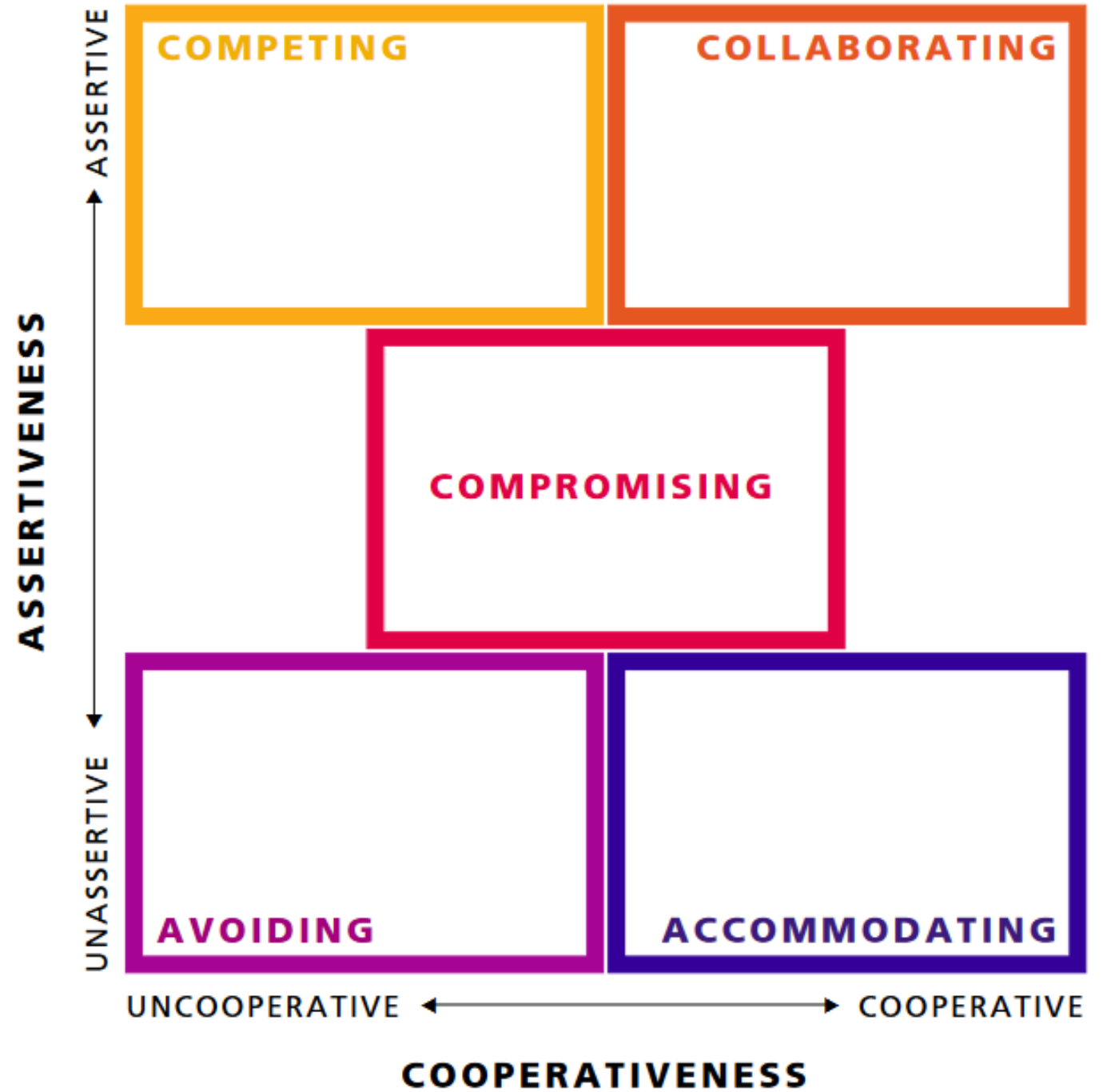


# Thomas Kilmann model of conflict styles



# Why consider conflict styles?

- Style  $\approx$  "auto-pilot" (default, tendency, impulse, pattern, etc.)
  - How we tend to think, feel, do, and value
- We each have developed a characteristic way of handling conflict because at some point, in some context, it worked
- As participants and mediators, we will naturally slide into rhythm with some people, and out of rhythm with others
- Mindfulness (versus mindlessness) is preferred (pause, reflect and choose your response, instead of *reacting*)
- Be present. Ask yourself, "What can I do next to be most constructive?"

# Working Definitions

***Competing*** – doing whatever it takes to get what you want

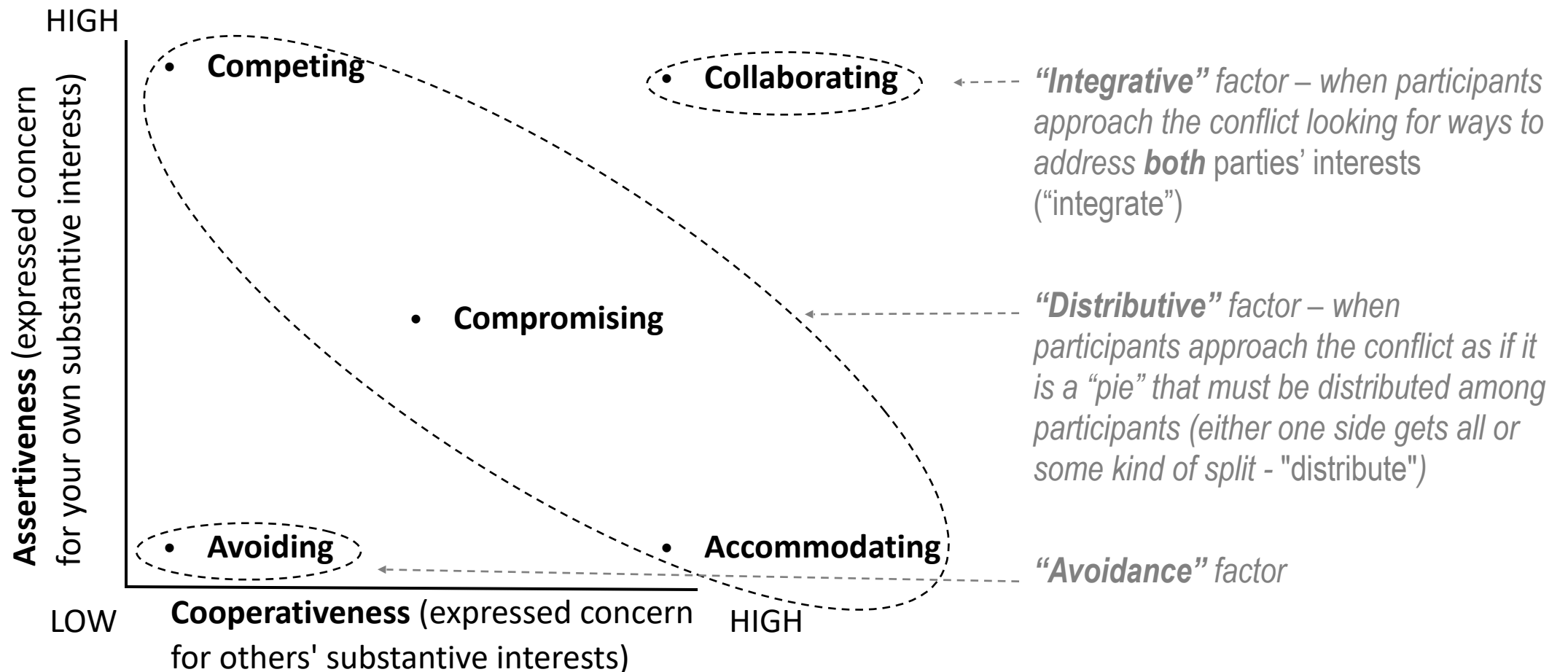
***Avoiding*** – doing little or nothing about anyone’s substantive interests

***Accommodating*** – “giving in”; “going belly up”

***Compromising*** – heading into the process with the assumption that in order to get at least some of what you want, each participant will have to give up some

***Collaborating*** – putting time and energy together into generating mutually satisfying outcomes

# Observations of actual behavior reveal three *general* patterns



# Caveats

- *Tendencies* are not the same as *outcomes*
- “Expressed” concern is not the same as *actual* concern
- Any given style is more or less effective depending upon the context and other styles in play
- All of us employ multiple approaches, often at the same time; one might also employ a given approach in order to achieve a different outcome (accommodate now to “win” later)
- The value of the model is less about “pigeon-holing” yourself and others into a single “style” than it is about recognizing that, when and how you slip into a “default,” “automatic” way of reacting to conflict