

A person stands in a dark, textured space, holding a large, dark, oval mirror vertically. The mirror is positioned to reflect light from a field of numerous small, bright, out-of-focus points on the left side of the frame. The reflected light is concentrated into a single, large, bright, horizontal beam of light on the right side of the frame. The person is silhouetted against the dark background.

*element five:* **CONCENTRATING**

**APPLYING THE 13 ELEMENTS TO FOUNDATIONS**



## THE ALCHEMICAL FOUNDATION: CONCENTRATING

Often we have the collective ability to accomplish something but lack the required *concentration* of the ability in a particular time and place necessary to precipitate movement. So instead of creating something new, we keep slipping back into the old equilibrium.

**1 INTENSITY.** Many transformations require peak intensity. Doing more with less intensity over longer periods of time doesn't produce the same effect. One exquisite donor experience may create greater impact than hundreds of mundane ones. A highly-energized philanthropic coaching relationship with a physician or board member may unleash movement more diffuse approaches will not. Often in our attempt at breadth, we dilute intensity and end up with weak results, or no result at all.

**2 TIMING.** There are moments when things are uniquely possible. Everything is aligned. It may be different a day from now or a week from now—the opening recedes. Alchemical foundations recognize particular moments when it's essential to concentrate effort and energy. In these moments they muster everything they have.

**3 PRUNING.** Doing too much of *what matters least* keeps us from concentrating enough on *what matters most*. We may think we need more resources, but what we really need is to release some things and dramatically exaggerate others. Pruning is an intentionality we bring to life. We no longer reflexively respond to what presents around us, or chase the myriad “shiny objects.” Instead we direct our awareness and energy.