

Ministry Life Skills Foundations

Nigel Pegram with Roger Tan

Ministry Life Skills Centre Inc.

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To all those who have been on the journey with me, I give my sincere thanks for all you have been and continue to mean in my life: my coaches—Barry Austin, Glyn Jenkins, Tracey Johnston, Barry Ryall and Roger Tan—whom I now count as friends. Those who have travelled the Life Skills path with me, particularly Bruce Stuart with whom I now co-lead courses, and who is of tremendous support and encouragement. And not least, all those I have coached who have continued to provide inspiration and encouragement to me.

Finally I give thanks to my wife Julie and my children Simon and Robyn who have taught me many things simply by their being different from me and continuing to love me.

Thanks

I would like to acknowledge that I have seen the hand of God in my life and wait with anticipation for the way the coming years will unfold.

—Nigel Pegram

The saddest aspect of
life right now is that
science gathers
knowledge faster than
society gathers
wisdom.

(Isaac Asimov)

Introduction

As the quote on page 1 observes, we seem to be much better at gathering information than living wisely.

In the area of people skills in particular, we seem to be better and better informed through research in areas such as neuroscience and psychology, yet we seem to be less and less adept at handling ourselves and those with whom we rub shoulders on a regular basis. We seem to be forgetting some of the basic skills of living.

This lack can be observed in all walks of life. In response to this need, the leadership of Churches of Christ in Western Australia teamed up with Roger Tan of the Life Skills Centre to build a very practical program which would enhance the relational, leadership and change management skills of their leaders. Thus the Ministry Life Skills course was born in 2007.

Some of the course graduates have taken these skills to the wider community, where they have been greeted warmly, due to their intensely practical nature.

This book has been written as a reference, to assist in the recall and application of the lessons learned there. You will find practical wisdom here. You will benefit much more if you are able to participate in the Life Skills courses as well as reading this book. They are skills to be learned and practised, not just information to absorb.

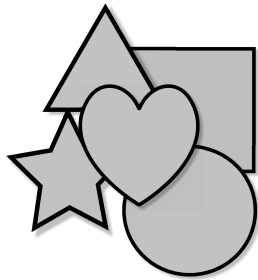
Introduction

Ephesians 4:11–13 sums up the purpose of Ministry Life Skills:

It was he who gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ, ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God — a mature person, attaining to the measure of Christ's full stature.

Recognising that we all are different, with various gifts, temperaments and styles, we seek to equip people so that they might become mature, more effective, more like Christ.

1 The Changing Shapes of Life



To exist is to change,
to change is to mature,
to mature is to go on
creating oneself
endlessly.

*(Henri Bergson,
French Philosopher)*

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Change, we all face it. We begin as infants, dependent on our parents for the basic necessities of life. We move through life, learning new skills, absorbing new ideas until we become adults ourselves. Even then, change is all around. We move from one relationship to another as friends come and go, as we, perhaps, find our life partner. We move from one role to another, apprentice to tradesperson, student to graduate, and then from one employer to another. We change roles as our family changes, with new faces joining the circle of relationships via friendship, marriage and birth. We particularly experience change as children are born and grow. Spiritually this is also true, with the Apostle Paul describing our journey of faith in terms of our growth from infants to adults—a life of constant growth and change.

Given that all of life is change, it is surprising that we often see so many struggling with change.

In recent decades the pace of change has accelerated. Not only are we inundated with massive amounts of information every day, but society around us has changed and is continuing to change at an incredible rate.

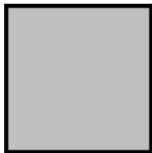
Not only has the rate of change increased, but the nature of change has altered. Previously, things changed in a sequential, predictable fashion. Now, however, the changes we see in society have been described as rapid discontinuous change. The key ideas here are that not only is change happening quickly “*rapid*”, but it is not happening in a predictable, sequential way “*discontinuous*”, so we often cannot look at what has happened in the past and predict what will happen in the future.

1.1 A Strategy for Managing Change

Given these complexities, the question has to be asked, how can we better manage ourselves and others for whom we are responsible? Not just to survive change, not even simply to cope with it, but to lead and move with wisdom through the changes being faced.

1.1 The Five Shapes—A Strategy for Managing Change

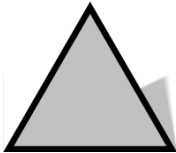
To manage change wisely, Ministry Life Skills outlines a strategy using five shapes as mnemonic devices. Readers will find that when learning has taken place in the context of the Ministry Life Skills course they are all mnemonic.



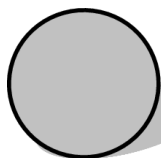
Box—mindsets.
What's in the box?



Star—rules.
What are appropriate rules?



Triangle—leadership models.
Which models are we following? Are they helpful?



Circle—the big picture.
What are the goals?



Heart—emotions.
What emotions are involved?

1.2 What's in the Box?

Our mindset in any situation determines the actions we will take (or will fail to take). Our mindset will also influence our emotional state. If our mindset toward events is negative, then negative emotions will arise. If our mindset is positive, positive emotions will arise. For example, when someone interrupts us, we could experience it as a positive event, or a negative one. If the person is someone we are waiting to see, someone we like then it is likely we will have a positive experience. If, however, the person is someone we are not close to and who is interrupting when we are trying to complete something urgent, then we will likely experience a negative response.¹

Of significance here are our belief and value systems, habits of thinking and behaviour, and our life experiences.

When facing issues of change, if we cannot think “outside the box” then we will find it either difficult or impossible to find new and innovative solutions to these new challenges. This will

¹For more information on positive and negative perception and self-talk, see Chapter 2.

1.2 What's in the Box?

result in our using less than optimal approaches or at worst taking inappropriate action, leading to unhelpful consequences. I have heard it suggested that madness can be defined as when we do the same thing again and again and expect different results. Similarly, if things are changing around us in a rapid and less predictable way than ever before, to close your mind to new options and approaches could similarly be described as a type of madness.

In Australia, for instance, the culture in which the Church operates has changed so much that past methods of outreach are nothing like as effective as they were, say 50 years ago. In the mid-twentieth century tent missions were huge, with many coming to faith through their work. Nowadays they have been left behind because the level of connection between Church, Christians and the community is much more distant. The cultural gap is much wider, therefore mission now has to allow for bridging the wider gap first. A much more relational approach to evangelism is needed. Some churches failed to make that mindset change, among others, and they have moved further and further apart from the community within which they exist. Part of the mindset previously was that the Church had a right to a voice and that people had an awareness of God, Jesus and the stories of the Bible. People can keep that mindset and try to evangelise, expecting people to listen because the Church is speaking or to understand when we use Christianese, however, nowadays people won't listen and they won't understand.

Sometimes the mindset can be as basic as thoughts about what is good and what is bad. If we use the above example, of the distancing of Church and community. Some mindsets will



1 The Changing Shapes of Life

say this is a bad thing, equating the distancing with a rejection of Christianity and faith. However, a different mindset would say that this is a good thing, people now no longer assume they are Christian, it is seen as a decision to be made. Also the rise of other faiths means that instead of living in a society where the logical and rational, the “scientific”, determined what was good and bad, mystery and faith are now a regular part of people’s journey and conversations, providing opportunities for Christians to share their own faith. The circumstances haven’t altered, yet our response is entirely different depending on the mindset we bring to it.

Just take some time to observe people you know. You’ll see some who view life as a series of challenges and obstacles to overcome, others seem to be a fountain of enthusiasm and joy. The difference is no just positive thinking, but the openness to possibilities.

The ability to think outside the box means that when change occurs, the person with the closed mindset will see what is lost and will only see a limited set of options. The person with the ability to think outside the box will see these things, but will also see new options and possibilities. For example, being retrenched from a long-standing position is a significant change. There are significant issues, including financial security for yourself and your family. The person who cannot think outside the box will look for similar positions with similar employers, because that is who they are and what they do—they are a clerk or carpenter or engineer. The person with the ability to think outside the box will see themselves with a set of experiences and skills which can be brought to a wide range of circumstances:

1.3 What Are The Appropriate Rules?

- The employee starts their own business;
- The tradesman becomes an instructor;
- The engineer becomes a consultant;
- Their partner gains the opportunity to start or expand their own career while they look after family;
- Time can be taken for a review of their values and their future.

In essence, change is seen as a transition to something new rather than the loss of something existing.

1.3 What Are The Appropriate Rules?

When facing change, not only do our mindsets determine which responses we make, but there are rules under which we operate. Some of these are obvious and understood, some are expectations and beliefs which we have grown up with. Not all rules are useful or appropriate. Indeed, some rules which used to be helpful at one time will eventually become a hindrance.

For example, in Australia, it has been common wisdom that it is better to own your own home, rather than rent. The Australian dream was to own your own home. In many circumstances this is true. However, if it is followed slavishly, then in the times when renting is actually significantly cheaper than loan repayments, an opportunity to reduce your costs may be lost.



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We operate according to both internal and external rules.

The internal rules are closely linked with our mindsets. These rules determine what we consider to be acceptable or appropriate responses or behaviours when faced with change. An internal rule could be, I have to be the one responsible for feeding my family, or children should not talk back to their parents. However, if circumstances lead to your spouse being better able to earn an income to support your family, then that rule is unhelpful, even damaging. The rule about the behaviour of children may be more appropriate when they are young, but as they grow and develop their own ideas and identity, instead of teaching principles of authority and respect, it ingrains dependence and does not foster the development of a healthy self-identity.

Not all rules are unhelpful. We have laws to help everyone live safely and productively together. Rules become unhelpful when their reason for existing no longer applies to the current situation. A well-known example was the requirement that London taxicabs had to carry a bale of hay for their horses. This law was not repealed until 1976, well past the time when this “rule” was helpful.²

We can carry similar rules throughout our lives.

“Don’t rock the boat” is a common one in Christian circles. It can often be described using terms such as being loving or gracious, however, the truth is that sometimes confrontation does not happen when it should and people end up being hurt. This has been seen in recent times through the disgrace of child sexual abuse by church leaders. All too often people have

²An amusing list of some similar laws was compiled by the BBC. See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/6204511.stm>.

known about it and kept silent, being more concerned for the reputation of the local church or God's "name", regardless of the damage done to the vulnerable. This has been shown to be the lie it is and the damage done has been much greater than if it had been addressed at the time the offences were being committed.

A more subtle variation of this is the rule not to offend. This can be used to avoid making any changes in church. A better rule is that change should be introduced with due consideration for people's feeling and reactions (see 1.6). This rule about not offending is also used to justify not sharing Christianity with those of other faiths. A better rule would be that we should not be insulting, condescending, obnoxious or abrasive. Put positively, the rule is to treat others with respect.

From the above examples it is easy to see that the issue is not that we don't need rules, but that the rules we have need to be appropriate to the situation at hand. It is important that we are first aware of the rules by which we operate and second that we are willing to change rules as circumstances demand. We cope better with change if we examine ourselves and our situation to see if the rules fit the circumstances.

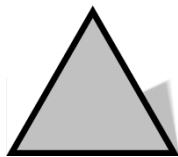
1.4 Leadership Models

In times of change leadership looms large. How we lead ourselves and how we lead others will rapidly determine whether change is a positive or negative experience.

Leadership is one of those topics that quickly polarise people, causing significant comment. Often this is because of confusion

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between authority, power and leadership or because of people's negative experiences in this area.



As in the previous section, the issue here is the question as to what is appropriate. In an emergency situation where people are in danger, a more authoritarian model is best. You don't want a debate or consensus when lives are at stake. However, in a small group meeting, leading toward consensus may indeed be the best approach. Furthermore, part of the discussion which is often assumed is that leadership is that which we do to or with others. Yet, we also choose how we act and make decisions for ourselves and our significant others. Questions about leadership need to include how we lead ourselves.

Our instinctive approach (see Chapter 6) will influence how we approach leading ourselves and others, whether we focus more on the task or objective, or on the people involved. Our life experience will also contribute. We will use methods we have seen other use and will mimic the patterns of significant others in our lives, especially our parents.

There are two things to learn in this area. First, we need to consciously consider the leadership model being exercised in the change process and ask if it is appropriate in the circumstances. Second, we need to be wise, observing and learning from the leadership of others so we can extend our own potential in this area.

As with most things, any of the various leadership models can excel or fail depending on how it is applied. Even the most appropriate leadership model will fail, for instance, if exercised when inappropriate rules are in place or if relationships and feelings are not considered while leading.

We are wise if we understand our own preferences and experiences, the preferences and experiences of others involved and make an informed decision that delivers the objectives in an acceptable manner. You may wonder what I mean by “an acceptable manner”. I say this because leadership is about both the process and the goal.

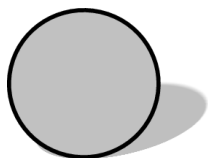
For instance, if you are planning a journey across the country as a group, it can be achieved any number of ways. You can travel by car, plane, train or bus. However, if a number in the group get car sick or if you have people who are major train buffs, then you may choose the train. If you are making this decision for your family, you may put up one or two ideas and quickly come to a decision, since everyone knows the others and their preferences. If this is a trip involving people you don't know, the model would likely include much more consultation and consensus, which would not only help arrive at the best travel method, but would also begin the process of forming relationships among the group. To use a model, with little or no consultation may easily result in a journey where people are significantly unhappy and where people have much shallower relationships to begin with.

1.5 The Big Picture

The big picture is about the goal, the purpose behind any action or change and possible consequences. This shape communicates that it is easier to manage change well if we are clear about the objective being pursued and the consequences of various courses of action or inaction. It also reminds us that when change happens around us, it is important to ask questions

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concerning the goals we wish to pursue, rather than being driven by circumstances; managing change instead of simply reacting.



Being aware of the big picture makes it easier to determine what the appropriate rules and leadership models should be. Take the trip across the country mentioned on the previous page. If the purpose of the trip is to have a family holiday while seeing more of the country, then you probably wouldn't choose to fly, since the aim would be to be able to see and experience as much as possible during the journey. If the goal was to attend a national business meeting, then flying probably would be the appropriate method, since the rule would be to avoid wasting the business's resources.

Being aware of the big picture also means being aware of your own and others' values. It is inappropriate to choose methods which go against core values when solving a problem—that's where the saying that the ends don't justify the means comes from. Take the example of becoming unemployed, for instance. The goal may be to ensure your family is fed, clothed and housed. That could be achieved by robbing a bank, however most would say that it was an inappropriate solution in light of your own values and the consequences.

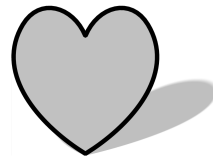
In the church this is especially true. We are told that it is exactly by how we live our lives that people will know we are Christian, by the love we have for each other. The goal isn't to become a Christian, but to live a life which displays the reality of our growing relationship with Christ, which then attracts people to Jesus.

Conflict is often hidden among discussion of method and details, where the reality is often that it is about goals and purpose. Take the often-heard discussions you hear around various churches about changes to worship services, the form of church meetings and even the types of buildings used. At its core, these are usually differences over whether the church is inward focused (there for the benefit of its members) or outward focused (mission is the priority). All too often the conversation is not about this fundamental issue, but about what sort of songs, the style of the service, how people dress, the type of Bible used, and so on.

1.6 The Heart of the Matter

Ultimately, whether we respond to change well or whether we assist others in responding to change well will be determined not by logic and argument, but by our own and others' emotions.

First, it is our own emotions which will be the most significant determiner of our responses. If we are in a negative frame of mind about the changes we are facing to begin with, we will find it difficult to think outside the box, to assess which rules are appropriate, to determine what form of leadership we should follow and what the big picture issue really is. All we will be able to see is the big, hairy emotional tangle in front of us. In his book *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman notes that



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“stress makes people stupid”³. When emotionally upset, people cannot:

- remember,
- attend,
- learn, or
- make decisions clearly.

Therefore, if we are emotionally in turmoil, then we cannot make wise decisions in a time of change.

The same applies when dealing with others in change or when leading others through change. What will motivate them will be their own emotional state—at its most basic, either trying to avoid pain or seeking comfort or pleasure.

Before you can help yourself or others progress wisely through change, you need to understand the emotions involved and allow for or deal with them in the whole process. Failure to do this will result in a lack of commitment at best, right through to active opposition.

Research into emotional intelligence also shows that decision-making is more reliable and better informed when our emotions are also engaged. Our emotional response gives weight to conclusions, weight which helps us decide if one choice is more significant than another. Being more aware of our emotional bias helps us decide with wisdom.

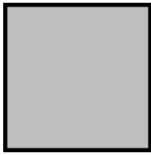
Similarly, if we lack emotional intelligence, if we do not understand which actions will hurt people as opposed to engage

³Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* (2006b, p. 49)

and draw them in, then decisions concerning what models to use and what rules to have will likely be a real hit and miss affair.

1.7 Summary

The five shapes provide a strategy for managing ourselves in times of change and also a strategy for planning and implementing change which we lead with others.



Box—mindsets.

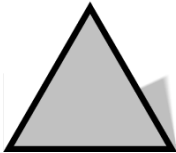
What's in the box, both yours and others? Are you thinking outside the box?



Star—rules.

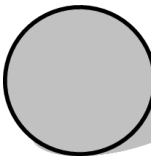
What are the appropriate rules?

Which rules need to be kept, which should be challenged, which should be added?



Triangle—leadership models.

Which models are we following? Are they helpful? Are we leading or reacting?



Circle—the big picture.

What are the goals? What are our values? What cost are we willing to pay?

1 *The Changing Shapes of Life*



Heart—emotions.

What emotions are involved? What emotions will the change evoke in myself? What emotions will be evoked in others? What are some wise ways to plan for this? What are some wise strategies to use when they occur?

This is a tool, not a formula. Different people will use the tool in different fashions, some starting with the circle, the big picture, others will start with the heart. It will depend on personality type as well as the situation.

It is wise to examine other similar organisations and to speak to other people who have dealt with the changes you are facing. Find out what the strengths and weaknesses of the various models are and which will be most appropriate in your context. Wisdom is not only gained by doing, but by learning from the doings of others.

Questions

What have you discovered about your attitude toward change?

What strategies might you use to help yourself or others manage change?

What are some of the issues that people face when undergoing change?

2 Two Choices — Intrapersonal Communication



The realist sees reality
as concrete.
The optimist sees
reality as clay.

(Robert Brault)

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, our emotional state plays a big part in determining our outlook, our approach to life. The single most important factor in shaping our outlook is our self-talk, our internal conversation.

2.1 Perception Is Reality

Our perception determines our reality. You only have to have been affected by some medications to experience that. I can remember commencing a medicine for migraines. I was cautioned that one of the possible side effects at the start would be unusually vivid dreams. Even now, more than a decade later, I can remember how difficult it was to know those dreams weren't real. We see this in the extreme with people who have some mental or medical disorders. What they are experiencing is very real to them, but it very different from the experience of others around them.

Similarly, we see people involved in the same circumstances, yet they can experience and process it in very different ways. Often what is different is their internal framework, their self-talk about the event. We see this when two people hear the same words, but come away with different understandings of what was said. For example after listening to someone make the point that we “shouldn't rehash things”, one person may take away the principle that when things have been dealt with, they should be left in the past; another may hear it as, “stop complaining about your lot in life” (especially if they have been experiencing some extended difficulties). Their current

mindset, past experience and their self-talk will determine how the information is received and interpreted.

2.1.1 Current Mindset

Similarly, our current mindset will influence how we perceive events. If we are going through a difficult stretch, then it is more difficult to cope with another challenge. In Chapter 5 we comment on building our own emotional bank account to enable us to be more resilient, as well as giving us a reservoir of goodwill to draw upon from those around us.

Our mindset will also be influenced by our past experience. It is all too easy to react, rather than respond when confronted by a situation similar to one in the past, particularly if strong emotions were associated with it. In its most extreme form, this response will be an emotional hijack (see 5.2.2 on page 70).

2.1.2 Past Experience

We cannot change our past experience—it is in the past. However, we can be aware of the events that have shaped our attitudes and responses. If we can recognise unhelpful attitudes and behaviours we have learnt, then we can change or moderate those responses. Similarly, we can build on the good skills we have been taught.

One of the big challenges is to be able to put aside the habits and filters of the past and to see things in a new light and to respond in new ways. We will see below in Chapter 5 that dealing with our emotional baggage and having more secure emotional anchors will assist our emotional well-being as well as making us more effective and resilient in all areas of life.



Figure 2.1: A skinny, misshapen doughnut

2.1.3 Self-Talk

The voice we hear the most, and therefore the voice which frames our world view more than any other is our own. That voice can discuss an endless range of things. What we are concerned about in this chapter is whether this internal dialogue is beneficial or limiting.

Whether our internal dialogue is generally positive or negative will be determined by our temperament and learning from significant others (e.g. parents, mentors). Strangely enough, even though our own voice is the one we hear the most, many of us are not aware of what we are saying to ourselves. This conversation can either build us up or pull us down.

The image of the doughnut is useful. When being given a doughnut like the one in Figure 2.1 on page 26, you can respond in two ways:

1. You can be grateful that someone has given you a doughnut, that they have thought enough of you to make or purchase one to give to you, or
2. You can look at how skinny and abused-looking it is and end up disappointed.



Figure 2.2: A healthy doughnut, almost no hole

Each response has its own set of emotions. If you focus on what's there, the fact you have a doughnut, then gratitude and warmth toward the giver are the result, along with the positive, encouraging feelings you will have concerning yourself. If you focus on what is not there—how big the hole is—then you end up disappointed and discouraged. Focusing on the whole or the hole makes a big difference.

We call the person who focuses on the difficulties and challenges, who has negative self-talk the “critic”, while the person who focuses on the positive, the possibilities is the “performer”.

It is important to recognise that what you focus on grows. If you continually look at the negative, the holes, the disappointments in life then you become discouraged. The more discouraged you become, the more things discourage you. Conversely, if you see the positive, the possibilities and joys in life, the more joy life and people bring to you. Therefore, for the performer their doughnut (their view of life) rapidly moves from the skinny one we saw earlier to one similar to that in Figure 2.2 on page 27, with little or no hole whatsoever. For the critic the hole gets larger and larger until there is little or no dough left. When all you see are the difficulties, when all your self-talk brings is negative emotions, you will under-perform in life.

2 Two Choices — Intrapersonal Communication

A common word used by the critic is “but”. Frequently, as soon as something is said to a critic the first word out of their mouth (or running through their brain) is “but ...”. A helpful strategy for those who are critics is to simply remove “but” from your vocabulary. This simple step quickly begins to change your self-talk. It is even more useful to replace “but” with “yes, and ...”, since it maintains the conversation and encourages you to think of more possibilities.

Some other strategies:

- Instead of saying that you don’t like something, say that it “can be improved”. Not only do the feelings associated with the language change, but it automatically starts you in the direction of looking for ways in which the change might be brought about.
- Look for the good in every situation. Find whatever good that you can out of any situation in which you find yourself.
- Ensure that you look at the whole picture, not just a small part of it. It is so easy to get caught up in the small issues and miss out seeing the whole benefit that can arise from the issues being faced.
- Change your vocabulary. In addition to changing “but” to “and ...”, change your vocabulary from “I don’t know” to “I don’t know yet”, from “I can’t” to “I want to learn”. It is a matter of taking the time and attitude to make room for learning and thence moving forward, rather than accepting the negative status quo.

2.1 Perception Is Reality

Critic	Performer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You're not good enough• When this is active—negative feelings• Things are heavy, difficult	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It can be done; I can find out and do it• I can improve, learn from mistakes• Empowered, confident, in control

Table 2.1: Performer and Critic

- Face each situation on its merits. There is no perfect situation—everything has pluses and minuses—if you focus on the positives and the advantageous, then the negatives somehow can be better managed.

While this might sound like wishful thinking of just having a positive attitude, the reality goes deeper. For example, many people would say losing your job is a negative thing. The critic would certainly agree and would immediately look at the difficulties—where will the money come from, how will we keep the house, what will people say ... ? The performer will use this as an opportunity to reevaluate their life. To ask if this is a turning point where God is moving them in a different direction. The critic could easily miss God's signposts because they are too busy focusing on the problems, rather than the opportunities.

This inner dialogue has external consequences. The critic tends to dampen others' enthusiasm and joy and results in

fewer successes. The performer draws others in and along by their enthusiasm and “can-do” attitude, leading to more positive results.

If we focus on the frequent use of “but” by the critic, it is fairly easy to see how people will become discouraged or distant from someone who constantly harps on the difficulties when a new idea is suggested. Similarly it is easy to see how people will be encouraged and want to discuss their ideas with someone who says “yes, and ...”, who then puts in some helpful additions or waits for more to be said.

2.2 A Choice

For all of us, the three factors mentioned above influence our interpretation of the world around us. We may not be able to change our past experiences. We can, however, change our current mindset and self-talk. If we train our inner voice to be a performer rather than a critic we will see the good and the opportunities around us. No-one else is responsible for our self-talk. While our temperament and modelling may have given us some unhelpful tools, we are nonetheless in charge of our internal voice.

It is simple, we need to listen to the words and tone of our internal dialogue and to build the positive and limit the negative. It is simple. That doesn’t necessarily mean it is easy. Like any other habit, training our self-talk will take time and energy. However, like any change of habit, a small change repeated over time quickly becomes a new habit. Once you are aware of your self-talk, to change from a critic to a performer

or to become an ever greater performer is no more complicated than stopping any unwanted habit, like biting your fingernails.

A useful test, just to show how quickly we adapt to form new habits is to change which wrist you wear your watch upon. At first you keep looking at the original wrist for the watch, but within days or weeks you start looking more often at the other wrist first. Eventually you look there first more often than the original wrist. If you kept it up for more than a month, it would be a new habit. You can do the same test by changing the hand in which you hold your toothbrush to clean your teeth. At first you are slow, maybe whack your gums with the brush occasionally and perhaps make a bit more mess than usual. After a week or two, much of that has changed. Again within a month you find that you are as proficient with one hand as the other.

We challenge you to try these experiments. If you can change your patterns and habits in such a short time in these areas, you can make similar changes in your self-talk. The choice is yours, performer or critic.

As we'll see in Section 5.2 one of the domains of emotional intelligence is self-management. Whether we choose to be a performer or a critic will help us determine whether we are an emotional thermometer or thermostat, whether we set the emotional temperature around us or simply change to reflect it. By managing our self-talk we are better able to manage ourselves through all the varying circumstances of life.

2.3 Summary

Your self-talk is a habit you can modify. Whether you focus on the whole or the hole, whether you are a performer or a critic, it is your choice. Each choice has its own emotional and relational consequences. That which you focus on grows. To have more joy and success and to bring more joy and success to others, you need to decide to silence your inner critic and release your performer.

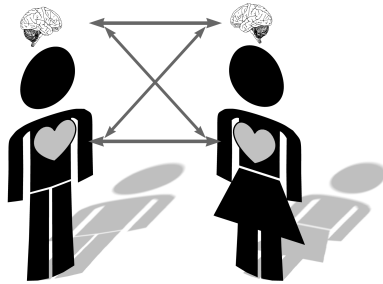
Questions

What are some negative words that you use regularly that need to be changed? What can you replace them with?

How would you handle negative people in your life? Give one example.

Reflect this into a ministry situation—what might be the presenting words spoken by a critic compared to a performer?

3 Three Levels of Interpersonal Communication



To handle yourself,
use your head; to
handle others, use
your heart.

(Donald Laird)

3 Three Levels of Interpersonal Communication

In the previous chapter we discussed our internal dialogue, how it affects both our own performance and our relationship with others. In this chapter we move from our internal dialogue, to our conversations with others.

When it comes to Christian ministry, so much of what we do depends on clear, open, honest communication. So often a lack of effectiveness or conflict arise out of others misunderstanding our actions or intentions. If we improve our communication, we can improve our relationships and therefore our effectiveness in ministry.

3.1 Misunderstandings

I'm sure we've all experienced those times when we've been in a conversation with someone and it just seems that you're not connecting. The words are coming out, but the understanding is not happening. The more important the situation, the more emotion behind what we want to communicate, sometimes the harder it seems to get to a place of understanding. Particularly in times of disagreement, we can say one thing and when the other person responds, we know they've heard something else entirely.

Then we can have the experience where we are speaking about something which is truly important to us and yet know that by the other's response, they haven't understood how significant it really is for us. From their responses we know that to them it's not that significant. I can remember telling someone how a member of my family had been hurt by this person's actions. It wasn't intentional on their part, simply an inconsiderate action.

3.1 Misunderstandings

I approached this person and attempted to communicate what the hurt was and what the actions were that caused it. The person listened, but did not hear, for at the end the comment was made, “Thanks for telling me.” I knew by the response that this meant, “Thanks for that information.” In no way did I feel that the person felt, and therefore truly understood the hurt caused. The result? Rather than feeling reconciled and closer to this person, I felt even more disconnected and distant. Why? My goal wasn’t just to communicate information, it was to achieve understanding—and the two are not necessarily the same thing.

Many of us will relate to this sort of disconnect when speaking with member of the opposite sex. Sometimes it seems as though we speak another language, or to use the title of John Gray’s book, sometimes it seems men are from Mars and women from Venus.

The solution is to recognise that at different times different types of communication are required. Sometimes information is all that’s necessary to be communicated. At other times, people really need to know that we truly understand them and what they’re feeling.

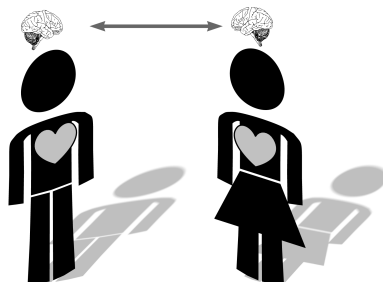
There are three levels of interpersonal communication:

1. Head to Head
2. Head to Heart
3. Heart to Heart

Each has its place in our interactions with others.

3.2 Three Levels

3.2.1 Head to Head—Information



The most basic and most common form of communication is the exchange of information. We may find this type of communication, for instance, in the description of a process, say what will happen in a meeting, or a request for something to be done.

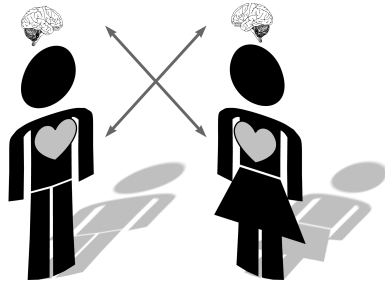
It is easy for someone to confirm that the information has been heard and understood—we simply need to confirm that they have the facts right.

Relationally, this is very superficial, therefore it is the approach we use with people who are new to us or who we have only had passing contact.

We also use this form of communication with those whom we know better, our family and friends. We want to know what's been happening with them. We might want to find out their plans for the weekend. The key is being appropriate. If we only ever communicate in terms of information, never exposing our own heart or hearing the heart of the other, then

they will interpret that as our being cool, distant or unfeeling, unconcerned about them. To build better relationships, we need to move beyond the exchange of information.

3.2.2 Head to Heart—Sympathy



Moving beyond understanding information a person gives us involves connecting with their feelings. The next level of communication is hearing their heart. We call this head to heart communication sympathy. Sympathy means we hear how someone feels about the things they are communicating. This often occurs when we can identify the feelings someone has about what is going on, but we may not have been there ourselves. The understanding on our side is intellectual, we can see they have this emotion and are able to communicate that understanding to them.

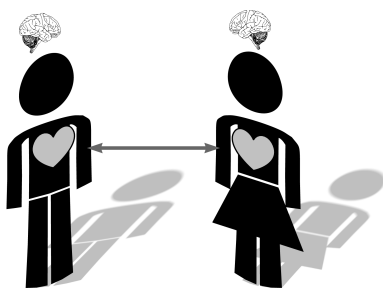
If we go back to the example I mentioned above where I attempted to communicate how a member of my family had been hurt. If the person concerned had not been in a similar situation, it could have been communicated to me by body

3 Three Levels of Interpersonal Communication

language and the things said that there was an understanding of what I and the others were feeling. I felt disconnected because that understanding was not communicated.

An important point here is that even if you are able to sympathise, if it is not communicated effectively back to the other person, then the head to heart communication has not truly happened. That is understanding, it is not communication. Head to heart communication requires that you hear their heart and they know that you have done so. How that is communicated may vary from your body language and expressions to your words. It doesn't really matter so long as the other person gets the message accurately.

3.2.3 Heart to Heart—Empathy



Empathy occurs when we not only understand what someone is feeling intellectually, but we feel with them. Our hearts connect. Usually this requires that we have had some similar experience. Because of that shared understanding, that shared feeling, the communication is deep and rich.

Again, coming back to my illustration above, if the person who had offended us had communicated that he felt what we felt ourselves, then we would have had a solid foundation from which to pursue ways to rebuild the relationship and the ability to honestly discuss what happened so that we could avoid a similar incident in future.

When we connect with people at the heart level, we form a bond with them that lasts. When you have laughed and cried with someone, you much more naturally move into deeper conversation with them. When people have learnt that they can trust us with their heart, they are more willing to trust us with it again and again.

If people trust us with their heart and we do not respond, or perhaps even respond inappropriately, they will act to protect it. In future they will be much less likely to expose themselves, to show their inner feelings, for fear of being treated poorly once more.

The more deeply we can connect with people, the greater the bond of trust we form with them. If they trust us, then it is more likely that the real issues will be communicated. Trust is a process, with people only exposing a part of themselves until they are sure we are safe, able to be trusted with more. Abuse that trust, even unintentionally, and you may never find out the truth about what's really going on for them.

3.3 More Than Words

If you are able to clearly articulate how someone is feeling, then you are practising empathy. Obviously this requires that you have the language of emotion which allows you to actually

3 Three Levels of Interpersonal Communication

name what those feelings are. For this reason, the building a vocabulary of emotion is an essential foundation. This is why the ability to sense and label your own emotional state is the most basic emotional skill. (See Chapter 5.)

In any conversation, a person's emotions can be easily misunderstood. This can be caused by many things. Sometimes our own experiences crowd in and we interpret things through our own set of filters. Sometime gender or cultural issues mean that the issues at stake are completely different. A recent example of this for me was when speaking with a friend about his adult daughter going back to university to do a second degree. Parents from a western perspective might wonder when she would "grow up" and leave home and become an independent adult. My friend came from a Chinese background, for him it was expected that his daughter would be at home until she married. Therefore at the point where he was telling me the story of what was happening with his family very different thoughts and assumptions were being processed by each of us.

Our western society has become more and more individualistic. Many grow up with limited relational experiences. Men in particular grow up learning from a young age that you can speak about sport and work, but that you don't speak about what you're feeling. Sometimes this can be explicit—"Don't be a baby". At other times they learn just by observing what their parents and others do and do not do.

As you develop your own vocabulary, you gain the benefit of becoming more able to assist others describe what they are feeling themselves. All of us who have been involved in coaching in Ministry Life Skills have seen people struggling with this. They know they're feeling something, but they are unable to describe it, they haven't the language for it.

There is more involved than simply learning a list of words. The words without the understanding of what the emotions feel like are empty. People will quickly determine whether we understand or not. This is why we emphasise the labelling of your own and other's emotions in the group sessions. A feelings chart, such as the one at <http://godvertiser.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/feelings-chart-godvertiser-dot-com.jpg> (figure 7.5 on page 138), is only useful if you are either experiencing the feelings yourself or seeing them in others. If you do not have the language of emotion and try to simply learn the words without the affective content, all it will be is another intellectual exercise.

3.4 What You See ...

The saying “What you see is what you get” is only true some of the time. Particularly when we are speaking of communicating and relating with others, it is often not the case. Shame, misunderstandings, social pressures, masking, self-esteem, cultural issues, many things can lead to the situation where the seemingly placid exterior hides an emotional maelstrom underneath. The image of a duck on a pond is often used to illustrate this. It can seem quite calm on the surface, yet the duck can be working really hard just to stay in place.

People's emotional lives are like this. Much of the activity is below the surface. Allowing time to build trust, listening for the “hook” people throw out during their conversations, allows relationships to move beyond a surface, head to head interaction.

3 Three Levels of Interpersonal Communication

This requires awareness and skill. If the other is not well versed in the language of emotion, then the listener not only has to do the hard work of connecting with and identifying the other's emotional state, but be able to enter into an empathic conversation which leads the other to be able to describe the unfolding layers of their emotions until they can get down to the bedrock issues which are driving them. No lasting change or solution can be found if the underlying feelings and issues cannot clearly be articulated. This is one of the skills a coach can bring.

These are some helpful strategies which can be used to help navigate these waters:

1. Clarify,
2. Describe, and
3. Observe.

3.4.1 Clarify

It is important to spend time clarifying your perceptions. What you think you see may not be what is really happening. We may simply misunderstand, we may even make incorrect assumptions. The only way to guard ourselves from these mistakes is to ask clarifying questions. Not only does this ensure we understand how the person is feeling, it confirms to the other that we have been listening, that they have been heard. It builds both trust and understanding at the same time.

Remember, though, we are interested in understanding, not analysing motivation, try and avoid “why” questions.

3.4.2 Describe

As we clarify, we begin the process of describing how the other person feels. Sometimes they will not have spent the emotional time and energy to reflect on what they're feeling. Therefore they'll know they are agitated, for instance, but not what has led to their agitated state. For others, they simply won't have the language of emotion, so a careful empathic listener will be able to reflect what they feeling so that the person is able to begin to label their own feelings. The bonus is that this process reinforces and deepens the heart to heart connection between the participants.

3.4.3 Observe

Sometimes there is a disconnection between what someone says and what they are feeling. I remember recently hearing someone speak about something which was quite sad which was happening in their life. Yet when they remarked on it, they finished it off with a smile and giggle. When challenged a dramatic reversal occurred, when the pain was named, the tears flowed.

If you only listen to the words, you can miss much. Body language, expression, tone of voice, can all alert you to the fact that something more is going on underneath. Sometimes this is a protective mechanism—they don't want to feel the pain. Sometimes it's a way of keeping people at arm's length, staying in control. Regardless of the motivation, true empathy and honest communication will not happen until the mask is removed. Naturally any response must demonstrate emotional

3 Three Levels of Interpersonal Communication

intelligence, else you will at best disrupt the heart to heart, and at worst wound the other person.

3.5 Summary

Communication happens at differing levels, from the exchange of information to the sharing of emotion. Different circumstances require different approaches. Deeper relationships are built on deeper levels of communication.

Some practical suggestions:

- When unable to think of a feeling word, go back to the last time you felt that feeling and then find a word that describes it.
- When unable to think of a feeling word, think of five words close to that feeling.
- Don't stay stuck, use these methods!
- When a person is stuck, give them emotional breathing space. You need to know when to relent since the person's critic will be at work in them.
- Some release valves are:
 - Get somebody else to say it
 - What would someone else say?
 - How else could you say it?

Questions

What are some of your most negative emotions? How would you overcome them?

How would you find out how others feel and what their emotional needs are?

How do you listen to people with your heart? What are some ways of responding to what you will hear?

4 Four Basic Needs

Autonomy

Belonging

Love

Esteem

When a person acts without knowledge of what he thinks, feels, needs or wants, he does not yet have the option of choosing to act differently.

(Clark Moustakas)

4 Four Basic Needs

When things are boiled down to their simplest form, there are two basic motivators:

1. The motivation to move toward that which we desire, and
2. The motivation to move away from that which we do not like (or desire).

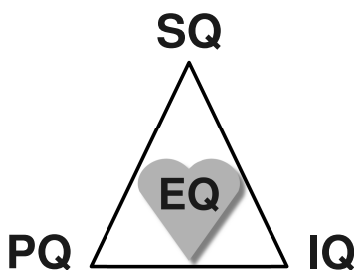


Figure 4.1: Internal Wisdom

These basic motivators are emotional. Yes, our thought processes are involved to some extent, but as we see with the myriad of pictures of the starving and dying poor in our world which are displayed on our televisions, until our hearts, our emotions, are involved, we do not act. Many can look at these images and express how terrible

it is, but until they are “moved to action”, until their emotions are engaged, no actual response is made.

As we note below in Chapter 7, our heart, our emotions are influenced by three other areas, our body, mind and spirit (see Figure 4.1 on page 50).

This relationship influences our behaviour and as we will explain below goes from thoughts to feelings to actions, the “Think-Feel-Do Loop” (see section 5.1.2 on page 66).

Expectations and needs are very powerful in determining our behaviours. If we have unmet needs or expectations a feeling is

generated which leads to a certain behaviour. It is no surprise, then, that the Latin word emotion comes from, *emovere*, carries the meaning of “to move out”.

Emotion is energy which causes motion. If we have an emotional need, then we will act to have that need met. If we do nothing, we will remain in an agitated state, a state which may well deepen if no relief is found. A person in pain will act to either avoid or find relief from the pain, or give up.

Throughout our lives we will find ourselves in times where our emotional needs require recharging. This can be due to physical causes (sickness, for example) mental issues (lack of clarity, confusion), or spiritual influences (lacking fulfilment). Regardless of race or culture, gender or station in life we all have emotional needs. These are neither right or wrong, we can't control our feelings. What we can influence are our responses.

Most people know what is “correct” behaviour. We wear masks to hide our feelings. Under pressure, however, the cracks show and we may exhibit inappropriate behaviours. There are four basic emotional needs. If these needs are not met, internal agitation results. When at an physical, spiritual, intellectual or emotional low point, that agitation increases and may lead to inappropriate or damaging responses.

The four basic needs are:

1. Autonomy—the freedom to be me
2. Belonging—being part of a group
3. Love—receiving care and concern
4. Esteem—self-worth and being valued by others

**A
B
L
E**

4.1 Autonomy

This basic need is about self-determination, being able to do what the person wants to do.

If this need is not met, the individual may exhibit either rebellious or controlling behaviour. These actions allow the person to feel as though they have some control over their own situation.

Autonomy
Belonging
Love
Esteem

In some situations, ensuring a person has this need met may be simple: give them the leadership or “top” role. However, if the person is part of a team and has this need, you may find that giving them freedom within limits works too.

I was, for a while, an officer for high school army cadets. Many of those deemed “rat bags” who joined became significant leaders. Their rebellion was driven by their unmet needs. Once their need was met, once they felt they had some autonomy, their energy became an asset, rather than a hindrance. Notice that in the strictly regimented military structure they did not have total autonomy, there were still a number of layers of authority over them.

4.2 Belonging

This need revolves around the need to be accepted by others. If this need is not met, then there may be a compromising of values to gain acceptance. This can be seen in behaviour such as “keeping up with the Jones”.

People with this as a strong need are very social. I had to smile when a friend was recounting how he was wandering around his office, for what seemed no reason until he realised that he was looking for someone to talk to—he was there by himself. If you have people with this need then make sure they have the opportunity for plenty of social contact. If not met, at its extreme, this need can lead to relationship behaviours as inappropriate as adultery. This type of person can be a real asset in many situations, since they will naturally relate to people, including newcomers.

Autonomy
Belonging
Love
Esteem

4.3 Love

This is the ability to give and receive care and concern. Different people have different “languages of love”¹. If this need is not met, then unhealthy behaviour can result. This can range from co-dependency, so they feel loved because of the need of the other, through to promiscuity, where the need to physically receive love is equated with sex.

Autonomy
Belonging
Love
Esteem

The issue of missing the mark in giving love appropriately is significant here. It may well be that one party is giving love, but the other may not receive it since it is not in their “language”. Awareness of the other’s language

¹For example, see Chapman (1992).

and the willingness and ability to adapt is required to properly fill the love need. You can see this in social situations where some people are very tactile, they hug and kiss. You can see the uncertainty and discomfort of those for whom this is not a significant part of their love language.

4.4 Esteem

Autonomy
Belonging
Love
Esteem

This need is wrapped up in being able to feel good about yourself, your value and inner well-being.

As you might guess, the person's critic or performer, their self-talk influences this need a lot. If a person's critic is loudest, then they will not feel good about themselves. If their performer is ascendant, however, they will be confident and self-assured.

If this need is not met it will lead to behaviours such as exaggeration and bragging, or trying to ingratiate, making oneself acceptable to others.

Recognition for people's contribution, for a job well done, is important for the fulfilling of this need. Remembering to give positive feedback and giving negative feedback in a sensitive, emotionally intelligent way, is required.

4.5 Finding the Need

Given that people don't wear a sign telling you what their inner need(s) are, how can we determine them? How can we avoid

missing messages so we can engage in appropriate responses, engaging them on an empathic, heart-to-heart level?

Covey's fourth habit² "Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood" reminds us that we first need to understand the other before we can engage in successful empathic communication. Unsurprisingly, this takes time. In a few minutes we can only see what is on the surface. You have to hear their story, and they have to **know** that you have heard it, before you will be trusted with their heart, their soft, vulnerable, inner side.

Autonomy
Belonging
Love
Esteem

Sometimes the current emotional behaviour stems from experiences and issues in a person's past. You cannot see that, you can only have it revealed to you over time. However, you can see a person's behaviour. Knowing that their behaviour stems from emotions arising from unmet needs, that behaviour will give you clues concerning what need is unmet (there may be more than one).

Wisdom is required to listen to the unspoken messages. Sometimes the language used will provide clues. Sometimes what is not said is more important than what is said. At other times, it is the disconnect between what is said and the behaviour which gives the clues.

As mentioned earlier, in one group coaching session I remember a person was speaking about a situation which would normally cause significant feelings, particularly sorrow and

²Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the character ethic* (2004a, pp. 235–260).

4 Four Basic Needs

grief. Yet, these emotions were not displayed and the description of what happened finished with a little laugh. When this disconnect was questioned, the mask was removed and the true emotions and needs were revealed. At that point we had empathy. Before then we had a mask keeping others at a safe distance, walling off the discomfort and pain.

You may find it helpful to look at what needs have been met, so they can be ruled out. Are they expressing autonomy, can they freely agree or disagree with you? Do they have a healthy self-esteem? And so on.

The ability to read the unspoken physical messages, the body language is also helpful. At what points are they relaxed, when do they exhibit signs of stress? Most communication is non-verbal. Learn how to read it. Learn the limitations and strengths of this skill. On the whole, women are much better at this than men.

When people have unmet needs they often develop a distorted picture of their circumstances. As we noted above, stress reduces a person's ability to see and think clearly. This may mean they cannot see the good things in life they have, simply because they are being driven by these unmet needs. A useful strategy may be reflecting back to them the good things they do have, helping to bring some perspective and balance to the situation. Again, this needs to be done with wisdom. Simply charging in there before trust is established and telling them to "count their blessings" will actually harm the relationship—they won't have felt heard and loved and therefore may well hear it as a criticism.

Finally, when addressing inappropriate behaviour driven by unmet needs, address the need, not the behaviour. We all have blind spots. Sometimes people do not even see that their

behaviour is inappropriate or damaging. Often it is a habit learnt over a lifetime. If you can work with them to have their needs met, the behaviours which were driven by the unmet need will change simply by the fact that they do not have to engage in the inappropriate behaviour to try to meet the need.

In the short-term, this may not be as satisfying, since the behaviour may still continue, however, it will result in long-lasting change. Of course, if risk to the health and welfare of others is an issue, wisdom will need to be exercised.

4.6 Summary

Emotion leads to action. There are four basic emotional needs:

1. Autonomy—the freedom to be me
2. Belonging—being part of a group
3. Love—receiving care and concern
4. Esteem—self-worth and being valued by others

When unmet, these needs will lead a person to actions to meet those needs. Some of these actions may be unhelpful. Identifying and meeting the need will result in an increase in well-being as well as long-lasting behavioural change.

Questions

What are some of your most negative emotions? Which of the unmet needs could be causing those emotions?

How would you find out how others feel and what their emotional needs are?

How would you approach coaching an emotionally agitated person?

5 The Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence



The difference between a smart man and a wise man is that a smart man knows what to say, a wise man knows whether or not to say it.

(Frank M. Garafola)

5 *The Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence*

This module is the core of Ministry Life Skills.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) has been described as a master intelligence. EQ is the wisdom which leads to happier, healthier and sustainable home and work life, and helps avoid many of the pitfalls which lead to early or unpleasant ends to relationships and employment.

Unlike some other aspects of intelligence, which remain relatively fixed once adulthood is reached, EQ is an intelligence you can continue to develop throughout your life. If you develop your EQ, you will raise your effectiveness across the board. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*, records a number of research projects where an increase in EQ even displayed an increase in IQ. In his later book he¹ recounts many examples where EQ makes a difference in the workaday world.

Our own experience in teaching EQ to church leaders is that improving your EQ results in more resilient ministry, happier leaders and more engaged and contented church members. Furthermore, we have observed that most unpleasantness in ministry results from situations involving low EQ somewhere in the mix. This can range from the leader not being aware of their own emotions and motivators, and therefore not managing themselves well in challenging situations; through to being unaware of the emotions of others and the emotional impact of their own actions on them.

Emotional Intelligence can be summarised as knowing your own emotional state and responding appropriately, and being

¹Goleman, *Working with Emotional Intelligence*

aware of others' emotional states and responding appropriately to them. Goleman separates EQ into five “domains” of emotional intelligence, each of which builds upon the ones before:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Self-Management
3. Self-Motivation
4. Empathy
5. Building Relationships

The first three domains concern our own emotional state, the last two deal with our relationships with others.

5.1 Self-Awareness

No more basic ability exists than being aware of your own emotional state. If you are not aware of what you are feeling right now, then you cannot manage or motivate yourself effectively. Since, as we have noted on page 51 that emotions are energy in motion, unrecognised emotions will lead to unexpected and often unpredictable consequences.

The first step in self awareness is having a language of emotion. If you can name the feelings you are experiencing, that is the beginning of being able to manage the emotion and your responses. If, however, you are caught up in a morass of emotion and are not able to label what you are actually feeling, you will be motivated by feelings you do not recognise. You might then respond to what you think is loneliness, when it is

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actually grief, or to what you think is anger when it is in fact shame you are feeling.



This is the reason we repeatedly return to the question “what do you feel” with our course participants. Our hectic, often impersonal, lifestyle coupled with smaller relational networks means that the skills which we once would have learnt from large family networks and from the community around us are not communicated. Where we would have seen the wide range of emotions

expressed and discussed in family and community events, we are kept disconnected by computers, television, mobile phones, and our own time-poor lives.

It takes time and energy to reflect on our feelings. Sometimes we do not have the self-awareness or time to reflect while we are in the middle of something. Self-awareness is a journey we travel. At times it may be that we are too overwrought to allow us to detach and consider our feelings and motivations. Then we will reflect after the fact and gain some wisdom from hindsight. As we develop our self-awareness, we will be able to do this reflection closer and closer to the events so that ultimately we will be constantly aware of our current emotional state.

We need to be wise. To give ourselves the grace to develop this skill, recognising it is a process. It is also wise to ensure we build time into our daily lives to allow us to reflect on ourselves. Depending on our personal style, this comes more naturally to some than others.

Some people are afraid that their strong emotions might cause them to lose control, therefore they suppress these feelings to retain that control. The sad thing is that what they achieve is the opposite of what they seek. The unexpressed emotion will have an effect, but because it has been suppressed it will come out in unexpected and unpredictable ways. For the sake of maintaining an illusion of control, they sacrifice their long-term emotional stability. Only by acknowledging these emotions can the next step of managing them be taken. Control and stability comes through engaging with your emotions rather than disengaging.

5.1.1 Think – Feel – Do Loop

We can not separate our emotions from our thoughts and actions, they are intimately connected.

This connection can be described as a loop, the Think – Feel – Do Loop.

We experience events which are interpreted by us—we have a set of thoughts about the event. Those thoughts trigger an emotional reaction. This thinking and emotion leads to a response by us, which then has a series of consequences, which become events themselves, and the cycle continues (so Figure 5.2 on page 64).

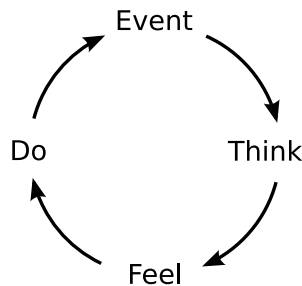


Figure 5.1: Think – Feel – Do Loop

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For example, when someone bumps into us while we are walking down the street, our thoughts about the event may be “I didn’t deserve that!” “Why can’t they be more careful!” These thoughts may lead to feelings of hurt, annoyance, possibly even outrage. These thoughts and their subsequent feelings then motivate us to angry, aggressive action, perhaps harsh words or even striking back. The consequences are then even more unpleasant as the other responds in kind, and so on. Yet, if our thoughts are different, “Is that person unwell?”, “They have tripped”, or “Someone else bumped them”, then the emotions evoked by the thinking will be very different. Compassion and concern will lead to your enquiring whether they need help. Rather than building distance and aggression, this thinking leads to warmth and closer connection with the other.

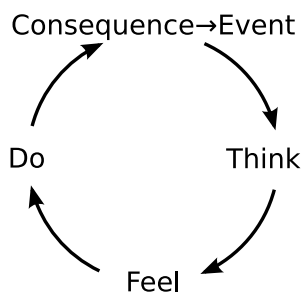


Figure 5.2: Consequences

The Think – Feel – Do Loop is a normal response. When dealing with people, sometimes we may find the Loop is incomplete.

Someone may be stuck in an emotional state, thinking and feeling and then thinking and feeling, and so on, eventually talking about it, but never getting to any action. These people can ap-

pear chaotic, disorganised, unable to make decisions. As the situation gets out of hand, this can lead to hijacking. (See Figure 5.3 on page 65.)

Others may be emotionally disconnected, simply thinking and then acting, without recognising their own emotional state

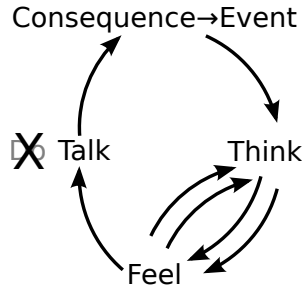


Figure 5.3: Think – Feel

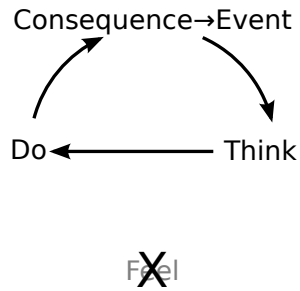


Figure 5.4: Think – Do

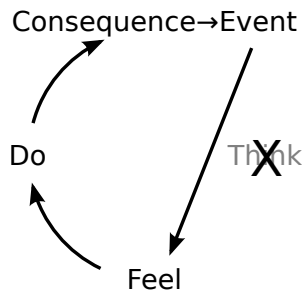


Figure 5.5: Feel – Do

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and motivators (see Figure 5.4 on page 65). These people can appear cold and distant.

Finally, people can skip the thinking part of the cycle, simply having an emotional reaction and making a response out of that (Figure 5.5 on page 65). At best, these people can seem unwise in their actions acting in ways that seem irrational or unreasonable, at worst they can be constantly emotionally hijacked (see 5.2.2 on page 70).

Each of these circumstances requires a different response to complete the loop.

The person who is think–feel needs time to talk things out before their coach asks them about what they plan to do. The person who is think–do should be questioned about what they’ve done and what they plan to do. They also need to be asked about how they feel. The person who is feel–do needs focus on the consequences of their actions.

5.1.2 Triggers

Part of our self-awareness is recognising that some events are emotional “triggers” for us. Some use the phrase that someone has “pushed one of our buttons”.

Sometimes, we have modes of thinking which are so ingrained that they lead almost automatically to a particular response. Perhaps, in the past we have been repeatedly interrupted and have had some negative results because of our inability to complete a task before us. As a result we now respond harshly to anyone who interrupts us while we are trying to focus on a task. The actions resulting from these triggers are not always appropriate. If, for instance, our spouse has come to express affection, to respond with annoyance and dismissal is not at

all helpful to the relationship. It may even be that the task we are occupied with is not that important, or that it can be delayed without any negative consequences.

To be able to effectively manage ourselves, we need to know what our triggers are and be able to predict what situations will set them off. If we are forewarned by our own self-awareness, it then allows us to build in a gap between the trigger event and our response. Ultimately, being aware of the trigger and the thoughts and emotions which are linked with it, we can change our self-talk, our thinking about the event, so that the trigger eventually is disarmed.

5.1.3 Emotional Baggage

We all carry emotional baggage with us through life.

Baggage are those things which weigh us down. It may be a mindset learnt from our family growing up, telling us we are not good enough. It may be some experiences of betrayal by those we have loved, so we protect ourselves by not risking love and trust any more.

The types of baggage we can carry are as varied as the people who carry them.

Awareness of our own baggage allows us to either begin the process of dealing with it ourselves or to seek help in that process. Baggage is usually dealt with by recognising the thoughts which lead to the emotional response and consequent actions and learning a new way thinking. This new way of thinking will then lead to different emotions and actions. Once this happens, we have left our baggage behind.

We also need to be aware that sometimes the responses we see from others are a result of their own baggage and to allow

for that when relating with them. To recognise their baggage is to allow the opportunity for empathy to develop.

5.2 Self-Management

In any relationship, it is important that you respond, rather than react. Reactions are not always appropriate and do not necessarily help to build a relationship. On the other hand, appropriately chosen responses will build relationships. In order to choose appropriate responses, you need to be aware of your emotional state. So mastery of emotional self-management is built upon good emotional self-awareness.



In the early stages of developing emotional intelligence skills we might often find ourselves looking back at our emotional states and reactions, seeing how we might better have managed ourselves in that situation. Growth in self-management is seen when you are able to observe your emotional state as it occurs and choose how best to respond in a given situation. Ultimately,

we should be able to predict our response to coming events and anticipating them prepare so we show a better response even before the event occurs. Our level of self-management can be measured by the gap between a stimulus and our response to it. (See Figure 5.6 on page 69.)

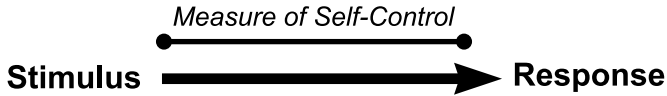


Figure 5.6: Self-Control

A number of other skills and factors contribute to our self-management:

1. Delayed Gratification
2. Emotional Hijacks
3. The Emotional Roller-coaster
4. Our Emotional Bank Account
5. Emotional Anchors

5.2.1 Delayed Gratification

The ability to delay gratification is an important self-management skill. If you are unable to delay satisfying your wants and needs, then you will act in a more impulsive fashion. Whereas if you are able to control your impulse to immediate satisfaction, you will be able to plan for the medium and long term and find long-lasting results and successes. A well-known study of children involving the “marshmallow challenge”² demonstrated that the ability to delay gratification predicted later “success” in life.

²Shoda *et al.*, 1990.

Any significant rewards require time and energy over an extended period. If a person is unable to wait for their satisfactions, they will not enjoy significant rewards in many areas of life, including relationships. In a marriage, for instance, if all one partner is interested in is their own desires and comfort, then it doesn't take a genius to see a rocky road ahead. However if the marriage is characterised by a putting aside of immediate desires for their spouse and for the sake of their relationship, then a long-lasting, resilient partnership will result.

I believe one of the reasons that so many marriages fail today is that we have lost the art of delayed gratification—our society encourages us to live for the moment. This same ethos is brought into social and work situations, where it is easier to be interested in “what’s in it for me” and to walk away, rather than put some hard work in for the long-term.

5.2.2 Emotional Hijacks

The human brain has a section which is not present in lower animals, the neocortex. This is the seat of higher reasoning—the “thinking” part of the brain. Previously, people thought that all sensory information was processed here before any response was made. Research, however, has shown that there are two related systems in play at the same time. These can be thought of as the rational mind and the emotional mind.³

³See Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* (2006b) for more information regarding the structure of the brain (chapter one) and emotional hijacks (chapter two).

Some of the information and images in this section come from Dubuc (2008) and Structural Informatics Group (2009).

Experiments have shown that a pair of small structures located in the brain, the amygdalæ, particularly respond to fear and danger stimuli. The function of the amygdala seems to be closely connected to survival responses. When something happens which endangers us, we are wired to react swiftly, almost without thought. The

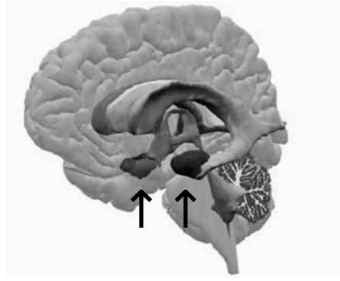


Figure 5.7: The Brain Showing the Amygdalæ

way the amygdala is “wired” into the brain is responsible for our ability to react when we encounter danger and then think later. As illustrated in Figure 5.8 on page 72, an emotional stimulus takes two paths, a short route straight to the amygdalæ which generates a rapid emotional response, and a longer path, via the neocortex, which is able to generate a more fine-grained, nuanced response.

Since there is feedback between the two “systems”, the rational mind often puts a more fully formed interpretation on stimuli.

Normally, the neocortex acts to manage the responses of the emotional mind. However, if the emotional response is particularly strong, an emotional hijack occurs—the rational mind is simply overwhelmed by the response of the emotional mind. This is due to two factors, the pathway to the emotional response is shorter, and the amygdala interprets by association, not reason. This means sometimes the response can be totally out of proportion or inappropriate to the stimulus.

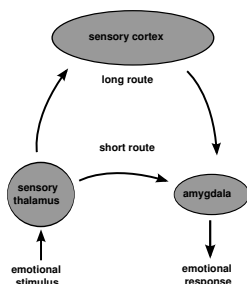


Figure 5.8: Alternate Sensory Pathways

Another result of this brain anatomy is that the most vivid memories are those with high emotional content.

The fact that the pathway via the amygdala is shorter means that we can have an emotional response before we have a reasoned one. In survival situations, this is a good thing, to react first and think later can be the difference be-

tween life and death. However, in day-to-day life, it can be very unhelpful, even damaging. We can see this in situations like footballers “losing it” on the field and striking out (the Australian media has seized on the term “brain snap”). In more mundane situations, we see it when people suddenly react out of all proportion. Many will be aware of the difficult times faced by returned war service people. The difficulties experienced by returned Vietnam War veterans has become well-known, where seemingly innocuous sounds like that of a helicopter has caused an emotional “melt-down”.

Where our neocortex interprets things in a detailed, analytical fashion, the amygdala interprets by association, matching similarities, not details. For the neocortex to make a connection, there has to be a lot of similarities recognised by us at a conscious level. For the amygdala to make a connection, there simply has to be some similarity. All that’s required is some sort of connection and the amygdala can trigger a response—the same emotional reaction as last time. For example, if we see something long and tubular in the grass next to us out

of the corner of our eye, we can have jumped out of “danger” before even recognising that it was a piece of hose pipe. In that jumping, we will have experienced all the fear and adrenaline that goes with an encounter with a snake even though no snake or danger is there.

This pattern matching of the amygdala causing a response out of proportion and inappropriate to the stimulus event is an emotional hijack. Someone who has experienced physical and emotional abuse in their past can easily be overwhelmed with emotions which take them right back to those situations simply by encountering a person or behaviour which is similar, even if it occurs in a totally different context.

When someone reacts and then looks back and wonders at the speed, strength and appropriateness of their response, it is likely they have experienced an emotional hijack. Sometimes unfortunate consequences are the result.

Because the emotional response swamps the rational mind, it is important to work with and through the emotions first, before they can begin to work through the issues in a reasoned manner.

Where it is known in advance that a person will face a potential hijack situation, then training is the best safeguard. This is the approach used for fire fighters. They face the fire and their emotions many times in training situations so that when they encounter the danger for real, they are not overwhelmed by their emotions. They react out of a pre-programmed response.

When questioning a person who has experienced a hijack, it is useful to avoid asking “why” questions as this can become quite threatening and itself trigger another flight/fight response.

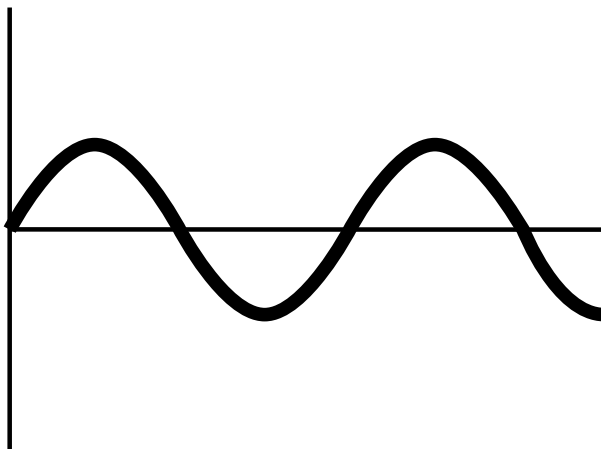


Figure 5.9: Emotional Roller-coaster

5.2.3 Emotional Roller Coaster

Another part of managing our emotional state is to recognise that we have highs and lows, good and bad days. This can be drawn using a graph which shows these highs and lows over time (see Figure 5.9 on page 74). The mid-line is what we consider “normal”, not bad, not good. The intensity of our emotional state is measured by how high or low we are from the mid line. Therefore, someone with a graph like Figure 5.10 on page 75 will be experiencing really high good days and really low bad days. These people can be perceived as being more emotional. Some people also swing from high to low much more frequently than average, their graph would look something like Figure 5.11 on page 75. This sort of person will seem less “steady”, more prone to mood swings.

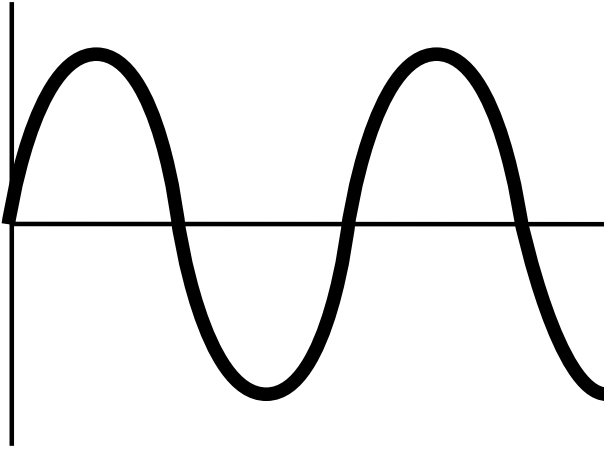


Figure 5.10: Intense Emotional Roller-coaster

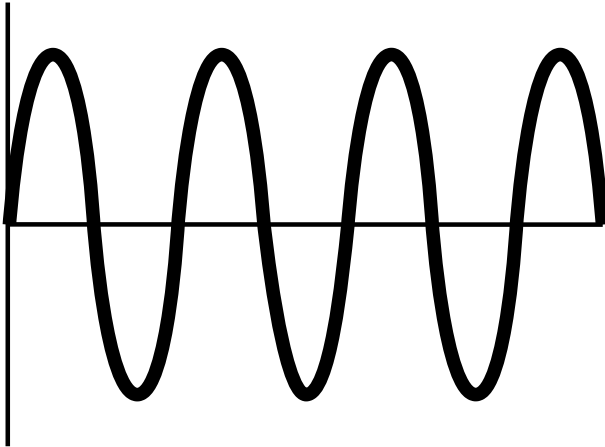


Figure 5.11: Frequent Emotional Swings

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Two factors influence our ability to cope with the highs and lows:

1. Our emotional reserve (see Bank Accounts on page 78), and
2. Our expectations.

Our “normal” graph shows that people swing gradually to the positive when things work out, when their expectations are met, and swings into the negative when things go awry, when expectations are not met. This is the key to managing the emotional roller-coaster. Our expectations of events is what determines our level of happiness. On the graph, this is represented by the horizontal line. As can be seen in Figure 5.12 on page 77, if your expectations are high, you spend most of your life with your emotions in the negative area. If you have high expectations, they will be met less frequently than if you have low expectations. People with very high expectations often find themselves in the midst of negative emotions even when achieving numerous goals—when they achieve what would be deemed “success” by others, they themselves see it as a failure simply because they expected even more. This attitude is closely linked with a very active Critic (see Chapter 2). On the other hand, if you have low expectations, you will spend more of your time in the area of positive emotions (see Figure 5.13 on page 77). To have low expectations is to live a happier life.

At this point, some might object that it is defeatist and negative to go through life with low expectations. This response usually arises from a confusion between hopes and expectations. We argue that you should have and maintain high hopes, to do otherwise is to live a demoralised, defeated life. Yet, while

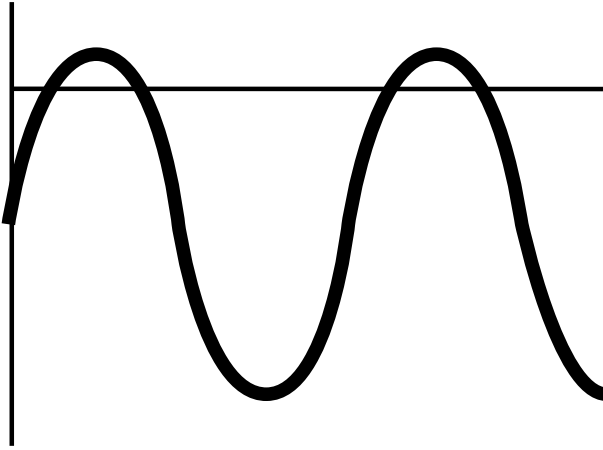


Figure 5.12: High Expectations

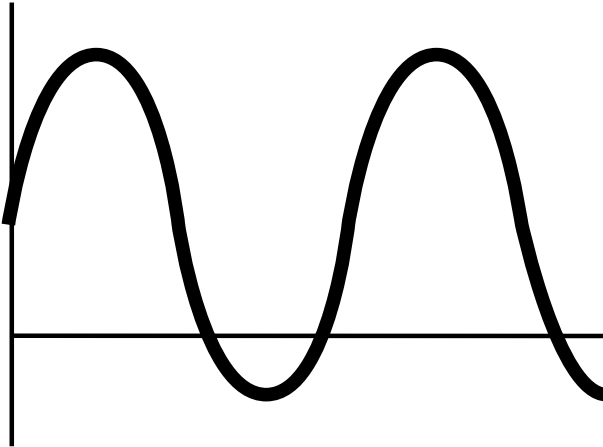


Figure 5.13: Low Expectations

maintaining your high hopes, if you lower your expectations of people and events, you will be disappointed less and pleasantly surprised more. In fact, the difference between our hopes and our expectations is the measure of our happiness. For example, if a relationship has broken down, we might hope for a reconciliation. If we expect one and it doesn't happen, we will be disappointed. If we don't expect the reconciliation and it happens, we will experience surprise and joy. Regardless of the expectation we might have, indeed, even regardless of the circumstances, we can maintain the hope that the relationship will be restored.

5.2.4 Bank Accounts (1)

One of the images we use is that of an emotional bank account. This has two aspects:

1. Our own emotional reservoir, and
2. Our relational "account" with others.

In this section we will deal with the first type of account. (For the second type of account see page 89.)

Just as we have reserves of physical energy which help us to deal with the demands of life, so too we have reserves of emotional energy which we can draw on. Managing these reserves is another important life skill.

Awareness and foresight are important here.

We need to be aware of the state of our emotional reserves. Are we running on or near empty? If so, even a small unpleasant event or setback could easily tip us over the line into the negative. If we are already in the negative, then we will be

pushed even further down. For a person in the midst of multiple negative emotions, then at some point they may need the assistance of a counsellor or psychiatrist to assist them back to a more positive emotional state.

However, if we recognise that we have been living “near the edge” for a while, making repeated draw downs on our emotional reserves, then we can act wisely and take time to recharge, to make some deposits into our reserves. These deposits may take the form of time alone, time out having fun, rest, exercise. What works for us will be dependent on our personality type. We need to find those things which help us to recharge and during times where we are drawing heavily on our reserves be intentional about doing them.

Greater wisdom is seen when we make time to build our reserves at all times. That way, when negative events occur, instead of pushing us below the line, all we see is a dip in our graph. If we are intentional about depositing into our own account, then instead of the standard roller-coaster showing highs above the line and lows below the line, we can have a graph like Figure 5.14 on page 80, where we show lower dips and an ongoing upward trend.

Forecasting allows us to prepare and to build our reserves for events we can see coming.

If you ask people to draw a roller-coaster representing the highs and lows of their own life, you will often see that deep lows follow the highs. For example, many young couples experience a “crash” which occurs after their wedding, often on their honeymoon. Instead of the idyllic time they imagine, frequently there is tension and conflict.

If we know that we are experiencing a good time, a particular high, since we can predict that it won’t last for ever, that

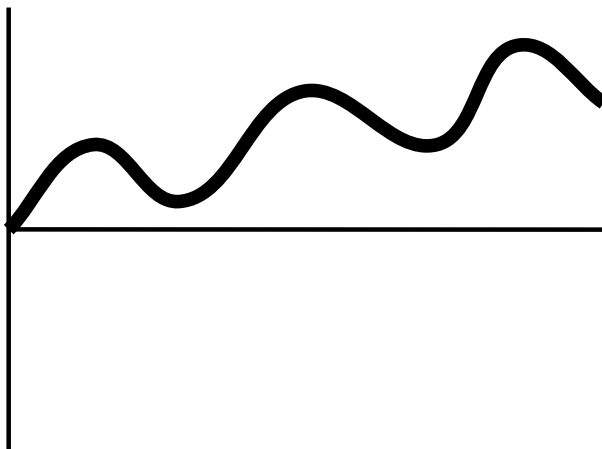


Figure 5.14: Building the Bank Account

there will be a fall at some point, we can prepare. First, this forecasting helps us manage our expectations, so we are not surprised when the dip occurs. Second, we can make sure we put some effort into building our reserves and planning for contingencies before the dip happens.

5.2.5 Emotional Anchors

An anchor can be used in a number of ways:

- to prevent a ship from moving, such as when in harbour,
- to provide stability and safety, such as when in a storm,
- to hold a vessel stationary relative to the water without using a motor

- to provide directional control vessel when the steering has broken, and
- to provide stability when being towed.

The image we pursue here is that of the ship at sea using a sea anchor, rather than one anchored in harbour.

The dips in our emotional roller-coaster can be likened to storms at sea. Of particular danger when a ship is in a storm is when it turns side on to the prevailing wind. The risk is that the waves striking the side of the vessel will cause it to capsize. A sea anchor serves to keep the bow or stern of the boat into the wind.

Events, relationships, beliefs and our self-image can all serve as emotional anchors in the storms of life. A set of strong relationships with people whom we can turn to when a crisis strikes provides support and perspective. Those who haven't cultivated close relationships in the good times are the ones who struggle the most in the storm.

Similarly, those who have a strong set of principles and values are better able to weather storms since their world-view and values provide a framework within which they can respond, even if the circumstances are something with which they've never had to cope before—when we may feel like we're out of control, being pulled along by events. This is where your Spiritual Quotient can significantly influence your emotions. For example, those who believe in a good, loving God will find they can bear misfortune much easier than those who view their life as a series of random events. One has a sense of ultimate significance and purpose, the other can easily fall into despair because of the seeming meaninglessness of it all.

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This belief system can also serve as a guide when there are no precedents in your own experience. In these circumstances, you can make decisions and move forward based on values and principles, rather than on habit and past knowledge.

Sometimes we may need to go back to critical events in our life to get some stability and perspective. For instance, during a time when we feel abandoned or alone, remembering the affirmation and feedback we have had from friends and colleagues keeps us from losing hope.

5.3 Self-Motivation

Since our emotions lead to actions, we all experience motivation. The question is, are we aware of what motivates us and do we manage ourselves so that our motivators move us in the direction of our goals?



The first part of this is that we have to have goals toward which we can move. Sadly, many people live life by letting events happen to them, letting circumstances determine what they do next. Often these people find life lacking in satisfaction, they never achieve anything, they experience less the joy of success simply because they are not aiming to achieve or succeed at anything. So, of course, in this they meet their goal and achieve nothing.

Success can be measured in many different ways. Experience and history shows us, that much of what we chase in our

Western society is ultimately lacking in significance. If you speak to people close to death, they want to experience the feel of a walk on the beach, to watch a sunset, to have family and friends around, not to have more money or a new large-screen TV.

The fact of the matter is that no-one can motivate us. We motivate ourselves. Even the most gifted motivational speaker in the world will not move us unless our heart is touched and we choose to move in the direction being spoken about. The speaker doesn't motivate us, we are brought to a point where our own emotions motivate us to act. This is significant. It means that we are ultimately responsible for our own action and motivation. People who excel in self-motivation are able to bounce back from life's setbacks.

Since we are different, different things will motivate or demotivate each of us. The skill here is to place ourselves in situations which are rich in those things which motivate us and to remove those things which demotivate. If we can't remove the demotivators, we can always choose to remove ourselves from the situation, achieving the same result.

There is a close link here with our basic needs (see Chapter 4). If our needs are not being met, we automatically will be demotivated. For example, if our workplace is such that we have no autonomy, and yet that is a significant need for us, then we will not want to get out of bed to go to work. We will not be engaged with the tasks and challenges on hand while there. Nor will we be warm and engaging in our manner and relationships. Sometimes it is possible to change our focus or role. Sometimes we need to change position altogether. The question we need to ask is the challenge of change harder

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than the level of demotivation and demoralisation? For some personalities, this is a very hard choice.

Sometimes we cannot change our circumstances, we can, however, change the people with whom we associate. We may not be able to choose our family, but we can choose those with whom we work and play. If we hang around negative people, Critics, it will have an effect. How much it influences us depends on our ability to self-manage. Sometimes we are thermometers, responding to the emotional temperature, sometimes we're thermostats, setting the emotional temperature. However, even the best self-managers will find it hard to keep a positive frame of mind and remain motivated when surrounded by people who are constantly negative. We can choose to seek out the Performers around us and spend time with them. That can be as simple as spending time with a different crowd at work. Sometime there are few or no Performers on hand. The choices then may include changing workplace or making sure we find Performers to associate with in our family and social time. The latter solution may work for someone in part-time or casual work. However, if most of your waking hours are with Critics, it is likely that change will be required.

The same goes for our social relationships. Some people think to be caring is to always spend time with those who are physically or emotionally needy. However, what often happens is that these giving people often end up physically, emotionally and spiritually exhausted. The result is that they can't continue and therefore pull out altogether. The wise thing to do is to make sure to have times of pleasure and engagement with the people who help you recharge, to choose to make time to spend with positive people.

For people who find change challenging (most of us, see Chapter 6), we need to recognise the long-term benefits of changes which collect motivators and remove demotivators.

5.4 Empathy

Empathy has been discussed in Chapter 3. It forms the core of effective relationships. With this domain we move the focus from ourselves to our relationships with others.

Empathy is a powerful connection with those whom you hold close to your heart. People don't care what you know till they know that you care. It is understanding the perspective of another person and be attuned to their needs and sentiments, having the appropriate language and understanding to effectively communicate their feelings. This is why having facility in the

first domain assists us with empathy—if we cannot understand and name our own emotions, we cannot hope to do it accurately with others.

Empathy also involves being aware of social and physical “clues”. Sometimes what is not said is as important as what is verbalised. Sometime things “clash”, a facial expression doesn't match the words or topic being discussed. For example, sometimes people laugh to avoid dealing with difficult emotions.

Until you understand where the other is at, you will be communicating to where you think they are, and therefore risk missing the target entirely. Some people limit empathy to our



own feeling what the other is feeling. We have not achieved empathetic communication until the other person knows we understand what they're feeling. Our feeling is not enough, we have to communicate our understanding to them.

When true empathetic connection is made, you will frequently observe that the parties' behaviours start to mirror each other (e.g. they move to adopt similar postures) and the speed of conversation often drops, with more silences and non-verbal communication.

5.5 Building Relationships

The good news is that if you have built your skills in the first four domains of EQ, this last one pretty much comes for free. When we understand, manage and motivate ourselves, and when we can communicate empathically with others, relationships are built naturally.



This occurs for two reasons. By understanding and managing ourselves, we avoid unhelpful behaviours and responses. By being able to enter into empathic communication with others, we draw them to us since they know we understand and care about them. The secret to building relationships is in the listening to and trusting of others. Also then in understanding and choosing behaviours that are appropriate to developing a good relationship.

5.5 *Building Relationships*

It is important to “Seek first to Understand and then to be Understood” (Covey’s fifth habit). Listening to them for as long as they need for them to understand that their point of view is understood. Once that is achieved by feeding back your understanding to them, then there is a basis for communication of what you wish to say. Otherwise we are telling, we are not communicating.

The use of these effective communication skills also allow us to influence group decisions (building leadership) and manage conflicts.

For those who lead or are responsible for others, recognising where motivation comes from is critical to building teamwork and commitment. Threats of unpleasant consequences may cause short-term action, but will lead to long-term disconnection. They may “do their job” but they won’t excel, they won’t use initiative, they won’t go over and above what is required. Whereas, if you lead by plugging into your associate’s motivators, commitment will increase, so will output and initiative.

Using unpleasant consequences is often quicker and is therefore used frequently. It is not better in the long-term. This is especially true in the Knowledge Economy, where an organisation’s greatest asset is their people and their emotional and intellectual commitment. A few passionate, willing and committed team members are much more valuable than dozens of grudging “bodies on the seats”.

The use of tools like DISC behavioural profiles can assist in determining those things which will motivate or demotivate others. (See Chapter 6.)

The principle that relationships make a difference to results has been recognised by people such as Kim who has created the “Core Theory of Success”:

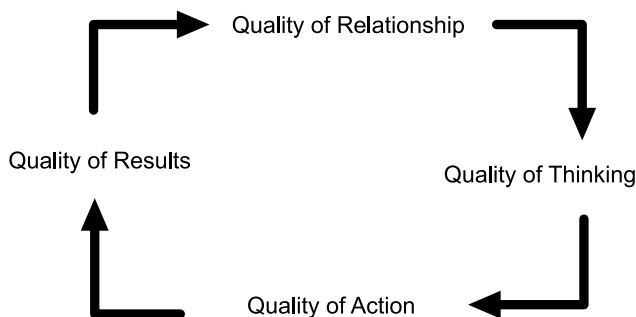


Figure 5.15: Reinforcing Engine of Success

As the quality of relationships improves, the quality of thinking becomes better, leading to an increase in the quality of actions and results. Achieving high-quality results has a positive effect on the quality of relationships, creating a reinforcing engine of success (see Figure 5.15 on page 88).

Poor relationships lead to poor results which produce poorer relationships ... Good relationships produce good results which improves the relationships, and so on. Quality of relationships allows the collective thinking to be open and genuine enough to have the depth needed to solve the issue at hand, including disagreement. That then leads to the higher quality of planning and of the actions that come from that planning.

In many situations you'll find that a boss or team leader has a lower IQ than many for whom they are responsible. This is simply because the one who gets the best out of the team is the one with the highest EQ, rather than the highest IQ.

5.5.1 Bank Accounts (2)

Alongside making deposits into our own emotional bank account to build our reserves for the difficult times. We also need to make deposits into our accounts with others.

In any relational situation, we can either make a deposit or a withdrawal on that relationship. If we behave in an insensitive or hurtful fashion, a withdrawal is made. If we add value, are generous and caring, we make a deposit.

We need to monitor the types of relational transactions we are making. If we make more withdrawals than deposits, we will eventually have no “credit” left with that person. We will be relationally bankrupt. At this stage the relationship moves into negative territory and if not corrected, the draw-down becomes so great that the other person decides it is not worth the cost and the relationship dies.

Conversely, if we regularly make deposits, the other will feel we value them by the way we regularly praise, are generous and put ourselves out for them. This credit then acts as a buffer, so that when we need to draw down on the relationship because we’re having a hard time, the relationship still ends up being in credit.

5.6 Summary

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is the master intelligence. If you develop your EQ, your performance in all areas of life will increase.

There are five domains of Emotional Intelligence.

1. Self-Awareness

5 *The Five Domains of Emotional Intelligence*

2. Self-Management
3. Self-Motivation
4. Empathy
5. Building Relationships

These five domains build on each other. To be truly competent in the higher domains, you need to develop your competence in the lower domains. Personal Emotional Intelligence is required for effective interpersonal Emotional Intelligence.

We need to recognise the power of our triggers, baggage and anchors, and be aware of things which cause emotional hijacks. Recognising where we are on our emotional roller-coaster, managing our expectations and putting deposits into our personal emotional bank account builds resilience.

Building the gap between stimulus and response allows us to respond rather than react.

Empathy and making deposits into our relational accounts with others builds relationships, aids in resolving conflicts and builds teamwork.

Questions

What are some of your triggers? What will you change so you are better able to manage yourself in situations where triggering or hijacking might occur?

Why is emotional intelligence so valuable in personal relationships?

How do people behave when faced with a threatening situation? What would help them to conduct themselves better when in crisis situations?

6 People Are Predictably Different



To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.

(Anthony Robbins)

6.1 People are Predictably Different

Everyone behaves in predictable ways, we have our own styles. These styles shape the way we think, feel and respond to our environment. This style becomes recognised by others, even to the point of people remarking when we “act out of character”. Because others have their own style which may be different to our own, misunderstanding and conflict can arise. These negative interactions can arise because we simply “don’t talk their language” or because our style is the opposite of theirs and we clash. If we understand our own preferred style and the preferred style of those with whom we live and work, we can avoid misunderstanding and conflict, build harmony, good relationships and therefore teamwork.

A number of tools have been developed which helps us understand people’s style of behaviour. We recommend DISC behavioural profiles for a number of reasons:

1. They are quickly administered (seven minutes)
2. The cost is quite low per person
3. The principles behind DISC can be used to quickly take an estimate of a person’s preferred behavioural style.

As with all tools, it is important that it is used wisely, respecting its limitations. DISC is time and context sensitive. The way someone behaves at their place of employment may be significantly different from how they are around their friends. Also, we change over time, so a profile administered now may easily

6.1 *People are Predictably Different*

be different from one administered in five years—the person has grown, or maybe they’ve experienced a life-changing crisis. Above all, it is a tool for informed discussion and questioning, it’s conclusions are not absolute.

Determining what a person’s style is is useful in a number of ways:

- You are able to build more focused or better rounded teams
- You can anticipate areas of potential conflict and use more appropriate ways of dealing with conflict
- You can be more confident that you have the “right people in the right seats” on your bus.¹

The DISC model maps a person’s behaviour along two axes: task→people focus, active→passive style. That is, someone will either be more people focused or more task focused, and they will be either more active or more passive in style.

It is important to note that these are their default style. An adaptable person will be able to change their style to suit the situation in which they find themselves.

The letters DISC are mnemonic, each represents a style of behaviour.

D Dominant, Direct

I Influencer, Inspirer

S Stable, Steady

C Compliant, Correct

6 People Are Predictably Different

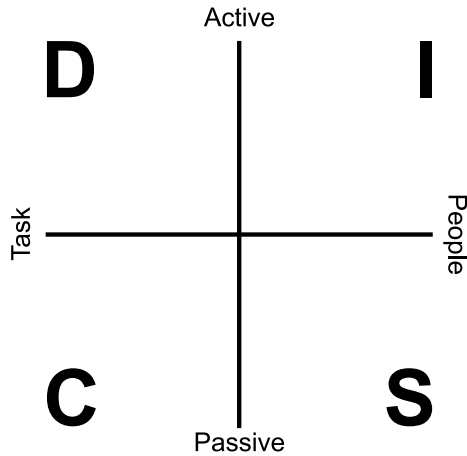


Figure 6.1: DISC

The key to making a quick preliminary assessment of people is to ask yourself, “Are they fast paced or slower?” and “Are they people or task focused?” You then combine the two characteristics to get their primary style. For instance, someone who is fast paced and people focused will be an I.

It is important to note that many people have more than one trait expressed. For example, instead of being a pure S, they may exhibit both S and C traits. Normally one is dominant, so that is the one you will likely observe using the questions above.

For any style, the key is to determine your strengths and to work out of them, rather than using attributes where you are not so strong. For example, while the high D is an instinctive

¹Collins (2001, pp. 13, 41ff.)

leader, other styles can lead, they just need to lead in a fashion which uses their strengths, rather than try and emulate the leadership style of the 'D'.

Finally, no style is “better” than another. Each has its place in a team or role, the key is to put the appropriate style in the best place in the situation. Similarly, each style can have people who have high or low EQ. On the whole, high I and S styles tend to be higher in EQ, but that is no guarantee. Heredity, role models and life experiences all determine how a person behaves.

By necessity, this is a brief introduction to DISC. We recommend either using a certified DISC consultant or taking the certification training yourself, since there is much more that can be gained from a more complete understanding of the tool.

6.2 D—Dominant, Direct

The 'D' personality is the only type who can flourish in a negative environment. They are future orientated, wanting to ensure the right thing is being done. 'D's can appear harsh and unfeeling and may cause hurt, sometimes unintentionally. They form 3% of the population. Their opposite in style is the 'S'.

Description Directing, dominating, demanding, determined, decisive

Basic Motivation Challenge and control

Desires Autonomy, varied activities, challenging assignments

6 People Are Predictably Different



Responds Best to People Who... Provide direct answers, get to the point, allow freedom for personal accomplishments

Needs to Learn... Self-control, to finish well, to be sensitive to people's feelings

When Working with a High 'D' If there is mutual respect, sees the other 'D' as visionary, aggressive, assertive, competitive and optimistic.

If mutual respect does not exist, sees the other 'D' as argumentative, dictatorial, arrogant, domineering and hasty.

For Effective Communication Mutual respect must exist to avoid conflict. Both must understand one another's realm and boundary of authority.

Acknowledge that both are great sparring partners.

When Working with a High I Views 'I' as egocentric, superficial, too self-assured and inattentive. Becomes upset by 'I's playfulness and noncommittal generalisations.

For Effective Communication Be friendly, complimentary and acknowledge his/her accomplishments. Be generous with praise.

When Working with a High S Views 'S' as passive, nonchalant, apathetic, accepting, possessive, complacent and non-demonstrative.

Views 'S' as slow-moving.

For Effective Communication Avoid pushing. Recognise with sincerity his/her good work and be friendly. Work with the team leader of the 'S' group.

When Working with a High C Views 'C' as overly cautious, evasive, defensive, too focused on details and worries.

Thinks that he/she over-analyses and gets bogged down in details.

For Effective Communication Provide details and clear boundaries.

Do not be over friendly. Respect his/her need for solitude.

Value to team: Instinctive leader

Pace: Fast

Greatest Fear: Being taken advantage of

Default Focus: Task

Communication The primary 'D'

- Loves it when you:

6 *People Are Predictably Different*

- Are brief, direct and to the point when explaining yourself.
- Ask “what” not “how” questions.
- Focus on the results (remember they desire results)
- Give them the “bottom line” when describing a situation
- Suggest ways to help them solve problems
- Highlight the benefits when telling them about your ideas
- Agree with the facts rather than emotions when agreeing with them
- Discuss a problem in light of how it will slow results
- But has difficulty understanding when you:
 - Ramble or repeat yourself
 - Focus on problems instead of solutions
 - Make generalisations
 - Make statements without support

6.3 I—Influencer, Inspirer

The 'I' personality is your typical life of the party, enjoying meeting new people. They tend to be optimistic and talkative. Is can appear disorganised and untrustworthy since they can let their tendency to talk and relate get in the way of getting the job done. They form 11% of the population. Their opposite in style is the 'C'.

6.3 I—Influencer, Inspirer



Description Influencing, inspiring, interacting, interested in people

Basic Motivation Recognition and approval

Desires Freedom from details, friendly relationships, a chance to verbalise ideas

Responds Best to People Who... Provide recognition of their abilities, are friendly, who socialise

Needs to Learn... Time-management, that deadlines are important, to listen to others

When Working with a High D Views ‘D’ as argumentative, dictatorial, arrogant, domineering and hasty.

Resents when told what to do and is frustrated when good ideas go unnoticed.

For Effective Communication Must give direct communication; deal with the issues in a straightforward manner; make statements that are short and to-the-point.

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When Working with a High I Views 'I' as stimulating, charismatic, outgoing and optimistic.

Will develop a relationship quickly, but will compete for recognition and strive to impress others.

For Effective Communication Be friendly, complimentary, acknowledge his/her accomplishments and listen sincerely instead of planning what to say next yourself.

When Working with a High S Views 'S' as passive, nonchalant, apathetic, accepting, possessive, complacent and non-demonstrative.

Loses patience when 'S' doesn't act quickly and may become frustrated when 'S' doesn't express thoughts and feelings.

Can be motivator and encourager to an 'S'.

For Effective Communication Slow down; be more easy-going, show appreciation with sincerity and establish friendship. Above all, do not be too pushy.

When Working with a High C Views 'C' as overly-dependent, evasive, defensive, too focused on details and too cautious.

Will experience strain in communication due to different foci.

For Effective Communication Present facts clearly and be well-prepared for discussion. Remove any potential threats and be ready for expressions of doubts and concerns. Give him/her time to evaluate all the information before making a decision.

Value to team: Instinctive communicator

Pace: Fast

Greatest Fear: Loss of social approval

Default Focus: People

Communication The primary I

- Loves it when you:
 - Give them an opportunity to talk about their ideas, other people and their emotions
 - Assist them in developing ways to transfer talk into action
 - Share your ideas and experiences with them
 - Recognise them for their accomplishments
 - Give them the opportunity to motivate and influence others
 - Show them that you accept them
 - Explain the details, but don't dwell on them
 - Communicate with them in a friendly and light manner
- But has difficulty understanding when you:
 - Do all the talking
 - Eliminate their social time
 - Ignore their ideas and accomplishments
 - Tell them what to do without asking their input
 - Give them “detail” work

6.4 S—Stable, Steady

The 'S' is the most common style, comprising 69% of the population. For the 'S', close relationships are important. They team players and are good at ensuring processes are implemented. Their fear of change and the fact that they form the bulk of the population is a key reason implementing change can be challenging. Their natural opposite is the 'D'.



Description Steady, stable, service, submissive

Basic Motivation Stability and security

Desires Identification with a group, established work patterns, a familiar environment

Responds Best to People Who... Are relaxed and friendly, are consistent and have work patterns, come from a familiar environment

Needs to Learn... To work independently, that change is necessary, to meet goals and targets

When Working with a High D Views ‘D’ as argumentative, dictatorial, arrogant, domineering and hasty.

Intimidated by his/her confrontational style.

Will not get angry, but will get even. Withdraws and slows down the action.

For Effective Communication Must have direct communication, deal with the issues in a straightforward manner, make statements short and to-the-point.

When Working with a High I Views ‘I’ as egocentric, overly optimistic, glib, too self-assured and inattentive.

On the surface, the relationship will look good.

For Effective Communication Be friendly, complimentary and acknowledge his/her accomplishments.

When Working with a High S Views ‘S’ as dependable, self-controlled, patient, kind, accommodating and attentive.

Will be supportive of each other, avoiding confrontation and seldom disagreeing openly.

To accomplish results, goals must be set by external means.

For Effective Communication Move at a steady pace, express appreciation, establish a friendship.

When Working with a High C Views ‘C’ as overly-dependent, evasive, defensive, too focused on details and too cautious and worrying too much.

They are both similar in their passiveness and unwillingness to make decisions.

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Pushes to build a relationship too soon and sees ‘C’s coolness as personal rejection.

For Effective Communication Present facts clearly and be well-prepared for discussion. Remove any potential threat and be ready for expressions of doubts and concerns. Give him/her time to evaluate all the information before making a decision.

Value to team: Instinctive relators

Pace: Slower

Greatest Fear: Change

Default Focus: People, family

Communication

The primary S

- Loves it when you
 - Express a genuine interest in them as a person
 - Give them answers to “how” questions
 - Clearly define your goals, a procedure, or their role in the overall plan
 - Are patient with them
 - Give them your sincere appreciation
 - Give them time to adjust to changes
 - Present ideas or changes in a non-threatening manner
 - Provide them with feedback
- But has difficulty understanding when you:
 - Are pushy or overly aggressive

- Are demanding
- Are confrontational

6.5 C—Correct, Compliant

The C type comprise 17% of the population. These are the people who want to ensure the job is done right. A particular characteristic of the high C person is that they invest everything they have into what they do. For that reason, negative criticism of something they have done is very wounding.



Description Cautious, calculating, compliant, careful, competent

Basic Motivation Correctness and high quality

Desires Clearly defined tasks with limited risk, details, time to think and process information

Responds Best to People Who... Provide resources, give detailed procedures, do things right

6 People Are Predictably Different

Needs to Learn... To take calculated risks, that the end product is as important as the details, that deadlines matter

When Working with a High D Views 'D' as argumentative, dictatorial, arrogant, domineering and hasty.

Uses external authority to deflect his/her demands. Becomes defensive.

Tension due to High C focusing on details while High D sees the "big picture".

For Effective Communication Must have direct communication, deal with the issues in a straightforward manner, make statements short and to-the-point.

When Working with a High I Views 'I' as egocentric, superficial, overly optimistic, glib, too self-assured and inattentive.

Tends to dampen his/her enthusiasm with their own pessimism — highlights the potential dangers and problems.

Insists on obtaining all the facts and details.

For Effective Communication Be friendly, praise his/her accomplishments.

When Working with a High S Views 'S' as passive, nonchalant, apathetic, accepting, possessive, complacent and non-demonstrative.

Both agree that cooperation, reducing risk and using caution in making decisions are important.

Is concerned that he/she is not precise enough and ignores his/her need to develop a relationship.

For Effective Communication Be amiable and relaxed, work at establishing a friendship, show appreciation for tasks well done.

When Working with a High C Views ‘C’ as a perfectionist who is accurate, thorough, systematic, agreeable and adaptable.

Will cooperate and work well together to devise careful plans and create extensive control systems.

Will compete to see who can be the most correct. Their concern for perfection will override their concern for meeting deadlines.

For Effective Communication Talk about facts and details, be well-prepared and plan carefully, giving ample time for evaluation before a decision is made.

Value to team: Instinctive organisers

Pace: Slower

Greatest Fear: Criticism

Default Focus: Task

Communication The primary C

- Loves it when you:
 - Support your ideas with accurate information
 - Are specific when explaining yourself
 - Are patient, persistent and diplomatic while providing explanations

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- Agree with facts rather than emotions when agreeing with them
- Allow them their space and independence
- Tell them up front your expectations of them
- Give them the pros and cons of an argument
- But has difficulty understanding when you
 - Refuse to explain the details
 - Answer questions vaguely or casually
 - Surprise them with new information

6.6 Summary

People are predictably different. Each style has its own strengths and weaknesses. We can build better relationships and teams by understanding other's fears and desires and by communicating in the fashion most appropriate for them.

D Instinctive leaders
I Instinctive communicators
S Instinctive relators
C Instinctive organisers

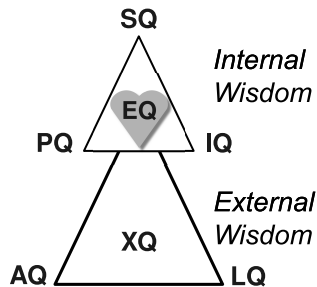
Questions

What are the strengths of your default style? How can you use them to improve relationships or performance at work, at home?

What is the preferred style of your significant others? What are the potential points of conflict?

What teams am I a part of? Are the styles in the team the most appropriate for the job? What changes or additions would help form a more effective team?

7 Wisdom and the Seven Intelligences



The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

(King Solomon)

7 Wisdom and the Seven Intelligences

By and large, when we think of intelligence we think of a person's academic, intellectual abilities—their IQ. The sad truth is that a person may have an extremely high IQ, while having very poor skills in many other areas. The same person may have great knowledge, but not be very capable when it comes to applying that knowledge.

The same may even be said for Emotional Intelligence (EQ). People can know a great list of words which label emotions and still not be aware of and be able to accurately label their own emotional states—the foundational EQ skill.

We speak in terms of seven areas of intelligence:

1. Intellectual—IQ
2. Spiritual—SQ
3. Emotional—EQ
4. Physical—PQ
5. Adaptability—AQ
6. Leadership—LQ
7. Execution—XQ

All of the Qs interrelate, however we can consider them in two broad areas. Those things which concern us internally, our affect, and those things which deal with our interaction with the world beyond ourselves—our effectiveness. As you can see

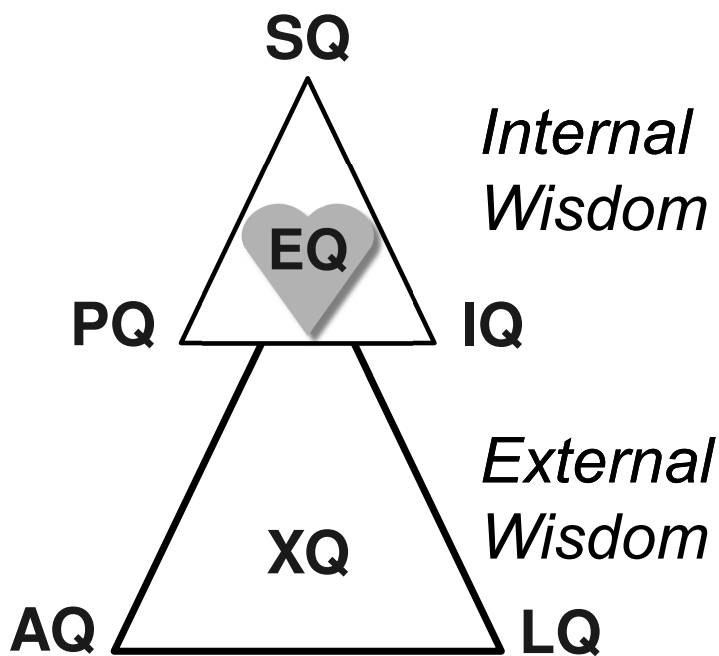


Figure 7.1: The Seven Areas of Intelligence

from Figure 7.1 on page 115, the first three (IQ, SQ, EQ) are internal, the final three (AQ, LQ, XQ) are external, with PQ having aspects of both internal and external wisdom. Internal wisdom relates to how you manage yourself. External wisdom is concerned with how you relate to others, what effect you have.

While our IQ reaches a fixed level and does not increase throughout the rest of our lives, the good news is that we can continue to grow in wisdom until our dying day. The question is, do we put the effort in where it counts?

The difference between having knowledge and being able to apply it is whether you are wise or not: wisdom. This is what this book is all about, applying knowledge so it makes a difference in your and other people's lives—life skills. Whether you are wise will determine whether you reach your potential. Being intelligent simply indicates you can store and process information. Goleman, *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998a) contains many examples which illustrate this truth.

7.1 The Seven Intelligences

7.1.1 Internal Wisdom—Affect

Our internal wisdom concerns our own state of being. Our thinking, feeling, spirituality and physical state. Our emotions are the heart of the matter. Our emotional state has more influence on the other parts of our internal wisdom than any other.

Intellectual—IQ

In a time when we hear much said about the “knowledge worker” you might be led to believe that a high IQ is a guarantee of success and happiness. Actually, high IQ is a poor predictor of either success or happiness. Mensa is a group for people whose IQ is in the top 2% of the population. Their own web site acknowledges that their members range from people on welfare to millionaires, from college professors to truck drivers.

Of course, this does not mean that being adept at learning and processing information is not valuable. It is.

It has taken the effort of many smart people thinking of new ideas to let us be where we are today. The idea that water could be channelled to the fields led to irrigation which meant more food and a more reliable food supply. The invention of the bow and arrow meant that hunters did not have to get close to dangerous animals to protect those around them, nor did they have to get so close to the game they were hunting. We could go on, illustrating how a knowledge of the physical world and its workings led to electricity becoming a core part of our lives today.

The difference comes is how that IQ is applied.

First knowledge must be gathered that helps us move toward our goals. While all information may be interesting and useful to someone, is it useful in helping move toward where you want to be in 5–10 years? Is it making your life better now?

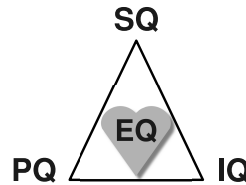


Figure 7.2: Internal Wisdom

Second it has to be used. If we have a problem, say our car won't start, what does it profit us to know every detail concerning how the car functions if we don't use that knowledge to fix the car? If you knowledge has no application it has no use, it is useless.

Spiritual—SQ

We believe that we are more than physical beings, that we have a spiritual component. More than 80% of the world's population believes there is a God, even more believe in some sort of life after death.

What does it mean to have spiritual wisdom? No matter what faith people profess, faith provides a framework of values, a sense of what is right and wrong. As we live out our lives we have that inner voice prompting us concerning what is right and wrong. Some describe it as our conscience, others as the voice of God. Some might use terms such as integrity, goodness or virtue.

A key part of spiritual wisdom is heeding that voice. Whenever we live in a fashion which is contrary to our values, acts against that internal voice, it has a negative impact on our own sense of self and sense of well being. Often it has impact on others.

In some areas this wisdom is not valued very highly. The recent global economic crisis can be traced back to people valuing profit over integrity, a high pay packet over high moral values. The result has been economic and personal. People losing their jobs, homes and families because some lacked a high level of integrity.

Like many things, our conscience can improve with use or fade with disuse. The sociopath is an extreme example, where circumstances have totally erased any sense of compassion and conscience.

Finally, a person with good SQ will have an eternity mindset. They will view the world and their part in it with a view that goes beyond their lifetime. People with low SQ tend to live for themselves and for the moment. Many ills in our world today can be attributed to a lack of SQ. Instead of seeing themselves as being accountable for their actions and as contributing to something of lasting significance, they do not consider the consequences years or decades, let alone centuries ahead.

Emotional—EQ

This is the heart of our internal wisdom. Given all we have said in previous chapters, it is worth describing here how EQ relates to the other Qs.

We have noted above the comment that strong emotions make people stupid. We are incapable of being able to think straight if we are in the grip of strong positive or negative emotions. Having the skills to manage our emotional state means we will be able to more consistently and more effectively apply our IQ. Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* notes that when work has been done with low-performing children to improve their EQ, the measure of their IQ has also increased.

Your SQ influences your EQ, your relationships. Significant emotions are associated with trust and confidence in someone. Different, but no less strong emotions are associated with their opposites, distrust and caution. In the long run, people value

integrity over intelligence. People will want to be with others whom they can trust. Employers will value employees who they know are going to behave well, even when not supervised. Friends and associates will open themselves to someone they believe is going to treat that vulnerability with care and respect.

Your physical state influences your emotional state. You only need to fall ill to recognise that with the illness comes a low emotional state. We also know that significant emotional turmoil can have physical results. A person suffering from depression, for example, has no energy and finds it hard to do anything.

Your ability to adapt is closely linked with your ability to manage yourself. You will find it hard to deal with change if, for instance, you don't know that change is one of your significant negative motivators. Knowing that is one of your demotivators, you can allow for it, plan longer lead times, give your self time to adapt, instead of placing undue pressure on yourself by having regular, rapid change. Similarly, if you have low EQ you will not find it very easy to adapt to the new people and relationships which come with changing circumstances.

As discussed above, the best leaders are those who get the best out of the team under them. Short-term effectiveness may come from authoritarian, punitive approaches. However, long-term gain and synergy only arises when the high EQ leader gains the commitment and loyalty of the team members. (See 5.15.)

A key part of execution is the internal motivation to action. This is one of the five domains. People may progress through life pushed along mostly by external motivators. To be truly successful and truly fulfilled, you need to marshal your inner resources toward goals which are meaningful to you so that

your own emotions and values become the things which push you to act.

Physical—PQ

Our physical intelligence is the bridge between our internal and external wisdom. Our physical state has implications for our internal state and our external effectiveness.

When considered from an internal wisdom perspective, PQ relates to an awareness of our physical state and wise responses to our body's needs.

A person who has good PQ will be aware of their body's natural rhythms, planning their work times around the peaks and troughs in their energy throughout the day. They will also be aware of those things which will deplete their energy reserves and plan rest before and after such events, avoiding the situation where they have drawn so heavily on their physical reserves that they are left totally exhausted.

PQ also involves recognising your body's signals and treating it with respect. Too often we don't consider our health until something catastrophic happens. Many medical conditions people suffer from are preventable.

Knowledge is recognising that a failure to pay attention to proper nutrition now not only reduces our effectiveness in the present, but will lead to heart disease, diabetes, and other ailments in the future. Wisdom is acting on that knowledge before it's too late or acting to improve your condition now.

Even something which seems simple, like sleep, is an important part of PQ. Not only does inadequate sleep lead to being less effective (fatigue, irritability, poor concentration, mood changes), it also leads to many health problems. At its ex-

tremes, problems like sleep apnoea can lead to life-threatening conditions like hypertension, stroke and heart disease.

PQ also means recognising that your pace of life is not that of others. Some people are fast-paced, others are slower. Recognise your own pace and live most of your days at that pace. To do otherwise will exhaust you (if you are slower paced) or frustrate you (if faster paced).

Finally, listen when your body tries to grab your attention. Pain is the body's warning system. It is your body telling you something is not right. If you regularly get a stiff neck from sitting at a desk. Take breaks. Put other activities throughout the day which mean you have to get up and move differently.

Apart from catastrophic injury, most of the ills we experience are the result of failing to listen to our body for a long period of time. Use your PQ. Act when the signals begin, rather than waiting for it to develop into something major before you act.

7.1.2 External Wisdom—Effect

No-one exists in total isolation, we all influence the world around us. The type and extent of that influence is determined by our external wisdom, our effectiveness.

Physical—PQ (2)

Our PQ reflects on our other internal states. Simply suffering from fatigue means that our thinking is less clear, our emotional state is lower, as is our spiritual experience. Results are also seen in our effectiveness. Fatigue also results in poorer execution, being less prepared to adapt and less able to lead.

7.1 The Seven Intelligences

If we do not care for our body, we will be less able to adapt, to lead and to perform. This seems obvious, yet many work hard without working hard at ensuring their own body will support them in the long term.

Are you in a credit or debit arrangement with your own body?

Beyond this, our physical intelligence relates to how we present ourselves.

A key issue here is first impressions. There is a lot of wisdom in the saying, “You don’t get a second chance at first impressions”. Roger Tan remarks in his book:

An interviewer once said she rejected a candidate with good qualifications because he looked moody and did not smile. She was afraid his negative attitude might affect the rest of the team.¹

Be wise concerning how you dress. Are your clothes appropriate to the situation? Your dress should not be for your own sake, selected just because you like it or feel comfortable in it, it should be selected with consideration of the audience. Is casual appropriate, or businesslike? Your dress makes a statement about who you are and how you want to be perceived. What message are you choosing to communicate?

Think about the impression you are forming in a person’s mind by your speech. Do you talk too much, is it all about you,

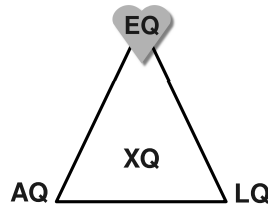


Figure 7.3: External
Wisdom

¹Tan (2008, p. 33.)

is it uplifting or depressing? Does your language reflect the desire to communicate or to show off your huge vocabulary? After speaking with you, are people left wishing they had more time with you or wishing you'd finished long before?

Great strides forward can be made by simply improving how you greet someone for the first time. Are you proactive and engaging or distant and withdrawn? Do you smile, look them in the eye and give a firm handshake? How would someone rate your greeting out of ten? How could you improve it?

Be aware of cultural differences. What is a firm handshake in one culture is aggression in another (this can even be the case with a male – female handshake). Similarly, different people as well as different cultures have different personal space. Observe, if people seem uncomfortable with how close you are to them, back off a little. As relationship develops, the personal space becomes more narrow with that person.

Your carriage and body language also forms part of your PQ. Do you portray an arrogance by your expression? Does your posture proclaim your disinterest in the other person.

Sometimes we are unaware of these things, we need a coach to tell us that we're looking down our nose at people or that our drifting off during conversations is written across our face.

Adaptability—AQ

Our adaptability is our ability to manage change. As we said in Chapter 1, one thing we are certain to encounter in life is change. The five shapes gives a model, a tool which can be used to manage change.

High AQ people learn to think outside the box, see the trends and respond wisely to events.

7.1 *The Seven Intelligences*

In the face of change, we can choose to be active or passive. We can choose to accept or reject the change. By rejecting the change, we become passive, reacting as things happen, letting the environment influence us. By accepting the change, we decide to respond, shaping the change and its effects on us.

Contingency planning is a key skill here. Do you expect your plans to go exactly as you expect? Do you plan for the unexpected? A wise person recognises that things don't always go according to plan and has prepared in advance what they will do in those circumstances. If you don't plan for contingencies, when things go awry you have to plan on the run, and the results are often much poorer than if consideration and time were given beforehand. In combat, the best leaders are not those who have the best battle plans in advance, but those who can seize the opportunities which present as the "chaos" unfolds. Having contingency plans aids in the taming of the chaos that can be everyday life.

If you plan for financial, relational, employment and other crises, you won't be left asking yourself and others, "What should I do?", you'll have a set of steps to take. This will bring a confidence and clarity which will help you weather the storm.

It surprises some people when we suggest the best time to plan what you will do when your current employment ceases is just after you have started your current role. The reason? You will be more clear headed then. Often when leaving a role you are in some level of emotional turmoil. This clouds your ability to think and plan well.

Put your contingency plans in place well before you need them.

Leadership—LQ

Many leaders have the IQ to rise to their position. However, to succeed in the long-term they need to have foresight, the wisdom to see beyond their current situation, to predict what may be coming and to prepare for that future now.

As mentioned above, a critical part of good leadership is good EQ. Your team's effectiveness will only be as great as their relationships. A group of people who work or meet together are not a team. It is only when they share purpose and goals that they become a team. We recognise now that our greatest assets are our people. If we don't manage our relationships with them and their team relationships well, we will see an exodus of those valuable people. Not only is there a financial cost in training for every new person brought on board, but there is an even larger cost in lost productivity and lost corporate knowledge.

Wise leaders also know their stakeholders and add value to that relationship. For customers that will be supplying what they need in a timely and pleasant manner. For suppliers it will be paying bills on time, being open about needs. For your employee's families, looking after your workers so that their support networks are an asset, rather than a point of conflict. Sure, some make gains by using unscrupulous or uncaring means, but long-term success will elude them since they will not win the loyalty of their customers or employees.

This principle applies to commercial business as well as to not-for-profit and volunteer organisations. In a volunteer organisation like a church, if you do not care for your stakeholders, the members, the volunteer workers, they will eventually decide it costs too much and abandon the cause.

7.1 *The Seven Intelligences*

Wise leaders listen. They listen to the voice of wisdom, their own conscience, the wise counsel of others. They are open and responsive to feedback, both positive and negative.

The best leaders give credit for success to those they lead when success comes and look at their own part when problems occur. Leaders who do the opposite, take the credit themselves and blame others for problems rapidly lose the support of those they lead. People are quickly demoralised by the injustice of it all. Conversely, people become even more committed when they recognise that their efforts are seen and valued by their leaders.

Wise leaders know their own strengths and weaknesses. They lead out of their strengths and do not try to be other than they are. The highly relational person may be able to act in a direct and decisive manner, yet over the long term they will undo themselves because they will be hurting inside over the damaged relationships.

Too often leaders are selected because of skills and qualifications, and are all too soon dismissed because of relationship and character issues. I have seen a leader abandon their post in three months because he was unable to manage himself. I have also seen a decade of work nearly destroyed in six months by poor relational skills.

EQ is a core competence for successful leadership. How do you choose your leaders?

Execution—XQ

Stephen Covey notes that the single greatest reason most plans fail is that they are simply not acted upon or not executed

well.² It is better to have an average plan which is implemented than a wonderful plan which is executed poorly.

Covey lists six drivers of execution:

- Clarity
- Commitment
- Translation
- Enabling
- Synergy
- Accountability

If your execution lacks any of these, you face significant challenges. To increase your XQ, increase your capability in these areas.

Again, these six are essentially relational in nature. Poor relational skills and poor relationships will hinder while good relationships and EQ will help your communication, winning of commitment, translating plans into people's roles, removing barriers, bringing a whole greater than the parts and in retaining accountability.

The opposite of synergy is a silo mentality and competitiveness. To achieve your goals, all need to work to achieve the same ends. If one part of an organisation is going in a different direction, let alone in direct opposition, then their effectiveness will be greatly reduced.

Wise leaders place people according to their passions and talents. You can fail to put the right person in the right place,

²Covey, *The 8th Habit* (2004b, pp. 272ff.)

and reduce their effectiveness. Similarly, you can choose to engage a person who is apathetic or one who is passionate about the role. It is obvious who will be more valuable to the team.

For some people, the gap of execution can be very personal. For fear of failure or criticism, they do not actually do or complete things. That way they haven't failed, they just haven't finished. This can sometimes be seen in people with a high 'C' component in their DISC profile.

7.2 Wisdom

Roger Tan³ tells the story of a seeker of wisdom, Sophia:

A story was told of Sophia, a young woman, who heard that an old wise woman possessed the secret of wisdom. She found the old woman at a well. She asked her, "Dear wise woman, I hear you have the secret of wisdom. Will you share it with me?"

The old woman looked at Sophia and said, "Yes, you seem sincere. I will tell you. The secret of wisdom is good judgement."

"Good judgement, of course," the young woman echoed. As she turned to leave, Sophia realised the answer needed further clarification.

She then asked, "Wise woman, if I may ask, how can I obtain good judgement?"

³Tan (2008, p. 8–9)

“That’s a good question,” she replied. “One obtains good judgement through experience.”

“Experience, of course,” agreed the young seeker, and proceeded to leave.

But once again she stopped in her tracks and humbly walked back to her mentor.

“O wise woman,” said Sophia, “I feel foolish, but I have to ask. How does one obtain experience?”

The old woman paused, nodded her head and then proceeded, “Now you have reached the right question. How does one obtain experience? It’s through bad judgement!”

This story describes one path to wisdom. However, none of us will live long enough to become truly wise by this path. A shortcut on the path to wisdom comes from learning from the mistakes of others.

Other avenues include seeking wise counsel from others. Mentors and life coaches perform this role.

For those who believe in God, another avenue is that pursued by King Solomon—ask God for wisdom.

7.2.1 Three Chairs

We can use the image of three chairs to improve our wisdom, see Figure 7.4 on page 133. If we sit in the middle chair (the present), and look back we all have perfect hindsight. We look back at ourselves in the chair in the past and can learn from our successes and mistakes, and we can similarly learn from the past successes and mistakes of others. We can use this “sight”

to become more wise concerning how we conduct ourselves in the present.

However, we can have even better vision by having our eyes open to what's happening in the present. We can do this by being open and inquisitive. However, sometimes we have blind spots, things we find it difficult to see. Seeking the opinions, wisdom and help of others such as life coaches helps us to remove the blindfold so we can be wiser about the present. Here we are looking at ourselves sitting in the middle chair, having someone hold up a mirror so we can see things more clearly.

That is how many people live their life, with clear knowledge of the past and some knowledge of the present. But that's not as far as it goes. We can use foresight to live with more wisdom in the present.

We learn lessons from hindsight by looking back and seeing what has led us to be where we are now. To use the wisdom of foresight, imagine where you want to be in the future, say five or ten years time. Put yourself in that seat and look backward. Ask yourself, from the perspective of my now future self, how did I get here. It's like using our wisdom and imagination to look back from the future to the present just like we look back from the present to the past. We can then make a plan to get from the now to the future based on our looking back from the future.

This is a simple strategy which can help make plans and strategies for the future more concrete. Of course, this strategy works better the more concrete image you have of what you look like in that future seat. Once that is clear, you can start making the changes needed to move from the middle seat to the future seat.

7.2.2 Digging Wells

You can liken your life to the digging of a hole in the ground. Some people spend all their time and energy pursuing selfish goals like power, and material gain. The sort of hole they dig is like a grave. It is somewhere for themselves, once it's dug it doesn't do much for anyone else.

Other people are wiser, they dig holes which have lasting significance—they dig wells. Long after they have died, others continue to benefit from their efforts.

Many people dig their wells only deep enough to strike water. The problem with this approach is that once you've dipped into the well a few times, it dries up and takes time to fill again. Do you invest in your internal resources so that when you need to draw on them you have the reserves you need? I see many people who run themselves ragged simply because they feel guilty that they're not working hard enough. They don't see refreshment, re-creation, time spent recharging as productive time. Actually, it's not, the issue is, this time allows them to be more productive in the long run.

If your well is not deep, in the long run, you will achieve less and be less happy in the bargain.

We also use the image of a well to speak about living wisely. These are the three wells of wisdom:

1. Learning Well—developing your resources by growing your seven Qs.
2. Working Well—putting your energy where it counts

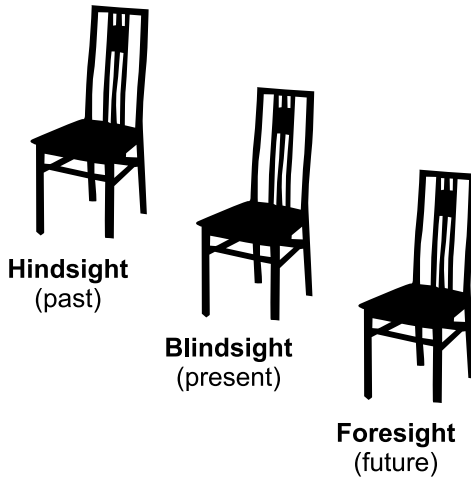


Figure 7.4: The Three Chairs

3. **Finishing Well**—ending well and doing what you need to to achieve your life’s mission

This book is mostly about the first well. Developing your resources, developing your wisdom in all areas of life so that you live a more fulfilled life personally and contribute to the wellness of others along the way. The key is to never stop learning. Be intentional. Seek opportunities to learn, even from your own mistakes.

The second well is not about your paid employment as much as putting energy where it counts. We all have a finite number of minutes in the day. How well do you manage your energy and activity. You cannot change the time allotted to you, so make good use of the time you have.

7 Wisdom and the Seven Intelligences

Do you have goals which focus your energy so you are moving in a direction? Are you managing your physical and emotional energy so that when it counts you have the internal resources? Spend it wisely. When opportunities arise, are you prepared and able to take advantage of them?

The third well is about how we finish things including how we aim to finish our life. When you leave somewhere are people happy to see you go? How have you dug in that place? Has your hole become a well or a grave?

Do you want to get to the last days of your life and be wrung with remorse and regret or be satisfied and content? Only by planning and acting now will you get to the end you wish. What are your goals in life? What legacy do you wish left behind? If you could write your own eulogy, what would you have people say about you when you die? You do write your own eulogy by the life you live, by the effect you have on those around you.

7.3 Summary

Wisdom is taking what we know and have learnt and applying in our lives. Learning from our own experiences but also seeking wisdom from others. We need to invest in our internal resources so that we build our capacity and effectiveness.

Where do you put your energies, what goals do you have and what legacy do you wish to leave?

Questions

What goals do you have? What legacy do you wish to leave?

Where do you put your energies?

What specific things can you do to build your capabilities in the seven Qs?

Feelings Faces

The images below can be useful for exercises in recognising emotions and when working with children. Please note that some we would not consider emotions, but states or actions (e.g. eavesdropping, hot, hungover).

Are You AWARE of How You Are Feeling Now?

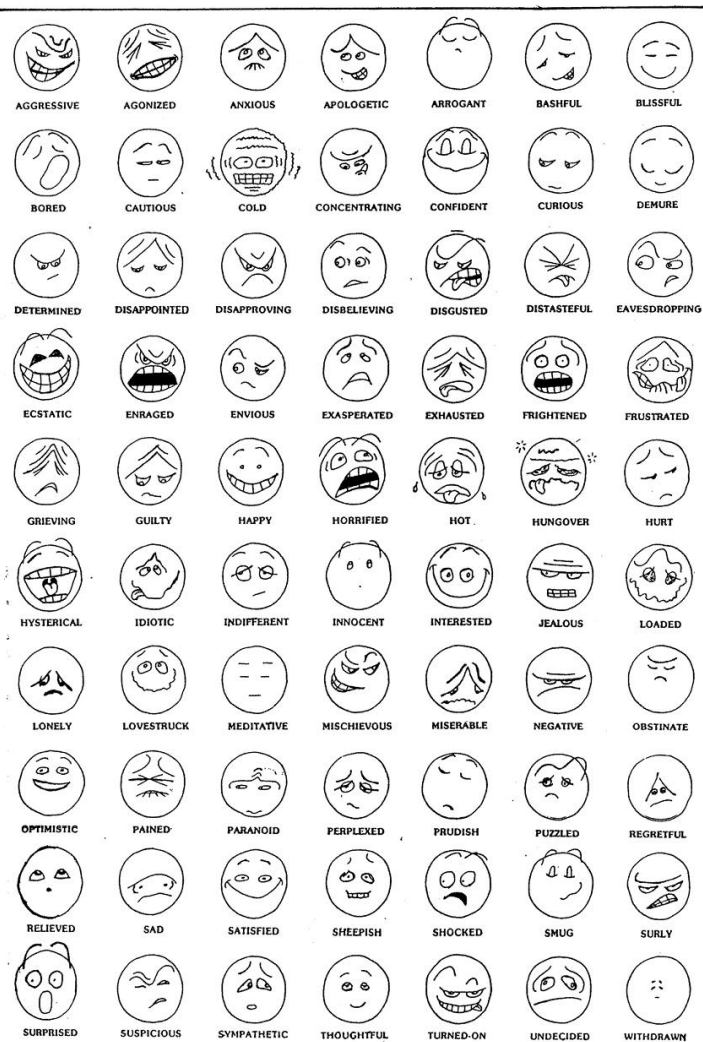


Figure 7.5: Feeling Faces

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