**CALIFORNIA COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL INSTITUTE**

**CERTIFIED LIFE SKILLS COACH TRAINING**

**By**

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**ACTION COACH**

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**INTRODUCTION**

This certification training is designed to help with in depth processing of one's life and others lives – including your past, present and future. It is about action + awareness = change!! You have choices and decisions that change your life and how you feel it, see it, and experience it. As a life skills coach you will be passing this on to others.

As a CLSC (Certified Life Skills Coach) you teach others that when they face challenges and make choices different from their learned attitude, behaviors and beliefs, they are on a journey to their destiny and passions. You help them to embrace this destiny and passion, face the challenges as they journey, and guide them to learn through the process of change.

Choosing a life skills coach is to “champion another” – it can make a difference in a client’s choices, the ability to explore all their options and possibilities, and assist in the support they need while going through the process of opening doors in loving, living, and being successful in life.

Dedicate yourself to the exploration and journey of helping others find the fulfillment in life. As a CLSC – you are invaluable to helping the PBC (Private Business Client) find their “wonderful life” – one day at a time.

You will find that in helping others, you will find yourself being challenged as well in discovering your life's skills - positive and/or negative. Thusly, we grow every day, every week, every month and every year into better people when we apply what we know and incorporate it daily into living life to its best and most positive "one day at a time."

**Difference between Psychotherapy and Life Skills Coaching**

Psychotherapy Coaching

Can work from an illness model. Diagnose Does not diagnose. Works directly with

client’s goals

Focus on internal issues and history. Seeks Focus on external issues and seeks

resolution thru modifying internal functioning solutions thru methods of functioning in

and unconscious, causal factors the external world (work practices,

resource management, interpersonal

relating) and future possibilities

Focuses on past, present and future Focus on present and future

Deals with emotional or behavioral issues, Works with already functional person

with past or current disruptive situations, and who wants to move forward to higher

with dysfunction to bring the client to normal function and achieve more fulfillments,

function excellence, while creating a happier life

Process oriented Result oriented

Delves into emotions and build skills for an Assumes client has emotional reactions

client to deal with upcoming emotions to life events, holds client capable of

expressing and handling their emotions

Provides space for client to gain insight, work Through a process of inquiry and

on suppressed emotions, and re-evaluate their personal discovery, coach and client

defenses. Recognize irrational beliefs, learn work together to build client’s awareness

skills to minimize symptoms and live healthier and responsibility while providing feed-

lives back, tools, support/structure to

accomplish more

The therapeutic relationship can be used as a Coach and client relationship is not a

model for the client to utilize in other determining factor, however, it is a

relationships partnership that helps clients achieve

relationship fulfillment (personal/work)

Can only be practiced in the state that the There are no geographic boundaries

therapist and client reside

**What is Life Skills Coaching?**

Life Skills coaching is a relationship by choice with a highly skilled professional who works with you as a personal partner. As a result of this relationship, you . . .

* . . . exceed your previous limitations continuously;
* . . . keep open to requests to do more than you would have done on your own;
* . . . set and reach better more worthwhile goals;
* . . . produce results more easily and quickly;
* . . . re-enforce and sharpen desired skills so that you are the best you can be.

"People get focused and produce faster and easier because they have a life skills coach."

**How is coaching different from other professions?**

* Consultants say: Here's the solution.   
  (Coaches assure you follow through.)
* Motivators say: Here's the carrot & whip.   
  (Coaches assure incentives change with you.)
* Trainers say: Here's how to do it.   
  (Coaches assure you master that knowledge.)
* [Therapist](http://www.coach.net/therapyt.htm) say: Here's why you're doing it.   
  (Coaches focus on what's right about you.)
* Mentors say: Let me show you the ropes.   
  (Coaches assist beyond corporate ladders.)
* Sport Coaches say: Here's how to beat others.   
  (Coaches assure you're in a win/win mode.)

**What is the basic philosophy of coaching?**

Everyone can get what's wanted a lot faster and easier teaming up with a life skills coach partner. 

**Who hires LSC's and why?** Those wanting more, wanting growth & wanting it easier. Life Skills coached clients get all three

**What happens when you hire a Life Skills Coach?**

* You take yourself more seriously and gain forward momentum in your activities.
* You take more effective and focused actions - immediately.
* You stop putting up with energy drains and get results with less effort.
* You set goals that are truly impacting on where you most want to grow.

**Does the CLSC work on personal goals or business/professional goals?**

Life Skills Coaches believe that personal and business matters definitely influence each other. Hence, coaches are trained to work professionally with all client aspects.

**Where does the life skills coach focus with an average client?**

Life Skills Coaches focus on supporting the client in getting maximum effectiveness. Clients really enjoy and truly appreciate coaches focusing in on what's going to make them their most successful and fulfilled.

**Why does life skills coaching work so well for the client?**

Overall effectiveness increases because the client is maximizing their feedback channels. They stay focused, stay in action and are held accountable.

**Why is life skills coaching becoming more popular?**

Life Skill Coaches have easier ways to accomplish things. They have tools, ideas & connections to help client's Big Ideas become Reality. 

**Is there some context in which life skills coaching can be placed for a client?**

Life Skills Coach's focuses on the whole person. They challenge the client & take the time to find out what winning in life means to them. The Life Skills Coach is a personal partner in helping one lives the life they want, personally & professionally. He/she is someone a client places trust in to help them hold them self-accountable for their life and to make sure they really do live up to their full potential.

**What about people who are already doing great in their lives. Why would they want a life skills coach?**

There are people who don't use a life skills coach as a resource. They are already doing what they most enjoy. They are not tolerating anything. Their life is effortless. They are already on their way to being financially independent within the next 15 years. They already have what they most want.

Life Skills Coaches have discovered that even these people want to expect more out of their lives. They usually want to have a resource available to help them venture into areas not looked at yet. This is where a life skills coach steps in. 

**Can I hire a life skills coach just for a short-term, special project?**

Absolutely. Some clients hire a life skills coach to help them accomplish specific goals or projects. Continuing to work with a CLSC is not unusual for these clients because new goals and projects come up because of their successes.

**How long is the usual starting commitment when working with a coach?**

A three to six month commitment is usual for life skill coaches to request from their new clients. Most certified life skills coaches let their clients stop immediately if coaching is not working for them right now.

**What does it cost to hire a life skills coach?**

*(WARNING: This is indicative of the coaching profession as a whole and not of our company pricing!)* Most clients discover that the coaching they receive pays for itself and that having a coach actually makes the client more money while opening up time and energy for other pursuits. To get the ball rolling, a client may expect to invest in a range of about $150 to $750 per month for three or four half-hour to full hour coaching sessions each month. This is for private pay clients.

For group clients, the fee is set by the agency and/or Certified Life Skills Coach! One can do sliding scale or set fee.

**SHOULD YOU BE A CERTIFIED LIFE SKILLS COACH?**

Coaching is not for everyone, but it may be for you. Life Coaching is a popular profession with business consultants, therapists, entrepreneurs, trainers, preachers and others, find the quality of work and clientele appealing enough to invest in this training.

Take the following quiz to see if Life Skills Coaching is the right profession for you.

Check the box which most applies. Then score yourself using the key at the end of the test.

Yes Umm No STATEMENT

( ) ( ) ( ) I truly enjoy people just as they are

( ) ( ) ( ) I am not afraid of anyone

( ) ( ) ( ) People have been seeking my advice for a long time

( ) ( ) ( ) I love to help and am willing to relearn how to do it right

( ) ( ) ( ) I don’t mind the ups and downs of being self-employed

( ) ( ) ( ) I am truly fine just the way I am, but I like to grow too

( ) ( ) ( ) As far as I am concerned, people do not need fixing

( ) ( ) ( ) I am on a rewarding spiritual or self-awareness path

( ) ( ) ( ) I have a good grasp on how life works effortlessly

( ) ( ) ( ) People consistently listen and respond to me

( ) ( ) ( ) I can easily charge a lot of money for my coaching

( ) ( ) ( ) I could “tell” people to work with me: I don’t mind selling

( ) ( ) ( ) I am well-connected with a strong network to get clients

( ) ( ) ( ) I’ll do whatever it takes to get a full practice in 1 year

( ) ( ) ( ) I have life experiences that I have learned from and can utilize to

to help others

x 3 x 1 x0

Total Yes points \_\_\_\_ Total Umm points \_\_\_\_

Scoring Key

Yes – 3 pts

Umm – 1 pt

No – 0 pt

Minimum score to seriously consider becoming a professional coach is 30 points.

**THINGS TO CONSIDER AND HAVE IN WRITING**

1. Life Skills Coaching fee’s
2. How you will meet or telephone appointment
3. Charges for changes/cancellations of appointments
4. Extra time charges
5. Initial coaching period up to graduated coaching length (1 hour up to ?)
6. Confidentiality statements
7. Personal info like vitae or resume or biography
8. Referral
9. Exit interviews
10. Refusing service
11. Coaching agreement
12. Ground Rules for sessions (on time, late charges, etc.)
13. Release of information forms if needed
14. Vacation notices (when you go on vacation they need to know the process for returning

to sessions upon your return)

1. Payment schedules and type of acceptance (in advance – min. 6 months up front)
2. Length of time you will work with them (minimum 6 months up to 1 year. Then renew with them for advanced coaching sessions)
3. Any other disclosures, requirements for coaching sessions and contract

**Approach Taken During Coaching**

During our 3, 6 or 12 month Life Skills Coaching sessions we shall cover many areas which shall include the following foundations . . .

* You and your coach shall create a [contract](http://www.coach.net/ezine_39.htm) as to what coaching support you want during your season with your coach.
* In return, your coach shall define the support your coach requires from you to support you during that time.
* You and your coach shall meet regularly over the phone/in person (in some cases in person) in "locker room" type discussions to brainstorm, strategize and evaluate results - Clarifying directions, responsibilities and challenges to be met along the way.
* You, your practices and your behavior shall be evaluated during the first month or so for benchmarking purposes.
* You and your life skills coach shall use that [benchmark](http://www.coach.net/ezine_47.htm) information as a stepping stone to determine . . .
  1. where you are now;
  2. what directions you want to go;
  3. what you want to accomplish; and
  4. how motivated you are to bring about change.
* If any training or skill development is required, recommendations will be made by your life skills coach as to the form that best suits you (tapes, lectures, discussions, books, seminars, workshops, groups, videos, etc.)
* Practice and scrimmages shall commence when necessary to assure you have the new techniques well-honed before you try them in environments that would cause you problems if not well learned.
* You and your coach shall ask the tough [questions](http://www.coach.net/20quest.htm) that are often not asked, for whatever reason.
* You and your coach shall work in partnership to focus in on the cause and effect of situations.
* You and your coach shall create a winning environment to maximize your coaching experience.
* You and your coach shall work team-wise to strengthen your foundations (ie: eliminating any resource [drainage](http://www.coach.net/ezine_42.htm) so you shall have maximum impact for your efforts.
* You and your life skills coach shall create customized strategies to attain your desired next level of success.
* You are expected to set goals that are principle-based, prioritizing your actions accordingly.
* You and your coach shall continuously create a winning structure that includes accountability systems to assure feedback on your performance.

As a result of your work with your life skills coach, you shall build reserves of energy, time, money, space, and people in your life you are meant to have.

LIFE SKILLS COACHING AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, hereby declare that I intend towards\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**and I intend to allow, (Life Skills Coach)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

to encourage me, challenge and support me. I recognize my CLSC as my partner in my development, and realize that while I may do a lot of work with my CLSC, the recognition and success I may gain is all deserved and awarded justly to me. I also understand that the results I achieve are linked to my candor, commitment, honesty and efforts.

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, fully understand that my Life Skills Coach is not a licensed practitioner of any sort and does not represent his/her services as such. I understand that my CLSC is a trained and certified Life Skills Coach only.

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, understand that my Life Skills Coach commits to keeping our work together confidential, subject to applicable federal and state laws in which they provide coaching services.

I understand that a commitment to work with my CLSC is a minimum of six months which will allow ample time to clearly define my goals and set up the appropriate structures and supports to allow me to successfully move toward them.

Our coaching sessions are weekly on (day)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at (time) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Unless otherwise arranged, I will be present and/or call at this time. We are mutually responsible for providing 24 hour notice for cancelling appointment. Appointments that are not rescheduled within 24 hours (with the exception of emergencies) will be considered a missed appointment and no credit will be issued.

Payment for services is due in advance on the first of the month or in full before the sessions. The monthly fee is $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ which covers \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ number of sessions as agreed upon. There are allowed 1 emergency call. After that the fee for the emergency call is $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ per call. Credit will NOT be given for missed sessions. Also, there is a $50.00 late fee for payments arriving later than the 5th of the month. (Customized per terms of proposal).

Either party may terminate this agreement by providing the other party a 30 day written notice and signed notice of their intent.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Client Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Coach Date

**ADDENDUM TO LIFE SKILLS COACHING AGREEMENT**

Please review and adjust as necessary. Sign where indicated and return to the coach. Putting this in writing strengthens one’s dedication.

SESSION DAY:

SESSION TIME:

DURATION:

START DATE:

HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE COACHED?

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT I NEED TO KNOW THAT WILL HELP ME COACH YOU BETTER?

IDENTIFY AREAS IN WHICH TO BE COACHED:

GROUND RULES:

1. CLIENT PAYS THE COACH AT THE SCHEDULED TIME OR IN ADVANCE
2. CLIENT PAYS COACHING FEES
3. CLIENT PAYS FOR LONG DISTANCE CHARGES IF APPLICABLE

OTHER TERMS:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

CLIENT DATE

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

COACH DATE

**CREATING TRUST AND SAFETY**

Establishing trust, safety and supportive environment produces ongoing mutual respect and services.

Ways to do this include:

Shows of genuine concern for client’s welfare and future

Continuously demonstrate/model personal integrity, honesty and sincerity

Establish clear agreements and keep promises

Demonstrate respect for client’s perceptions, learning style, and personal being

Provide ongoing support for and champion new behavior patterns and actions

Ask permission to coach client in sensitivity, moving into new area’s and out of comfort zone

Ability to be fully “present” and conscious

Create spontaneous communication by employing a style that is open, flexible and confident

Can “think” on your feet and “dance” in the moment as they say

Access your own tuition and trust your own inner “knowing” or “gut”

Is open to not knowing everything but finding out and informing client

Using humor effectively to create lightness and energy

Confident to shift perspectives and experiment with a new possibility for action taking

Demonstrate confidence in working with strong emotions and can self-manage one’s own personal emotions.

Do not become “enmeshed” by client’s emotions

No transference or counter transference

Create a plan for good self-care

Keep safety at all time

Bring out the best in others

Model good communication and emotions

Keep a level head at all times

Model best practices

Changing human behavior requires several different interactive human systems to alter:

Thoughts affect behavior and feelings

Behavior affects feelings and thoughts

Feelings affect thoughts and behaviors

**THERAPY USES:**

**Interpersonal Neurobiology**: Brain Integration and psychological well being is promoted by secure attachments.

**Object Relations Therapy** focuses on the nature of the attachments that people form and how needs are expressed and met in relationships.

**Trauma Theory** states: trauma occurs when both internal and external resources are inadequate to cope with an external threat compromising neurological processing and ability thrive in secure attachments.

**Psyhopharmacology**: medicating depression, etc. can mitigate aggressive behavior.

**THE 10 CATEGORIES OF 99 LIFE SKILLS COACHING SKILLS DETAILED**

1. Supporting the client
2. The Coaching process – how to deliver during the session
3. Sensing the client
4. Telling the client
5. Digging deeper with the client
6. Easing the client (don’t pressure)
7. Language – In other words awareness for change
8. Making requests to promote change
9. Stretching the comfort zone and boundaries for reaching goals
10. Design a plan to direct client to implement for success

Support

Deliver

Sense

Give

Dig

Safety

Direct

Promote

Strategize

Implement

Chart success

WHAT IS LIFE SKILLS COACHING?

A LIFE SKILLS COACH WILL:

HOW IS COACHING DIFFERENT FROM PSYCHOTHERAPY OR CONSULTING?

WHO WORKS WITH A LIFE SKILLS COACH?

**QUESTIONS**

Why ask questions? Questions play a crucial role in coaching for several reasons. Throughout different stages of the development journey, they may serve different functions, but overall, questions invite the client to find the answers themselves. Without questions, coaching would be somewhat like giving instruction without raising awareness, lecturing without self-reflection, and it would be tough to spark the same accountability that drives results.

Asking questions and listening carefully to the responses allows a coaching conversation to flow properly in the right direction – whether that’s toward setting goals or planning specific actions.

They also allow you as a professional to stimulate some self-reflection in your client, giving them more in-depth insight into their values (“ do I want this?”), their thought processes (“Why haven’t I tried X or Y before?”), and chart a path forward. For coaches, in particular, there are at least a few questions which have a place in every session.

**INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

These are questions with “power” that are typically used as a homework assignment between coaching sessions:

**Beginning Inquiry**:

What do I want?

What is it to have a full, rich life?

What am I tolerating?

Where am I not being realistic?

What is integrity?

How do I operate?

What is it to live in alignment with my values?

What is it to be present?

What is my prevalent mood?

When do I allow myself to not be my word?

What is the difference between a wish and a goal?

Am I being nice or am I being real?

What do I do to avoid feelings? (Alcohol/food/work, etc.)

Where is my attention? (on self, others, work, daydream, my vision, values, complaints, etc.)

**What works**:

What keeps me going?

What is working?

What frees me up?

What is it to be prosperous?

Where am I too hard on myself?

What is present when I’m at my best?

What makes me laugh?

Do I choose heavy or do I choose light?

Since I am going to do this anyway, do I choose to have it be neutral, hard, or fun?

What can I do to my physical environment to have it nurture me/relax me/empower me?

What is fulfilling, what feels good, and so what?

What is pleasure?

What is kindness?

What is it to go softly into life?

What is abundance?

How can I have this be playful and light?

How can I double my vitality?

What should I give myself permission to do today?

When will I take a break today and “nourish” myself?

What thrills me?

What is it to be awed?

What is to be generous with myself?

What is it to be considerate of self and others?

What is it to be gentle with myself?

What am I grateful for today?

**Provocative Questions:**

What do I regret/resent?

What am I unwilling to change?

Where might I be in denial?

What am I overlooking?

What is a big enough game?

What is the decision I have been avoiding?

Where do I stop short?

What is a big enough game?

What have I wanted to do and haven’t?

What keeps me from winning?

Where have I denied me/other?

Why bother?

What am I being right about?

What complaint/fear/bad habit/discomfort can I do something about today?

Is the world going to end if I don’t ….or if they …..?

What am I overlooking?

How do I sabotage myself?

What is it to transcend my sense of failure/sense of resignation/feelings of “I can’t”?

Where am I selling out on myself?

What am I willing/unwilling to do to help me improve?

What am I stepping over?

What is my reputation?

What do I expect of myself?

What is completion? Where am I incomplete?

Why am I taking this action?

**Completion Questions**:

What is it to be complete?

What’s next?

What territory have you taken?

How far have you come?

Who have you become?

What have you built?

What did it take to get here?

What have you completed?

What did it take to maintain?

What is momentum?

What will keep you on track?

What is it to be filled with loving kindness?

What is it to live life fully?

What is it to love deeply?

What values require your constant attention?

What are you willing and/or giving away?

What will you contribute to the world today?

Who did you have to be to reach this place?

How will you know to ask for support?

What acknowledgement would you like to give yourself or someone else?

**To be effective, a coach needs to understand their client’s envisioned future and their existing situation. They also need to understand what they hold most meaningful in their lives, their values, and get a good overview of how to help their client overcome their perceived obstacles.**

**Understand your client’s mindset: what makes them happy; what is it they want; what are they aware of what brings problems, etc.**

* 1. **What is the happiest part of your daily routine?**
  2. **What are some things you feel grateful for?**
  3. **In the past week/month/year, what were your three most positive moments?**

**Establish Direction: What does your client want to achieve?**

**Tap into their values**

**Encourage self-inquiry**

**BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH A LIFE SKILLS COACH**

1. Learning
2. Growing
3. Take better actions
4. Make better choices
5. Make better decisions
6. Reach for more……
7. Make and keep more money
8. Have more sustainable energy
9. Have a support system through growth/change
10. Can bounce things off another nonbiased person
11. Change systems by being guided through existing systems
12. Focus on what you really want
13. Get to know yourself better
14. Double your level of willingness
15. Do work you would not do otherwise
16. Expect your best
17. Make goals a reality
18. Develop insights
19. Help clients reach goals through motivation, empowerment, support and sustaining by

Certified Life Skills Coach

20. Not about the CLSC but about the client taking their realities and needs for change and

giving them the tools to reach those changes

**SECRETS OF A LIFE SKILLS COACH**

To be a life skills coach, one needs to:

1. Know yourself and your motivation to coach. Ask yourself why you are in this business
2. Clarify and clearly define the “basic philosophy and values” from which you operate
3. Continually assess and address your strengths and development areas
4. Identify your personal biases and get out of your own way
5. Build warm, mutually rewarding relationships with client, maintaining professionalism
6. Maintain confidentiality
7. Put your concerns for people – not profit – first
8. Begin with “unconditional positive regard” with client
9. Use appropriate self- disclosure and humor
10. Be a “coaching friend/mentor/fan” to client
11. Changing the client is not your goal
12. Look for and affirm client’s strength
13. Use data and feedback to expand potential growth areas
14. Provide a rationale for developing complimentary behaviors
15. Understand the client’s need(s), desires and balance these with their behaviors/actions
16. Follow the client’s lead – avoid “expertising” them
17. See behavior in the context of the bigger picture
18. Look at the “total” person
19. Identify their playing field
20. Be an “expert detective”
21. Translate developmental needs into actionable behaviors
22. Paint verbal pictures of alternate behaviors
23. Put in writing things they need to see visually
24. Think outside your box
25. Look at their “world” through their “filters”
26. Speak to the “unspoken” issues
27. Ask permission to “mirror” their words
28. Trust your instincts and gut
29. Challenge the status quo
30. Allow silence to speak louder than words
31. Know when you need to ask for help and seek it from a professional and experienced coach, psychologist, therapist, counselor
32. Do your homework
33. Develop your network
34. Don’t let your ego get in the way
35. Listen, Listen, listen and communicate appropriately
36. Summarize, paraphrase, and suggest “Have you looked at it this way?”
37. Turn frustration into production
38. Encourage
39. Accept
40. Explore
41. Ask questions – open ended
42. Set goals and ways to achieve them
43. Motivate, motivate, motivate

Areas a life skills coach will cover in coaching are physical, financial, emotional, career, relationships, spiritual, creativity, character, childhood and other issues.

Don’t forget to ask “What can you do in the next three months to change your ……….” and then put into action those things.

Change comes in three ways:

1. Now
2. Later
3. Now and later

Listening techniques:

1. I am here if you are here
2. Remind them they are extraordinary
3. Figure out ways to take away negative energy from their past
4. Remind them no one makes they upset – they upset themselves
5. Listen to their stories and ask them if they are open to being coached

Key is to help with:

1. Thwarted intentions
2. Unfilled expectations
3. Undelivered communication
4. Remember cultural issues if applicable
5. Meanings:
6. In the person and not in their words
7. What is not said as well as what is said
8. Make sure you know/hear the inferences, hunches and clarify them
9. Meanings will never match perfectly your meanings most likely

Question techniques:

1. Did I hear you say?
2. Get your thoughts and meaning out of the way and listen to the client
3. Listen to everything said and unsaid
4. I am here if you are here. Are you present right now?
5. Did you mean?
6. What do you think would have happened if you had been in control?
7. What do you think would have happened if…….
8. What can you do about……….?
9. Is there a possibility you can do……….?
10. What can you do about….. right now?
11. What happened or might happen?
12. What if it doesn’t work out the way you wish?
13. What if that doesn’t work?
14. What is your back up plan?
15. What do you make of it?
16. How does that work for you?
17. Is that working for you?
18. How do you feel about that?
19. What does it feel like?
20. Can you tell me more?
21. What do you want?
22. In what way?
23. How does that fit with your life/plans/values, etc.
24. May we explore this more?
25. Would you like to brainstorm with me?
26. What are other options?
27. Will you give me an example? For instance? Like what? Such as?
28. Fun – can you find something funny about this?
29. How can you have it be fun?
30. If you could teach others how to have fun and/or laugh at this – what would you say?
31. If you could do it over – what would you do differently?
32. How else can or could you handle this?
33. If you could do anything you wanted – what would you do?

History questions:

1. What caused it?
2. What led up to it?
3. What have you tried so far?
4. Can you remember how it happened?
5. Did this make sense to you?

Implementation questions:

1. What is your action plan?
2. Will you implement your plan?
3. When will you do it?
4. What will you have to do to get this accomplished?

Integration questions:

1. What will you take away from this?
2. How do you explain this to yourself?
3. What was the lesson?
4. How can you lock in the learning?
5. How would you pull this together?
6. How can you make all of this work together?

Perspective questions:

1. When you are 100 years old – what will you want to say about your life?
2. What would you think about this 5 years from now?
3. How does this relate to your life purpose?
4. In the bigger picture of things how important is this?

Resource questions:

1. What resources do you need to help you decide
2. What do you know about it now?
3. How do you suppose you can find out more about it?
4. What have you tried before that worked under similar circumstances?

Starting the session questions:

1. What would you like to talk about?
2. What’s occurred since we last spoke?
3. Tell me about the latest update/success’s/weeks outcomes, etc.

Block questions:

1. What seems to be the main obstacle?
2. What is stopping you?
3. What is the fear?
4. What seems to be the trouble?
5. What concerns you the most about………

Action questions:

1. What action will you take?
2. What will you do? When?
3. Is this the time to take action?
4. Where do you go from here?
5. What are your next steps?

Summary questions:

1. What is your conclusion?
2. How is this working?
3. Does this make sense to you?
4. How are feeling about our session?
5. What do you think……
6. Did you feel like this was helpful to you?

YOUR FIRST LIFE SKILLS COACHING SESSION HELPFUL HINTS:

1. What are you expecting from Life Skills Coaching?
2. What do you need most from me today?
3. What do you need most from me during our life skills coaching?
4. What is the biggest challenge you face right now?
5. What is the biggest change you are willing to make today?
6. What are the first three things you are going to do immediately after our session today?
7. How long will you be coaching with me?
8. What is one of the things I should know about you today?
9. What is the most fearful part of working with a life skills coach?
10. And so on

**Create awareness**. Assess, inquire, identify and help them discover for themselves the new thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, emotions, moods, etc. that strengthens their ability to take action and achieve what is important to them.

Design action plan to have client work on. It can be a flexible plan or a concrete plan. Challenge and confront them to stretch them, follow through and “do” or take “action” to achieve. Keep them on track through support, guidance, encouragement, motivation, consequential thinking. Celebrate their success and growth.

**Change talk is heard in five categories**,

Desire, Ability, Reason, Need, and Commitment, or DARN-C. Learning to listen for the subtleties of meaning in your client’s conversation in these five categories is very important in Motivational interviewing. Using these questions can help to elicit change talk:

* Desire: Why would you want to make this change?
* Ability: How would you do it if you decided?
* Reason: What are the three best reasons?
* Need: How important is it? and why?
* Commitment: What do you think you’ll do?

Here are some examples of how conversations might go:

Desire

**CLSC:** If you were going to change your negative attitude to positive attitude, why would you do it?

**Client:** Well, my wife has been nagging me, and I’m beginning to think she’s right. I’ve got to do something or my wife told me she won’t take it anymore.

**CLSC:** So, you’re thinking your wife might be right about your negative attitude being too much for her to take anymore?

**Ability**

**CLSC:** I know you’re not ready to begin to change your negative attitude, but if you were, what are some things you would do?

**Client:** It would be very hard for me, because I am who I am. I’d have to start by doing affirmations every day.

**CLSC:** While it would be hard for you to remember to do your affirmations, it seems like just remembering to say them every time you go in and out of a doorway would be a good place to start.

**Reason**

**CLSC:** Can you give me three good reasons why you might consider changing your negative thinking?

**Client:** Oh, if you talked to my wife she’d tell you at least three! She’s been nagging again. She says I’m so negative and nothing positive comes out of my mouth and I having nothing nice to say about anything or anyone. I guess she’s right about those things.

**CLSC:** It seems that things might be more peaceful in your marriage if you were less negative.

**Need**

**CLSC:** How important would you say changing your negative attitude is right now?

**Client:** Not very.

**CLSC:** Why do you say that?

**Client:** I have so many other worries about my life.

**CLSC:** It seems to you that your negative attitude is not the most important thing right now. What would have to happen to make it more important?

**Client:** I think if I had another fight with my wife or her divorcing me, well that might get my attention.

**Commitment**

**CLSC:** What do you think you’ll do about changing your negative attitude? What ideas do you have for yourself?

**Client:** I’m not sure. I could try what my best friend is doing, to go to one Cognitive Behavioral Counselor, just to see what it’s like.

In each of these conversations, the CLSC responded with reflective statements, which summarize the change talk statements the client made. It is important to understand that the LIFE SKILLS COACH would acknowledge the statements that are the “no change” side of the ambivalence, but reinforce the change talk.

Motivational Interviewing is a very powerful style of counseling for many health behavior changes. Once learned, the MI style of appreciating the limits of trying to persuade our clients to change their behavior makes our job much easier. We are not responsible for whether or not our clients change, but for helping them decided if they want to or can change, and if so, how to do so.

**BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN YOUR CLIENT**

Recognizing my qualities include knowing the following:

What are my skills/abilities:

Accomplishments:

Contributions:

Empathy Endorse “Be with” the client Listen

Free-fall Install Structure Keep energy going Don’t glaze over

Plug the holes Match the mood Be flexible Reduce anxiety

Acknowledgement Model Open minded Be neutral

Sometimes keep silent Have an opinion

Clarify Say it all, say it straight

Ask open ended questions Peel the layers of truth/lies

Get facts Laugh

Direct client Give the client language when necessary

**MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING**

Motivational Interviewing began by two collaborators, William R. Miller and Stephen Rollnick. It is a person centered, directive counseling method for addressing ambivalence about behavior change and for addressing common problems. It is designed to strengthen a person’s motivation for and commitment to a specific goal by exploring the person’s own reasons for change within the atmosphere of compassion and acceptance. This type of directive counseling has been around for a long time but not given the name “Motivational Interviewing” and under different counseling modalities and was usually called “Client Centered Counseling.”

Motivational Interviewing evolved from experiences in counseling with problem drinkers but is used in many different of concern with healthcare concerns. It recognizes the fact that the client’s approach their need for change at different levels and accepts that they need to be a part of the decision to change – in fact without that partnership in counseling – probably will have no desire to change; they may have never even thought about changing the behavior in question.

So MI is collaboration rather than a confrontation, evocation rather than education, autonomy rather than authority, and exploration rather than explanation. Effective processes for positive change focus on goals that are small, important to the client, specific, realistic, and oriented in the present and/or future.

**SPRIT OF MOTIVATION INTERVIEWING**

While there are variations in technique as there are clinical encounters, the spirit of the method, however, is more enduring and can be characterized in a few key points:

1. Motivation to change is elicited from the client, and is not imposed from outside forces
2. It is the client’s task, not the counselor’s, to articulate and resolve his/her ambivalence
3. Direct persuasion is not an effective method for resolving ambivalence
4. Counseling style usually quiet and elicits information from client
5. It is client centered and focused
6. The counselor is directive, in that they help client to examine and resolve ambivalence
7. Readiness to change is not a trait of the client, but fluctuates
8. The relationship is a “partnership” and “supportive” interaction between counselor and client
9. Style of counseling is non-judgmental, non-confrontational, and non-adversarial

The MI approach attempts to increase the client’s awareness of the potential problems caused, consequences experienced, and risks faced as a result of the behavior in question. Counselor’s help clients envision a better future and become motivational partners to help them achieve that better future. MI approach is to help a client think differently about their behavior and ultimately to consider what might be gained through change. It is critical toward change when they have not expressed a desire to do so.

**FOUR PRINCIPLES OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING**

MI has four key principles or aspects:

1. Express empathy: empathy involves seeing the world through the client’s eyes, thinking about things as the client thinks about them, feeling things as the client feels them, and sharing in the client’s experiences. Expression of empathy is critical to the MI approach. When clients feel that they are understood, they are more able to open up to their own experiences and share those experiences with others. In short, the counselor’s accurate understanding of the client’s experience facilitates change.
2. Develop discrepancy: this guides counselors to help clients appreciate the value of change by exploring the discrepancy between how client wants their lives to be versus how they currently are. Counselors work closely between their deeply held values and their day-to-day behavior. Counselors work to develop this situation through helping clients examine the discrepancies between their current behavior and future goals.
3. Roll with resistance/reflect discord: an evolving concept in MI has to do with resistance. It talks about “rolling with resistance” and reframing it in terms of discord. From this new perspective, discord is a disturbance in the relationship and is the responsibility of the counselor to address, frequently by the use of reflection. Discord often occurs when a client feels pushed in some way and often stems from the “righting reflex” on the part of the counselor. The righting reflex is the natural inclination most people have to want to make things better, which often is characterized by an assumption that we know what is right for the client and have the answers. Discord occurs when the client is lectured to, given unsolicited advice, asked to move toward change before indicating readiness/willingness, shamed and blamed, etc.
4. Support self-efficacy: this guides counselors to explicitly embrace client autonomy (even when clients choose to not change) and help clients move toward change successfully with confidence. As clients are held responsible for choosing and carrying out actions to change in the MI approach, counselors focus their efforts on helping the client stay motivated, and supporting clients’ sense of self-efficacy is one way to do that.

**LISTENING FOR CHANGE TALK**

Change talk is defined as statements by the client revealing consideration of, motivation for, or commitment to change. MI counselor’s listen for these expressions of importance, confidence, and readiness/commitment and seeks to guide the client to elaborate on these expressions of change talk as the pathway to change. Research shows that the more someone talks about change, the more likely they are to change. Different types of change talk can be described by the use of mnemonic DARN-CATS:

Desire (I want change)

Ability (I can change)

Reason (It’s important to change)

Need (I should change)

Commitment (I will make changes)

Activation (I am ready, prepared, willing to change)

Taking Steps (I am taking specific actions to change)

**MI INTERVIEWING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES**

The practice of counseling requires skillful use of certain techniques. In MI, it is the same for bringing to life the “MI Spirit” demonstrating the MI principles and guiding a client for change and commitment.

OARS

OARS is a brief way to remember the basic approach used in MI. These are the core strategies used to move the process forward by establishing an “alliance” in the counseling setting and eliciting discussion about change:

Open ended questions

Affirmations

Reflections

Summaries

Open-ended questions are those that are not easily answered with a “yes” or “no” response. They invite elaboration and thinking more deeply about an issue. Open ended questions create forward momentum used to help the client explore reasons for something and possibility for change.

Affirmations are statements that recognize client strengths. They help train the brain to do what is needed plus encourages clients to see themselves in a more positive light. To be effective, they must be congruent and genuine and done a minimum of 50 times a day to have the optimum outcomes in 27 days to 3 months. Affirmations can help a client feel that change is possible – they just need to get their brain on board.

Reflections or reflective listening is perhaps the most crucial skill in MI. It has two primary purposes: to bring to life the principle of “expressing empathy.” When the counselor utilizes careful listening and reflective responses, the client comes to feel that the counselor understands the issues from their perspective. Reflective listening is also a core intervention toward guiding the client toward change, supporting their goal. The counselor guides the client towards resolving ambivalence by a focus on the negative aspects of the status quo and the positives of making change.

Summaries are a special type of reflection where the counselor recaps all or part of a counseling session and or topic. Summaries communicate interest and understanding, and call attention to important elements of the discussion. Summaries can also highlight both sides of a client’s ambivalence about change and promote the development of discrepancy by strategically selecting what information should be included and what can be excluded or minimized

Here are some definitions for MI “talk”:

1. The righting reflex: the natural inclination in helping professionals to want to make a situation better for another person which leads them to tell their clients what to do.
2. Spirit of MI: working in partnership with a client as opposed to being the expert who tells people what to do.
3. Challenge of Change: change is not your personal experience but the clients. How does he/she feel about change and what has helped them in the past when they changed something. What are some of the obstacles and some of the benefits to change.
4. Importance: in making a change how important is it to the client. If you were in his/her shoes, do you think you would guide him/her in the exploration of their own perspective?
5. Confidence: focusing on confidence as the second area of attention, after clients have decided that making a change is important to them. Have confidence building skills, words, and exercises to clients to use.
6. Commitment: (Are you, will you and when) ask the client if they are committed to change. If the answer is yes, then ask them “will you change?” and if they say yes then respond with “when will you change? Can they begin the change process today? If they say yes, then follow up with each day you need to make the commitment to whatever the change is so it doesn’t feel so overwhelming to the client.
7. Values: a client’s personal values need to be considered when asking them to make a change. How do the client’s values effect what is needed and keep your values out of their process of change.
8. The language of change: sustain and change talk: listening for change talk and responding to it makes sense and reinforcing a client’s change talk is important. Listen for it, respond to it and watch for expressions of “desire” for the change.
9. Subtle and strategic: the right of each person to make their own decision, while also teaching and guiding clients in the direction of change.
10. DARN CATS: the ingredients for change: desire, ability, reasons, need, commitment, activation, and taking steps.
11. Engaging: emphasizing the relationship between client and counselor and letting the client know you are really interested in them and their success.
12. Focusing: establishing goals and an agenda/agreement for discussion to keep the client focused on their desire for healthier lives.
13. Asking permission: the emphasis of asking permission to provide information to a client before simply offering it.
14. Evoking before planning; fully engaging clients in conversations about importance, confidence, and commitment before guiding them into the planning phase.
15. Autonomy: helps the client to make a decision that is right for him/her.
16. Discord: similar to resistance but where the client is seeking understanding. Use reflection and empathy and keep the relationship as a partnership. If discord happens between you and the client it is the counselor’s responsibility to return to the partnership.
17. OARS: open question, affirmations, reflections and summaries.
18. Ruler exercise: measuring importance, confidence, and commitment when working with a client.
19. Reflection: simple reflections, complex reflections, double-sided reflections and summaries.
20. Ratio: we strive for more reflections than questions by a two to one ratio. Stay tuned in to your client so you can reflect on what they have said and ask open ended questions.
21. Complex reflections: imagining what other people might be experiencing as you assist them and coming up with ways/ideas to provide them for the process of change.
22. Exercises: techniques in which to challenge the client and to practice.
23. The model: Motivational Interviewing and the approach and aspects of it.
24. Personal reactions to counselors: being mindful of a client’s reactions to you and the alliance you want to build with them. Are you effective or are you not effective: knowing when to refer before it is too late.

DAILY HASSLES SCALE

Background:

This scale aims to assess the frequency and intensity/impact of 20 experiences that can be a “hassle” to parents causing friction. It is helpful in showing where to find major difficulties in raising children, thusly causing problems between family members.

Parents/caregivers complete the scale, which allows them to express what it feels like to be a parent with pressures felt by the caregiver. This will help the facilitator to see concise areas of pressures and to identify areas where assistance could be provided.

The facilitator will score the Scale in two different ways – frequency and intensity. The frequency of each type of happening provides an “objective” marker of how often it occurs. The intensity indicates the caregiver’s “subjective” appraisal of how much those events “hassle” or affect them.

The time frame for this can vary according to the facilitators focus. It is set up for the last six months but if there are reasons that a family may have been under more intense pressures in the last two months, then the facilitator can tell them to fill out the survey based on the last two months. However, it is intended to assess to see if there is progress in handling stressors over the last six months or if the parents/care giver is not dealing with the stressors effectively. Periods of less than one month should not be assessed with this tool.

Use

The facilitator should help the parent/care giver understand that the aim of filling the Scale out is to give an overall assessment of their stressors and to highlight areas for future discussion. It will help prioritize the parenting issues that need to be addressed.

Administration

The Scale should be given to the parent/care giver to fill out themselves and can be read to them if necessary. It takes about 15 –20 minutes total and is to be used as a basis for discussion. The facilitator can talk with the parent/care giver privately as well as use topics that are stressors for group discussion.

Scoring

The Scale can be used in two distinct ways: (a) the totals of one frequency and intensity scales can be obtained, or (b) scores for challenging behavior and parenting tasks that can be derived from the intensity scale.

To obtain frequency and intensity total scores:

a. A score of 3 or 4 for any one event indicates that it occurs with above average frequency.

b. On the intensity scale – a score of 4 or 5 for any one event indicates that it is at least some problem to the parent.

c. The challenging behavior total score is obtained by adding the intensity scale scores for items: 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12, 16. Range: 1-35.

d. The parenting tasks total score is obtained by adding the intensity scale scores for items: 1, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 17, and 20. Range 0-40.

There is no cut off for any of the scales but total scores above 50 on the frequency scale or above 70 on the intensity scale indicate potentially hassling events and that the parent/care giver is experiencing pressure over parenting.

Frequency scores over 3 or 4, or intensity 4 or 5, particularly those where the parent rates high intensity impact, should be discussed to clarify the need of the parent.

The total scores on the behavior and parenting tasks scales may be useful in indicating how the parent/caregiver sees the situation, whether there are difficulties in the behaviors of the children that are troublesome or other reasons.

NAME:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ DATE:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

SECTION II: THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, BEHAVIORS AND FANTASIES

In this section you are asked to think about your relationships and attitudes regarding them. Below is a list of statements. Please read each one carefully. For each statement use the scales below to rate the REQUENCY and POWER (amount of influence, control) that the thought, feeling, behavior or fantasy has in your attitudes about relationships. Unless the question specifies a particular length of time, you should be thinking in terms of “has this ever been a part of my thoughts and behaviors?

FREQUENCY POWER

0 = never 0 = no power

1 = one time 1 = very low power

2 = seldom 2 = low power

3 = periodically 3 = moderate power

4 = often 4 = high power

5 = very often 5 = very high power

FREQUENCY POWER

Example: I feel chemistry with someone so I think this is a

serious relationship \_4\_\_ \_3\_\_

1. Thinking you must have a relationship \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

2. Fantasize about what your relationship “should be” \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ ¬¬

3. Have thoughts with “if only he/she” in them \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

4. Feel like you walk on “egg shells” now and again \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

5. Over responsible in the relationship \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

6. Think that jealousy is love \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

7. Thinking that the next time will be different \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

8. Thinking that if you love enough your partner will change \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

9. Feeling you have to “give in” to be safe and “responsible” \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

10. Feel you have to “honor and obey” \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

11. Believe that you are the problem in your relationship \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

12. Denying how you really feel due to fear and/or repercussion \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

13. Like being part of “drama” \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

14. Rationalize why you stay in a relationship \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

15. Rationalize why your partner acts the way they do \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

16. Make excuses for your partners behaviors \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

17. Fantasize about how your life could be \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

18. Don’t know who you are anymore \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

19. Hide the reality of what your relationship really is like \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

20. Feel sad most of the time \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

21. Think deluded thoughts (e.g., you know how \_\_\_\_ are/is) \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_

22. Have sex even when you don’t feel like it \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

23. Feel like you have to do something because….. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

24. Feel depressed, lonely, hopeless or unworthy \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

25. Use sex to find love \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

26. Feel desperate or anxious \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

27. Stay and listen when being verbally assaulted/abused \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

28. Give in when arguing with your partner just to keep peace \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

29. Use patronizing language in conversations with partner \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

30. Call your partner names when arguing \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

31. Have affairs outside your relationship when you get angry \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

32. Believe you need to “win” arguments \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_

FREQUENCY POWER

0 = never 0 = no power

1 = one time 1 = very low power

2 = seldom 2 = low power

3 = periodically 3 = moderate power

4 = often 4 = high power

5 = very often 5 = very high power

33. Use intimidation tactics to get control \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

34. Keep secrets so no one will know outside the family \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

35. Force another to do something they don’t want to \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

36. Drink alcohol to feel better or to cover feelings \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

37. Use medication to feel better or cover feelings \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

38. Use drugs for any reasons \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

39. Receive physical harm or pain without reporting it \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

40. Seek to humiliate or degrade others for control \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

41. Avoid parties and events due to partners behaviors \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

42. Stay with your partner because of religious beliefs \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

43. Use computer for sexual arousal \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

44. Fall “in love” quickly and repeatedly \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

45. Behavior inappropriately and then say it will never happen again \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

46. Hit, spank, slap, bop, squeeze a partner \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

47. Send gifts hoping to be forgiven for something \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

48. Feel you are not good enough…. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

49. Make excuses for yourself or another \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

50. Thought about or attempted suicide \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

51. Had homicidal thoughts or feelings \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

52. Failed in efforts to control behaviors \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

53. Lose touch with reality from time to time \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

54. Have strong feelings of guilt and shame \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

55. Have a sense of loss of self and self esteem \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

56. Have a sense of loss of life goals \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

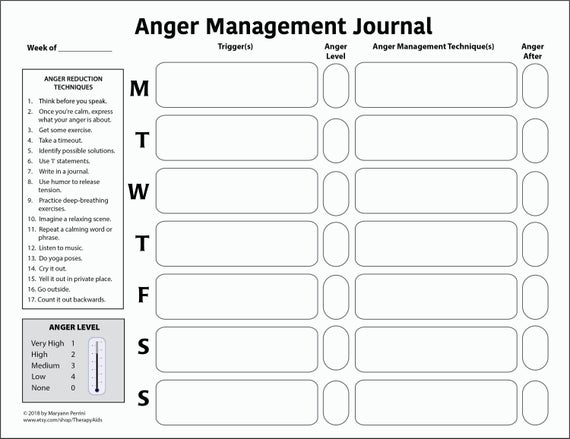
57. Act against your own values and beliefs \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

58. Have strong feelings of loneliness and isolation \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

59. Emotional exhaustion \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

60. Strong fears about your life and future \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

61. Have strong feelings of hopelessness and despair \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_



WEEKLY EATING LOG:

WEEKLY SUGAR/CAFFEINE LOG:

WEEKLY SLEEPING LOG:

**DISCOVER YOUR LIFE PURPOSE:**

**How do you find/discover your life purpose? Once you do find it, than what?**

**FIND OUT WHAT YOU WANT FROM LIFE – THEN DO THAT!!!**

**BE AUTHENTIC – IT IS THE ONLY WAY TO Go!**

I want to define what life purpose means. Besides Eckhart Tolle's description  “To awaken.” It is your motivation for living. It is what makes you get up in the morning. What you love to do and what you naturally do best.

**This is where YOUR journey starts to find a meaningful life purpose.**

When you are living your purpose it lights you up inside and everyone you encounter can feel that positive electric energy radiating from you.

Have you ever been around someone whose energy is so bright you are instantly attracted to that person? They are living in the light and when they are in the light, they know many things that others cannot sense including their life purpose.

We all have a life purpose and we have more than one purpose over our lifetime. Whether we are living it or not is another thing. So let’s talk about how to find your life purpose:

**Steps to help you - Find Your Life Purpose**

**1. Write Out What You Love to Do**

**What makes you smile and what gives you joy?**

(At this point you should get a piece of paper because you are going to start writing your list…you will see how this works once we go through the steps) Example: I love to write, I love to inspire people to grow, I love music, I love to sing, I love to read, I love Yoga, I love to meditate, I love to share with people, I love shopping…etc.

**2.  Write Down what Comes Naturally to You- Things You Do Easily**

* Communicating
* Motivating people
* Writing, creating new concepts
* Putting them into action
* Thinking outside of the box
* Dancing
* Sensing people's energy
* Successfully Starting New Businesses
* Marketing
* Promoting people
* Teaching people how to have a better life.

L**ooked at the various things that came easily to you** and the things that give you enjoyment. Inevitable that your life purpose will reveal itself.

**Once you come up with a couple things then you have to put that together with a profession.**Start to examine the numerous ways you would best assist people. Look at how you love to help people build and grow their business or how you like to make people laugh, create foods people enjoy, or how to help people……!!!!.

***Narrowing it down***

**3. Combine both of your lists and look for the similarities/correlations**

**New list:**

* Helping people
* Cooking
* Teaching
* Laughing
* Communicating
* Motivating people
* Thinking outside the box
* Writing
* Marketing
* Advertising
* Promotion

**4. Investigating Career Paths**

**Search the web under:**

* Cook
* Pscyhologist
* How to become a yoga instructor
* Helping people
* Motivating people
* Becoming a motivational speaker
* Becoming a therapist
* Teaching business techniques
* Marketing and promotion

**Next, change the search to people that were living these professions.**How much did they charge? What are they offering?

Thoroughly investigated their websites and speak to professionals that are already in business. This way you can really get a sense of what kind of experience you will have.

**5. Putting it all Together and Getting into Action**

**Now that you know what your purpose is, and have a rough idea of how you want to go about it, then you need to put it into action.**

Your first action step is to POW WOW with your group of friends or supportive people. Ask them what they see in you that you can use to find your life purpose.

Second action step was to investigate some of the things you and they see in you and professions that include those assets. In addition, once you do this thoroughly, not only through the web, talk to a few people who are doing what you want to do.

**Growing as an individual is the best part of life. Finding your Purpose is the icing on the best part of life cake!!**

**Personal Development Plan**

If you have things you have wanted to accomplish but have put on the back burner, because you are waiting for the right time or the right circumstances, here is a simple guide to get you started.

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step." Chinese Proverb

1) **Get a notebook or a journal to write** your Personal Development Plan in. Keeping a small pocket notebook helps to jot down ideas that come to you when you out on the road or traveling.

2) **Decide what it is you really want to accomplish** and start to accomplish it by making a goal.

1. **How are you going to get there?** What is your interest? What steps do you need to take to get there? Set a deadline.  
  
2. **Reality Check:** What skills, certifications, and education, do you need to obtain this goal? What books, videos, blogs, and websites can you read or view to help in obtaining the knowledge you need, to further your goal.

3) **Obtain a Mentor** or Someone in the field with the expertise you are seeking. What internships, networking, volunteering, or leadership organization can help you pursue your goals?  
  
4. **Resources:** Have a garage sale; Utilize EBAY or Craig’s List to help get the resources you need. Try an online job. There are many at work at home jobs from Dell, Apple, Neiman Marcus, Virtual Call Centers, Eddie Bauer, etc...

5. **Get A Buddy System**: Parent, sibling, friend, academic adviser at a college of your choice— someone to help hold you accountable for it.

6. **Use My 5 Step System**: List 5 things you can do each day to further your goal; such as people to contact; something to read or learn; and try to finish all five steps. Even if you don't the point is to keep moving forward. Draw your progress on a board of long term and short term goals.

Perseverance, Determination, and Commitment will get you everywhere.

**Why do the healing work? Forgiveness? Why?**

**Given how hard healing the past is, and how it won’t change events either way, why should we bother?**

**1. The pain of the past is lessened or eliminated. Everyone has painful memories, things that they would rather not think about. There may be whole periods of your life, or single instances that you would rather forget. Simple reminders are painful, often physically, and the [emotional](http://www.ripplesofimprovement.com/the-5-levels-of-emotional-space/) pain isn’t easy either. But, what if those memories didn’t bring that pain? What if instead, you had simply sadness? A little regret perhaps, but also a calm feeling that this part of the past will no longer haunt you? Not only is that feeling possible, but it is completely worth it.**

**2. You feel physically lighter and happier. Unless you have felt the liberating lightness of letting go of a piece of the past, you don’t know how awesome if feels. And, even if you have felt it, you may think it was a fluke. It is hard to describe the feeling; akin to the end of a tough job interview, but magnified. This feeling of lightness brings a sense of peace and happiness as well. While the immediate feeling may fade after a day or so, the sense of peace and happiness about that particular hurt will never fade. You will be able to bring it back whenever you want, especially when you need courage for the next bout with past hurts.**

**3. You are able to see yourself clearly and forgive yourself. When you lived the hurt in the past, you interpreted it in one way. Since that time, you have probably gone over and over the situation, trying to understand. With healing of that hurt, you don’t wonder anymore. You finally have clarity on the situation; you may see things from someone else’s point of view, as I did. Or, you may see clearly a false assumption about yourself that clouded your interpretation. It’s like you have a new knowledge of yourself that is completely true. Something you know that is who you really are and doesn’t need to be hidden. And, no matter what your role was, you realize you couldn’t help it; no matter what happened, you did the best you could with who you were at the time – even if that time was a matter of seconds.**

**How To Do It?**

**It’s easy to say that the past can be healed, but harder to believe when hurts runs deep. When you are ready to tackle the challenge, you will need to feel intense emotions, one that you have become a master at pushing away. While the process is fairly simple to explain, I know it’s far from easy to put into effect.**

**1. Realize that no one is forcing you to face your pain; rather it is a choice you are making. Any time you probe a particularly large piece of emotional baggage, or even a small piece, you will want to run. There is no shame in the wanting to run and if you don’t feel up to it, then don’t do it. Only you know how much you can take and when you can take it. It is totally up to you to decide when the time in right. Use that power as a confidence booster that you can face the past and come through it.**

**2. Give yourself whatever emotional safety you need. This may be time alone in your bedroom, or a walk in the woods. This may be with another person, either a trusted friend or a professional therapist. Dealing with past hurts is messy and scary. You must feel totally comfortable with your present surrounds in order to deal with the pain of the past. A glass of water and a box of tissues would probably come in handy as well. Releasing emotional baggage usually comes with lots of tears.**

**3. Give yourself permission to feel in order to start exploring the pain. We have become so good at pushing our feelings down and going numb that we need to know it’s OK to feel them. This is difficult as our conscious mind, the logical part that works to keep us safe, will do it’s best to maintain numbness. However, we know deep down that truly feeling our feelings is what we need to do. Take control and know that it is OK to let go, if only for a little while.**

**4. Allow yourself to feel your feelings about the past as completely as possible. It helps to think of a specific incident you want to address, but I often find that healing past hurts ends up going in a different direction that originally intended. It may be hard to actually feel the feelings, but once you feel the glimmer of one, the others won’t be that far behind. Do your best to express whatever comes up fully. You may be shocked at what you will realize about the past and how clear things will become.**

**5. If you get stuck in a feeling, deliberately stop probing the wound. If the pain is a particularly deep one, you may find yourself getting stuck and unable to get any clarity. You may feel there is no way out and that you were totally to blame for what happened; at least that’s what happens to me. When you reach this place there *is* *an out* – you *must* tell yourself something to the effect of, “This pain is overwhelming, I can’t face it anymore. I’ve done what I can for now, and I will put it aside until I am able to face it again.” No one said you have to keep feeling awful if you’re not making any headway. Remember, you chose to face this pain, you can just as easily choose to stop facing it. Also remember, going over and over the pain without release in the past made it worse. Honor yourself now and stop the downward spiral.**

**Doing this intense personal work is exhausting. However, it is also incredibly liberating. Every large piece of emotional baggage I’ve disposed of has stayed disposed of. Little by little, I chip away at the huge pile of luggage, getting closer and closer to complete self love. Some days I may deal with a small hurt, the equivalent of a messenger bag or briefcase. Other times I am able to heal a large hurt, the equivalent of a steamer truck – the kind that a body could be hidden in. Every shred of hurt that is healed is worth it.**

Forgiveness means giving up all hope for a better past. Happiness has less to do with what one feel’s but with how one see’s it. We need to fundamental “shift” in perception of what happiness is and how we receive it. There is a saying that goes like this: “There is a difference between wishing for a thing and being ready to receive it.  
No one is ready for a thing, until he believes he can acquire it.”  
Napoleon Hill.

When this “being ready to receive it” shift happens the world does not look so bad, feel so bad, and one is able to live in it as a “master woman” – re-creating happiness, optimism, and joy. This is called the “alignment” or “Baraka” (Aramaic) – where spiritual energy and grace actually shifts one’s and other’s emotional state. You can literally “turn another’s heart” or lift oneself or others out of psychological and emotional paralysis.

7 “STUCK/NEEDY” ENERGIES - that keep us trapped and enslave us into forgetting our true origin in love and freedom:

1. **Craving**: compulsive clinging to negative messages given to us by others
2. Ignorance: Believing accusations and lies about ourselves rather than defending our truth and true origin
3. **Judgment**: When “dualism” begins. Yes/No and the power of those two words. When judgment doesn’t equate to wisdom but rather criticisms and our power for wisdom is clouded by negatives. We need to have “other” answers or ways to look at something when judged – more than “yes” and “no”
4. **Enslavement**: The enslavement to negative messages and thus energies of the false self.
5. False peace: Beware of what you think is “peace” and “false flattery” given to you by others with a motivation to destroy and not enhance. If we let outer events influence our moods, we become their slaves. We lose our freedom. We let our happiness be determined by outer forces. On the other hand, we can free ourselves from outer influences.
6. **Anger**: This emotion was meant to be a “protector” of our true identity but was changed into a “aggressor” power so that it holds dominion or power over us to stay out of our happiness by holding onto justification, blaming, minimizing, denials, etc. This causes us to “forget” our origin of love, freedom and happiness and to focus on negatives.
7. **Darkness**: The deceivers of craving, ignorance, judgment, enslavement, false peace and anger cause us to live a “darkened” life and our “brilliance” of life is covered.

Inner transformation comes by us “shifting” our perceptions/attitudes so that we are always in our “true origin” of love and grace which give us freedom to be happy. We deserve it. We can’t allow ourselves to change and be trapped by the 7 STUCK/NEEDY Energies. We CHOOSE by our fundamental “shifts” in attitude and actions to EVERY DAY keep our “inner authority” and CLAIM our true origin = love and happiness. We reclaim it, rejoice in it and rejuvenate because of it. We create a wonderful “stillness” called happiness in the eternity of our lives on earth no matter what is going on around us.

**Spirituality plays an important role that is often overlooked in one's healing process.** Your "Spirituality" is an aspect of who you are. "Healing" is ridding the body of disease, either mental or physical, to bring about wellness, the results of which can be readily seen.

"You are body, mind, and spirit. Health necessarily involves all of these components and any program intended to improve health must address all of them." Dr. Weil further states, "Many people consider spirit to be in the province of religion, but I insist on making a clear distinction between spirituality and religion. Spirituality has to do with the nonphysical aspects of your being - the part of you that existed before and will exist after the disintegration of your body."

Spirituality has many facets, including awareness of the world that surrounds you; a sense of wonder, love, and gratitude; a practice of loving-kindness towards yourself and others; listening to your intuition and trusting your heart. **Spiritual health is evidenced by people demonstrating the ability to be authentic, face their fears, let go of the past, and develop insight, forgiveness, peace, compassion, and love.**

Spiritual health includes meditation, yoga, music and art therapy, breath work, laughter, and martial arts. Regardless of your personal definition of spirituality, you can explore these and other options in a vast realm of modalities and processes that exist for the purpose of developing your spirituality and adapting it to your everyday life; and thus to having a healthy body, mind, and spirit.

**The Feeling Part of Thinking - breaking it down to the mind-body-emotion link**

I want you to think about someone you love for a moment. Really think about them. You can think about an experience with them, or just about them. Notice how you FEEL when you THINK about them.

Now think about the fact that our minds are thinking and feeling constantly and we can see how powerfully our thoughts, images and feelings are interconnected.

Now this doesn't just mean that this creates our inner world, this also creates our outer world. Think about someone you love and notice how it changes your mood. Now that good mood will affect your day and if you choose to stay in a good mood, it will continue to affect your day.

Now think of someone you are really frustrated with. Notice how that frustration is connected to your thoughts, feelings and the images you get

.

Notice as well that you have a PHYSICAL representation that occurs when you are thinking something. That's the mind-body link we all talk about.

So what if you could affect this link? What if you could, in fact, change every aspect of it?

**STEPS TO HELP FIND INNER PEACE**

Inner peace is the most valuable thing that we can cultivate. Nobody can give us inner peace, at the same time it is only our own thoughts that can rob us of our inner peace. To experience inner peace we don’t have to retreat to a Himalayan cave; we can experience inner peace right now, exactly where we are. The most important criteria is to value the importance of inner peace. If we really value inner peace, we will work hard to make it a reality.

These are some suggestions (but not all) for bringing more peace into your mind.

**1. Choose carefully how and where we spend time.**

If you are addicted to the news and spend an hour reading newspapers every day or watching television news like CNN, and other news programs 24 hours a day, the mind will be agitated by the relentless negativity in the world. The news is full of negative events going on around the world and in our community and to have it added to the 78% of negative messages we already receive daily, we are on negative overload. We can try to detach from this negativity, but we will make our progress easier if we don’t spend several hours ruminating over the problems of the world. If you have a spare 15 minutes, don’t just automatically switch on the TV or surf the internet. Take the opportunity to be still, meditate, pray, relax, or at least do something positive. The problem is the mind feels insecure unless it has something to occupy it and relaxing or focusing on positives is unfamiliar to most, so we need to let our minds get use to this state so it can receive positives. When we really can attain a clear mind we discover it creates a genuine sense of happiness and inner peace. Balance is important in everything – including how we spend our time and where we spend our time.

**2. Control of Thoughts.**

It is our thoughts that determine our state of mind. If we constantly cherish and choose negative and destructive thoughts, inner peace will always remain allusive. At all costs, we need to avoid pursuing trains of negative thoughts. This requires practice – we cannot attain mastery of our thoughts over night. Affirmations are helpful tools and “listening” to your ruminating tapes being played over and over inside your head. Counter the negative messages you are telling yourself with positive messages. Always remember that we are able to decide which thoughts to follow and which to reject. Never feel you are a helpless victim to your thoughts.

**3. Simplify Your Life**

Modern life, places great demands on our time. We can feel that we never have enough time to fulfill all our tasks. However, we should seek to minimize these outer demands. Take time to simplify your life; there are many things that we can do without, quite often we add unnecessary responsibilities to our schedule. Do the most significant tasks, one at a time, and enjoy doing them. To experience inner peace, it is essential to avoid cluttering our life with unnecessary activities and worries.

**4. Spend time to cultivate inner peace.**

Every day we spend 8 hours a day to earn money, can we not find time to spend 15 minutes to cultivate inner peace? No matter how much money we earn, it cannot bring us inner peace, but, if we spend 15 minutes on meditation and relaxation techniques inner peace can become a possibility. Meditation does not just mean sitting still for 30 minutes; in meditation we seek to experience a state of consciousness which is flooded with inner peace. Prayer also is a meditation that can be used to cultivate inner peace. Asking a higher power or God to give you inner peace, then taking time to have a “relationship” with the higher power will automatically help cultivate inner peace. Sleeping 8 hours a night will also cultivate inner peace. If you are not rested – you are not giving yourself the “energy” and “rest” needed to cultivate your healthier self.

“You cannot buy peace; you must know how to manufacture it within, in the stillness of your daily practices in meditation.”

- Paramahansa Yogananda

**5. Avoid believing Flattery and Criticism**

If we depend on the opinions and praise of other people, we can never have inner peace. Criticism and flattery are two sides of the same coin. They are both the judgments of others. However, we should not allow ourselves to be affected by either. When we do, we feed the ego. We should learn to have confidence in ourselves. This does not mean we will love ourselves in an egotistical way, it means we value our real self and have belief in the good qualities that are part of everyone. There is something called “healthy ego” where one is “authentic” and “true” to self. That is part of having confidence in ourselves and trust ourselves to know what is good and what is bad for us. We are not defined by others but by our own values, judgments and ethics. Love of others and self is “healthy ego” and flattery and criticism are not “truth tellers.”

**6. Be Active selflessly**

Inner peace does not mean that we have to live a life of a hermit. Inner peace, can be felt amidst dynamic activity. But, this action should be done with selfless motives. When we serve others we forget our sense of self, and it is when we forget our limited self that we can have inner peace. In Japan, when someone is depressed they are asked to go out and work in a garden for several months. This is therapeutic in that it gets the depressed individual to focus on assisting plants to grow, raking a rock garden, and focusing outside of themselves which is selfless. The person soon realizes that they are no longer depressed because they have focused on positive acts and negative, depression, disappears.

**7. Avoid Criticising Others**

If we want inner peace, we should feel that our inner peace depends on the well being of others. If we are indifferent to the feelings of others, then it is impossible to have inner peace for ourselves. What we give out comes back. When you criticize another person, it takes negative energy, negative focus, and robs you of love. When you don’t waste your time, energy, and self on criticism, you find more time for peaceful things. If you offer a peaceful attitude to others this is what we will see return.

In today’s fast moving world, qualities such as gratitude seem to belong to another age – a simpler time when life moved along at an easier pace and there was time to appreciate everything. Yet within this apparently meek sounding quality there lies a tremendous source of power that can radically reshape the way you look at the world.

**8. What gratitude can do for us:**

* **Puts things in perspective:** Human beings have this self-defeating propensity to let the bad things in life fill our mental vision and leave no room for the good, a tendency reflected and perpetuated by television and newspapers. Often it takes just one bad thing to happen for us dwell on it and get depressed, no matter how many good things that are happening. In cultivating a daily practice of gratitude, we start to reverse that process and gain a true perspective on life.
* **Lifts us above the ebbs and tides of life:** The more you develop the quality of gratitude in your life, you will start feeling grateful even when bad things happen to you, because you will have developed the inner vision/peace to see that good things and bad happenings are nothing but experiences to shape you and make you stronger. Hence you will be able to have peace of mind no matter what the outer circumstances are.
* **Takes us out of our limited ego:** As with other practices of self-discovery, your awareness expands and you gradually feel you are part of something much more infinite than your limiting ego and finite mortal frame. Gratitude helps us turn away from self-centeredness and realize our place in the world.
* **Awakens a higher part of our being:** Gratitude is primarily a quality felt by the heart center that place in the middle of our chest where we can feel our soul, or the essence of our existence. Therefore, when we are consciously grateful, some inmost part of ourselves is awakened and we enter into the higher and nobler realms of our being.

**Techniques to cultivate the quality of gratitude:**

There are many different techniques to use; the important thing is that they be practiced every day, preferably at the same time each day so you can form a habit. Just after you get up in the morning is usually the best time – you aren’t likely to be disturbed, and the peace and serenity you get from the practice benefits you throughout your whole day.

* **Writing down things you are grateful for:** This serves as a useful beginning to the other techniques. Each day you can write down seven things that you are truly grateful for, and as you write try to feel that quality inside your heart. When you start writing, you realize how many things there are – from the big things such as the gift of life and friends down to tiny little incidents that happened yesterday such as someone giving you a smile or the chance to spend a few minutes sitting in a park.
* **Expanding gratitude inside your heart:** you can try silently chanting the word gratitude over and over again. Each time you repeat the word you can feel that a tiny flower of gratitude inside your heart growing and growing, expanding petal by petal.
* **Cultivating inner joy:** Joy carries with it the quality of expansion and awareness which gives rise to gratitude. Try breathing in and out and keeping your awareness on the river of breath entering and leaving your body. Feel that when you breathe in, pure inner joy in entering into your heart, and when you breathe out, worry tension and stress are leaving your system.

There are many things one can do to find inner peace. Your job is to find what works for you and make it a daily habit of your life. You are important and inner peace is not something that you can take in pill form, nor is it “given” to you as a gift. It is something you “cultivate” by taking time to do the techniques needed to make it “your gift” to you!!

**S.W.A.N. - SOMEONE WORTH ACCEPTING NOW**

**I Choose My Thoughts**

I harm or heal myself  
One thought at a time.  
I discover myself and others  
One thought at a time.  
I live my life  
One thought at a time.

My telephone rings,  
I choose a thought.  
I choose to choose from among the many positive thoughts.  
A connection with the outside world.  
A friend. A client. Information. Happy News.  
Appreciation. Technology. An answer.

Negative thoughts are just as plentiful,  
I have explored those thoughts, too.  
Negative thoughts pair up with negative feelings.  
Negative feelings do not feel good.  
And so in the middle of a cacophony of negative thoughts,  
I find the least negative thought,  
It is a lifeline out of the negativity.  
That one thought helps me find a slightly positive thought,  
And then a truly positive thought.  
One thought at a time.

I do not leap to joy in the midst of disaster,  
I move myself there,  
One thought at a time.  
From fear or despair,  
I move to joy through many thoughts,  
One thought at a time.  
From mild irritation,  
I move to joy in a few thoughts,  
One thought at a time.

Images of explosions invoke in me  
Feelings of horror and thoughts of injustice.  
Of all the possible sad thoughts, I choose  
The one that is the least sad.  
I breathe.  
From that less sad thought,  
I choose a slightly more positive thought.  
I have a right to choose a more negative thought,  
But that makes me more sad, so I move the other way,  
One thought at a time.

I am gentle with myself.  
When I find myself in the midst of unhappy thoughts,  
I move myself out of the unhappiness  
One thought at a time.  
I move myself to happiness  
One thought at a time.

I do this every day,  
Many times a day,  
One thought at a time.

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

Emotional Intelligence has to do with neuroscience study on emotions. Emotional intelligence is made up of fundamentals including self-awareness, social awareness, and the ability to manage relationships and competency in life.

Emotional intelligence determines our potential for learning the fundamentals of self-mastery and emotional competence shows how much of that potential we have mastered in ways that translate into capabilities on-the-job. Emotional competencies are learned abilities: having social awareness at managing relationships doesn’t guarantee that one has mastered the additional learning needed to handle someone adeptly or to resolve a conflict. Our emotional lives are a very important part of our intelligence and ability to have productive lives.

Our genetic heritage gives each of us a set of emotional “points” that determine our temperament as well as our childhood and adolescence emotional lessons/experiences making up our emotional habits and responses. Childhood and adolescence are critical windows of opportunity for setting down the essential emotional habits that will govern our lives. Automatic reactions are etched in our nervous system. For better or worse, our every personal encounter and our responses to it are shaped not just by our rational judgments or our personal history, but also by our distant ancestral past. This leaves us with sometimes tragic propensities.

Emotions are our deepest feelings, our passions and longings, essential guides that have power in human life and affairs. This power is extraordinary. In survival of one’s own life, it is paramount to nothing but potent love. Potent love – the urgency of saving a child’s life – overrides the impulse for personal survival.

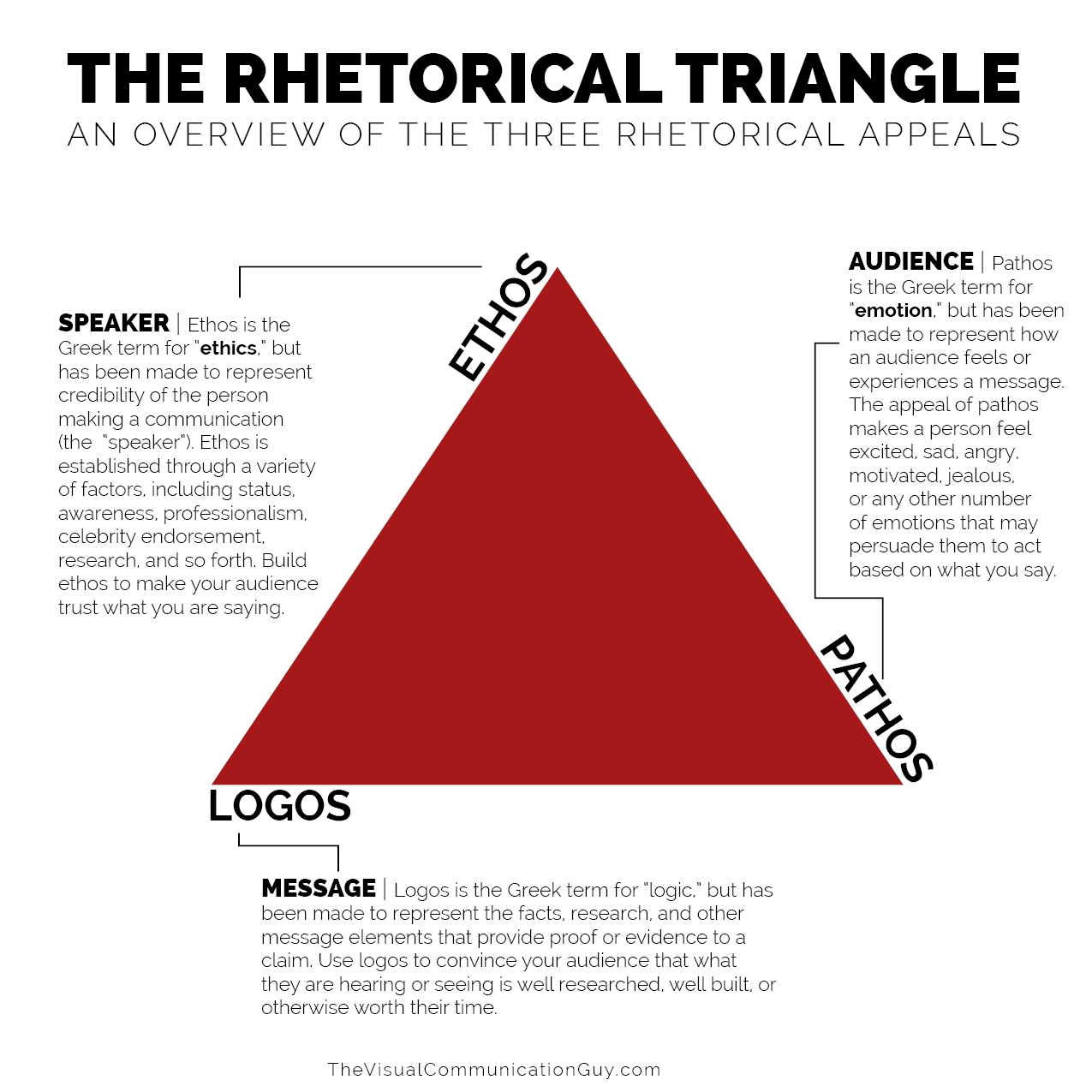
Our emotions guide us in facing painful loss, overriding frustrations to achieve a goal, bonding with another person, building a family. Each emotion offers a distinctive readiness to act and respond and is imprinted in our nerves as innate, automatic tendencies of the human heart. We know that when it comes to shaping our decisions and actions, feeling counts ever bit as much as thoughts. We now know that intelligence is nothing when the emotions are not there.

All emotions are impulses to act. The very root of the word “emotion” is “motere” – the Latin verb “to move” – plus the prefex “e” – to “move away” – suggesting that a tendency to act is implicit in every emotion (Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Coleman).

Reactions to Emotions:

1. Anger – blood flows to the hands, makes it easy to grasp a weapon or throw a punch; heart rate increases and a rush of hormones like adrenaline creates a strong energy. Anger for some people can decrease blood flow due to a decrease in heart rate; a sense of calm and detached empathy takes over and an action can be taken with more thought and control.
2. Fear – blood flows to the large skeletal muscles making it easier to flee/run and the face blanch as blood is pushed away from it. Circuits in the brain’s emotion centers trigger a flood of hormones that put the body in a general state of alertness which keeps it edgy and ready for action and ready for a response.
3. Happiness – increased activity in the brain center that inhibits negative feelings and fosters an increase in available energy which creates a quietness of worrisome thoughts. The body recovers more quickly from the biological arousal of upsetting emotions and general rest and enthusiasm for tasks at hand or goal reaching.
4. Love – tender feelings and sexual satisfaction entail parasympathetic arousal which is the opposite of “fight-or-flight” reactions shared by anger and fear. This is the “relaxation response” which generates a general state of calm and contentment which facilitates cooperation.
5. Surprise – the widening of the eyes, the lifting of the eyebrows, allows more light to the retina which allows more information about the event, making it easier to figure out exactly what is going on and to construct the best plan for action.
6. Disgust – looks like surprise and sends the same identical message for action planning.
7. Sadness – creates a drop in energy and enthusiasm for life’s activities, particularly diversions and pleasures; as it deepens and approaches depression it slows the body’s metabolism. This introspective withdrawal creates the opportunity to mourn a loss, grasps its consequences for one’s life and, as energy returns, plan new beginnings.

These biological responses are there for us to “act” are shaped by our life experiences and our culture.



**Four styles of adult attachment**

How you attach to other adults strongly corresponds with how you attached to others as a child. Four distinct styles of attachment have been identified — and perhaps recognizing yourself in one of them is the first step toward strengthening your relationships.

The four child/adult attachment styles are:

* Secure – autonomous;
* Avoidant – dismissing;
* Anxious – preoccupied; and
* Disorganized – unresolved.

Adults with these attachment styles differ in a number of significant ways:

* how they perceive and deal with closeness and emotional intimacy.
* ability to communicate their emotions and needs, and listen to and understand the emotions and needs of their partners.
* modes of responding to conflict.
* expectations about their partner and the relationship (internal working models).

There are three primary, underlying dimensions that characterize attachment styles and patterns. The first dimension is closeness, meaning the extent to which people feel comfortable being emotionally close and intimate with others. The second is dependence/avoidance, or the extent to which people feel comfortable depending on others and having partners depend on them. The third is anxiety, or the extent to which people worry their partners will abandon and reject them.

The outline below describes four adult attachment styles regarding avoidance, closeness and anxiety — and prototypical descriptions of each.

**Secure:** Low on avoidance, low on anxiety. Comfortable with intimacy; not worried about rejection or preoccupied with the relationship. “It is easy for me to get close to others, and I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don’t worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.”

**Avoidant:** High on avoidance, low on anxiety. Uncomfortable with closeness and primarily values independence and freedom; not worried about partner’s availability. “I am uncomfortable being close to others. I find it difficult to trust and depend on others and prefer that others do not depend on me. It is very important that I feel independent and self-sufficient. My partner wants me to be more intimate than I am comfortable being.”

**Anxious:** Low on avoidance, high on anxiety. Crave closeness and intimacy, very insecure about the relationship. “I want to be extremely emotionally close (merge) with others, but others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn’t love or value me and will abandon me. My inordinate need for closeness scares people away.

**Anxious and Avoidant:** High on avoidance, high on anxiety. Uncomfortable with intimacy, and worried about partner’s commitment and love. “I am uncomfortable getting close to others, and find it difficult to trust and depend on them. I worry I will be hurt if I get close to my partner.”

The outline below explains the four adult attachment styles; the behavioral, cognitive and social aspects of each style; and the way in which they differ regarding closeness, dependency, avoidance and anxiety. It is common for adults to have a combination of traits rather than fit into just one style.

**Autonomous (Secure):**

* Comfortable in a warm, loving and emotionally close relationship.
* Depends on partner and allows partner to depend on them; is available for partner in times of need.
* Accepts partner’s need for separateness without feeling rejected or threatened; can be close and also independent (“dependent–independent”).
* Trusting, empathic, tolerant of differences, and forgiving.
* Communicates emotions and needs honestly and openly; attuned to partner’s needs and responds appropriately; does not avoid conflict.
* Manages emotions well; not overly upset about relationship issues.
* Insight, resolution and forgiveness about past relationship issues and hurts.
* Sensitive, warm and caring parent; attuned to child’s cues and needs; children are securely attached.

**Dismissive (Avoidant)**

* Emotionally distant and rejecting in an intimate relationship; keeps partner at arm’s length; partner always wanting more closeness; ” “deactivates” attachment needs, feelings and behaviors.
* Equates intimacy with loss of independence; prefers autonomy to togetherness.
* Not able to depend on partner or allow partner to “lean on” them; independence is a priority.
* Communication is intellectual, not comfortable talking about emotions; avoids conflict, then explodes.
* Cool, controlled, stoic; compulsively self-sufficient; narrow emotional range; prefers to be alone.
* Good in a crisis; non-emotional, takes charge.
* Emotionally unavailable as parent; disengaged and detached; children are likely to have avoidant attachments.

**Preoccupied (Anxious)**

* Insecure in intimate relationships; constantly worried about rejection and abandonment; preoccupied with relationship; “hyperactivates” attachment needs and behavior.
* Needy; requires ongoing reassurance; want to “merge” with partner, which scares partner away.
* Ruminates about unresolved past issues from family-of-origin, which intrudes into present perceptions and relationships (fear, hurt, anger, rejection).
* Overly sensitive to partner’s actions and moods; takes partner’s behavior too personally.
* Highly emotional; can be argumentative, combative, angry and controlling; poor personal boundaries.
* Communication is not collaborative; unaware of own responsibility in relationship issues; blames others.
* Unpredictable and moody; connects through conflict, “stirs the pot.”
* Inconsistent attunement with own children, who are likely to be anxiously attached.

**Unresolved (Disorganized)**

* Unresolved mindset and emotions; frightened by memories of prior traumas; losses from the past have not been not mourned or resolved.
* Cannot tolerate emotional closeness in a relationship; argumentative, rages, unable to regulate emotions; abusive and dysfunctional relationships recreate past patterns.
* Intrusive and frightening traumatic memories and triggers; dissociates to avoid pain; severe depression, PTSD.
* Antisocial; lack of empathy and remorse; aggressive and punitive; narcissistic, no regard for rules; substance abuse and criminality.
* Likely to maltreat own children; scripts children into past unresolved attachments; triggered into
* Anger and fear by parent–child interaction; own children often develop disorganized attachment.

Attachment patterns are passed down from one generation to the next. Children learn how to connect from parents and caregivers, and they in turn teach the next generation. Your attachment history plays a crucial role in determining how you relate in adult romantic relationships, and how you relate to your children. However, it is not what happened to you as a child that matters most — it is how you deal with it. Many people go from victim to over comer.

**HOW TO DEAL WITH A DIFFICULT SITUATION**

At some point in your life you will find yourself involved in awkward moments or difficult situations. These moments can range from feeling embarrassment to divorce or dealing with the death of a loved one. Your difficult situation may be related to your finances, your marriage, your children or your [job](http://www.ehow.com/careers/). However, there are steps and actions you can take to handle any difficult situation that life may bring.

* Realize that your difficult situation is all in how you perceive it. What may seem difficult now will not seem difficult later. What may seem difficult to you may not be difficult to others.
* Realize you have a choice in how you handle your difficult situations. You can choose to be positive or you can choose to be negative. Try to find the find the positive in every situation that life may bring.
* Be resourceful. Never give up or give in when faced with a challenge. Find out as much information as you can about your situation whether that means talking to someone who has been through it or looking it up in the yellow pages or on the internet to find resources to help you get through the situation.
* Deal with your emotions. In any and every situation that you encounter you will have emotional responses. Sometimes you may feel hurt, sad, disappointment, anger, frustration, shame or loneliness. You need to let yourself feel the emotions. Cry when you need to cry. Punch a pillow, yell, scream, roll around on the floor and have a temper tantrum. Let the emotions pass through you like a current and move on.
* Don't let the situation change you as person unless the change is positive. We all will find that difficult situations help us to grow as individuals. Don't let the situation make you blame other people and harbor resentment or damage your self-esteem.
* Have a sense of humor and learn to laugh at your situation or mistakes no matter how bad they are. Laughter is like medicine and sometimes it can be contagious. Write a journal and record your feelings. Find a peaceful outlet such as a long walk, taking deep breaths, listening to your favorite music or watching a good movie. Use time out method or stop light method.
* Always keep a good support system. The support system can consist of friends or [family](http://www.ehow.com/relationships-and-family/) or simply a group of people that are going through the same difficult situation. Remember to surround yourself with love and love yourself no matter what situation occurs.

**TRIANGULATION**

Triangulation is most commonly used to express a situation in which one family member will not communicate directly with another family member, but will communicate with a third family member (or outside friend, acquaintance), forcing that third person/party to then be part of the triangle. The concept originated in the study of dysfunctional family systems, but can be described in other systems as well, including work.

Triangulation can also be used as a label for a form of “splitting” in which one person plays the third family member against one that he/she is upset about. This is playing the two people against each other, but usually the one person doing the splitting, will also engage in “character assassination” of the victim.

Show me someone who doesn’t have relationship problems and I’ll show you someone who doesn’t have a relationships. Problems are a natural part of relationships because people are involved, and people…aren’t perfect. When we encounter a problem, how do we decide where it came from, so we can resolve it? That is what relationship triangulation is all about!

**Where did the relationship problem start?**

Many of us go through life just like children, saying, “He started it!” Think back through all your recent arguments. Were there any in which you felt you were wrong? That’s the nature of argument, isn’t it? We’re right and they’re wrong! Problem is, that’s what they think, too. So, a mature person will admit the possibility of being wrong. Oh no! I don’t mean you’re wrong..maybe you were right but didn’t express your rightness right! So, now where do we stand? Despite the fact it always feels like the other person is at fault, you could be the source of the problem or they could. How do you figure out which? That’s where triangulation comes in!

**Triangulation targets relationship problems**:

We learned about triangulation during Gulf War I, where “smart weapons” were guided using three points (triangle corners) to bring the payload to the precise target. The three points were the target, the shooter, and a third point away from the target and shooter. The weapon uses this triangle to adjust its flight and hit the target. Now, don’t get ahead of me, this doesn’t mean you can solve problems with your spouse by bombing them.

Relationship triangulation can target the source of the problem using three points: yourself, the one with whom you have a problem, and a third person. Thought the problem never feels like you’re the cause, using triangulation and honesty, you can easily rule yourself in or out. If you find yourself having the same kind of problem with more than one person, then you can triangulate back to yourself as a cause. This doesn’t mean that they aren’t wrong, just that a significant part of the relationship problem rests with you. Now you have a way, other than people pointing fingers, to figure out if you’re aggravating the problem, but here’s the big part…you also know objectively when you’re not. Just think back over previous relationship problems with others and look for similarities. If you find them, this is invaluable in helping you fix the things that need fixing in you, in order to prevent future problems. And, after all, you’re the only one you can fix.

**Advice if you are part of the problem**:

Once you’ve identified two or more people you have the same problem with, triangulation is a powerful tool to determine just what causes you to react to these people that way. That’s because you have more than one incident to look at. What is it they did or said that triggered your negative emotions? What memories come up from your past when those emotions are triggered? As you think about these things, you may just hit on the one event that is causing the emotional problem every time someone behaves similarly. For example, because I was abused as a child, I get very angry every time someone seems to pressure or manipulate me. Knowing this, I can often head off my anger if someone I love just wants something strongly.

**Advice if you are not part of the problem**:

Triangulation is very powerful in determining you’re not part of the problem, too, saving you the wasted effort of trying to fix something in yourself that’s broken in someone else. This is very liberating! Those who are just passing through your life can be dismissed as having a bad day. For those who are important to you, knowing the problem originates with them keeps you from being defensive and provides valuable insight into accommodating their needs and helping them to find peace.

So many times, when we’re faced with a relationship problem, we’re left with just being angry and staying away until we cool off. Now, the problem becomes a valuable took in self-improvement, problem solution and problem prevention. Whether triangulation reveals the cause is with you or another, the above advice gives you real options other than relationship separation or sweeping things under the rug.

**What Is Imposter Syndrome?**

Impostor syndrome (IS) refers to an internal experience of believing that you are not as competent as others perceive you to be. While this definition is usually narrowly applied to intelligence and achievement, it has links to perfectionism and the social context.

To put it simply, imposter syndrome is the experience of feeling like a phony—you feel as though at any moment you are going to be found out as a fraud—like you don't belong where you are, and you only got there through dumb luck. It can affect anyone no matter their social status, work background, skill level, or degree of expertise.

The term that was first used by psychologists Suzanna Imes and Pauline Rose Clance in the 1970s.﻿ When the concept of IS was introduced, it was originally thought to apply mostly to high-achieving women. Since then, it has been recognized as more widely experienced.

Characteristics

Some of the common signs of imposter syndrome include:

* Self-doubt
* An inability to realistically assess your competence and skills
* Attributing your success to external factors
* Berating your performance
* Fear that you won't live up to expectations
* Overachieving
* Sabotaging your own success
* Self-doubt
* Setting very challenging goals and feeling disappointed when you fall short2﻿

While for some people, impostor syndrome can fuel [feelings of motivation](https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-motivation-2795378) to achieve, this usually comes at a cost in the form of constant anxiety. You might over-prepare or work much harder than necessary to "make sure" that nobody finds out you are a fraud.

This sets up a vicious cycle, in which you think that the only reason you survived that class presentation was that you stayed up all night rehearsing. Or, you think the only reason you got through that party or family gathering was that you memorized details about all the guests so that you would always have ideas for small talk.

**The problem with impostor syndrome is that the experience of doing well at something does nothing to change your beliefs**. Even though you might sail through a performance or have lunch with coworkers, the thought still nags in your head, "What gives me the right to be here?" The more you accomplish, the more you just feel like a fraud. It's as though you can't *internalize* your experiences of success.

This makes sense in terms of social anxiety if you received early feedback that you were not good at social or performance situations. Your core beliefs about yourself are so strong, that they don't change, even when there is [evidence to the contrary](https://www.verywellmind.com/cognitive-distortions-and-stress-3144921).

The thought process is: If you do well, it must be the result of luck because a socially incompetent person just doesn't belong.

Eventually, these feelings worsen anxiety and may lead to [depression](https://www.verywellmind.com/depression-facts-you-should-know-1067617). People who experience impostor syndrome also tend not to talk about how they are feeling with anyone and struggle in silence, just as do those with [social anxiety disorder](https://www.verywellmind.com/social-anxiety-disorder-overview-4581773).

Identifying

While impostor syndrome is not a recognized disorder in the [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)](https://www.verywellmind.com/the-diagnostic-and-statistical-manual-dsm-2795758), it is not uncommon. It is estimated that 70% of people will experience at least one episode of this phenomenon in their lives.2﻿

If you think you might have imposter syndrome, ask yourself the following questions:

* Do you agonize over even the smallest mistakes or flaws in your work?
* Do you attribute your success to luck or outside factors?
* Are you very sensitive to even constructive criticism?
* Do you feel like you will inevitably be found out as a phony?
* Do you downplay your own expertise, even in areas where you are genuinely more skilled than others?

If you often find yourself feeling like you are a fraud or an imposter, it may be helpful to let your life skills coach know. The negative thinking, self-doubt, and self-sabotage that often characterize imposter syndrome can have an effect on many areas of your life.

Causes

We know that certain factors can contribute to the more general experience of impostor syndrome. For example, you might have come from a family that highly valued achievement or had parents who flipped back and forth between offering praise and being critical.

We also know that entering a new role can trigger impostor syndrome. For example, starting college or university might leave you feeling as though you don't belong and are not capable.

Impostor Syndrome and Social Anxiety

Impostor syndrome and social anxiety may overlap. A person with social anxiety disorder (SAD) may feel as though they don't belong in social or performance situations.

You might be in a conversation with someone and feel as though they are going to discover your social incompetence. You might be delivering a presentation and feel as though you just need to get through it before anyone realizes you really don't belong there.

While the [symptoms of social anxiety](https://www.verywellmind.com/social-anxiety-disorder-symptoms-and-diagnosis-4157219) can fuel feelings of imposter syndrome, this does not mean that everyone with imposter syndrome has social anxiety or vice versa. People without social anxiety can also feel a lack of confidence and competence. Imposter syndrome often causes normally non-anxious people to experience a sense of anxiety when they are in situations where they feel inadequate.

Types

Imposter syndrome can appear in a number of different ways. A few different types of imposter syndrome that have been identified are:3﻿

* **The perfectionist**: [Perfectionists](https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-perfectionism-2510538) are never satisfied and always feel that their work could be better. Rather than focus on their strengths, they tend to fixate on any flaws or mistakes. This often leads to a great deal of self-pressure and high amounts of anxiety.
* **The superhero**:Because these individuals feel inadequate, they feel compelled to push themselves to work as hard as possible.
* **The expert**: These individuals are always trying to learn more and are never satisfied with their level of understanding. Even though they are often highly skilled, they underrate their own expertise.
* **The natural genius**: These individuals set excessively lofty goals for themselves, and then feel crushed when they don't succeed on their first try.
* **The soloist**: These people tend to be very individualistic and prefer to work alone. Self-worth often stems from their productivity, so they often reject offers of assistance. They tend to see asking for help as a sign of weakness or incompetence.

Coping

To get past impostor syndrome, you need to start asking yourself some hard questions. They might include things such as the following:

* "What core beliefs do I hold about myself?"
* "Do I believe I am worthy of love as I am?"
* "Must I be perfect for others to approve of me?"

Perfectionism plays a significant role in impostor syndrome. You might think that there is some perfect "script" for conversations and that you cannot say the wrong thing. You probably have trouble asking for help from others and may procrastinate due to your own high standards.

To move past these feelings, you need to become comfortable confronting some of those deeply ingrained beliefs you hold about yourself. This can be hard because you might not even realize that you hold them, but here are some techniques you can use:

* **Share your feelings.** Talk to other people about how you are feeling. These irrational beliefs tend to fester when they are hidden and not talked about.
* **Focus on others.** While this might feel counterintuitive, try to help others in the same situation as you. If you see someone who seems awkward or alone, ask that person a question to bring them into the group. As you practice your skills, you will build confidence in your own abilities.
* **Assess your abilities.** If you have long-held beliefs about your incompetence in social and performance situations, make a realistic assessment of your abilities. Write down your accomplishments and what you are good at, and compare that with your self-assessment.
* **Take baby steps.** Don't focus on doing things perfectly, but rather, do things reasonably well and reward yourself for taking action. For example, in a group conversation, offer an opinion or share a story about yourself.
* **Question your thoughts.**As you start to assess your abilities and take baby steps, question whether your thoughts are rational. Does it make sense that you are a fraud, given everything that you know?
* **Stop comparing.**Every time you compare yourself to others in a social situation, you will find some fault with yourself that fuels the feeling of not being good enough or not belonging. Instead, during conversations, focus on listening to what the other person is saying. Be genuinely interested in learning more.
* **Use social media moderately.** We know that the [overuse of social media](https://www.verywellmind.com/social-network-use-and-social-anxiety-disorder-4117143) may be related to feelings of inferiority. If you try to portray an image on social media that doesn't match who you really are or that is impossible to achieve, it will only make your feelings of being a fraud worse.
* **Stop fighting your feelings.** Don't fight the feelings of not belonging. Instead, try to lean into them and accept them. It's only when you acknowledge them that you can start to unravel those core beliefs that are holding you back.
* **Refuse to let it hold you back.**No matter how much you feel like you don't belong, don't let that stop you from [pursuing your goals](https://www.verywellmind.com/goal-setting-and-social-anxiety-disorder-3973936). Keep going and refuse to be stopped.

Words to remember:

Remember that if you are feeling like an impostor, it means you have some degree of success in your life that you are attributing to luck. Try instead to turn that feeling into one of gratitude. Look at what you have accomplished in your life and be grateful.

**RESILIENCE**

8 most important resilience behaviors are:

1.*Know that exacting revenge won’t bring peace.*

In the grips of a catastrophe, many are shocked, stunned and unable to function.  Soon the shock spirals into rage, fury and blame.  As individuals and as communities, we want the killers to be brought to justice; we demand blood for blood.  The problem is, even when the bad guys are brought to justice, peace doesn’t come.  Peace is an inside job; it is not tethered to outside circumstances.

2. *Understand that sometimes your thoughts are not your friends.*

When difficulty strikes, we run the *“If only…”* and *“What if?”* scenarios in our minds until we’re ragged.  It is imperative to allow yourself to “outflow” by simply speaking with another unreservedly and letting go of everything that’s in your mind.

3. *Control what you can.*

We can’t control what happens to us.  We can control how we respond.  It’s always a good idea to do what you know works—eat right, work out, sleep an ample amount, etc.—but it’s essential to do those things when you’re in the midst of turmoil.  Keeping to your daily routine will ensure that life seems as normal as it possibly can.

4. *Help others.*

Shifting your focus off of yourself and onto another is one of the few things that can provide a reprieve from the anguish of your own circumstances and thoughts, as well as giving yourself a much-needed perspective shift.  No matter how bad we have it, there is always someone else who has it worse. The act of helping people can also make a lasting difference for others, and the knowledge of that is soothing in a way nothing else quite can be.

5. *Seize responsibility.*

Get a toehold to stop the world from spinning out of control by finding at least one thing for which you can be responsible.  This process of seizing responsibility shifts the locus of control from being outside of yourself to being located with you, and it can make our life feel under your control again.

6. *Don’t become a survivor.*

Move out of victimhood and straight through the role of survivor without stopping. Understand that being a survivor and being a victim are opposite sides of the same coin; both are predicated upon dragging around the past. Do not condemn yourself to being a survivor; keep moving and put the difficulties of the past behind you.

7. *Understand that there’s no getting back to like it was before.*

Many people who are going through difficulty utter the words, “I just want to get everything back to like it was before.”  Problem is, that is an impossibility.  There is no way to un-ring a bell; what’s happened has happened and there is no way to rewind the past.  The sooner we can make peace with that reality, the sooner we’ll allow our own healing process to begin.

8. Finally, embrace wabi-sabi.

Wabi-sabi represents a powerful Japanese aesthetic centered on the acceptance of transience and imperfection.  Following this worldview and practice, we focus on finding beauty and peace within the challenges of life, and embracing the natural cycles of growth, decay, change, and uncertainty. Wabi-sabi further asserts that the magnificence and perfection of any object lie in its imperfections, so re-frame the way you see what is “wrong” with yourself and the difficulties you face.  When you can hold life’s so-called imperfections in that light, you’ll find that what makes you magnificent is everything you’ve previously believed is wrong with you.

When you have that amazing opportunity in life to meet an individual who has overcome great suffering as a young person, and continues to grow and find new ways to embrace, love and accept herself and others, you know this person has something very important to teach – about life, love, empathy and reaching your fullest potential on this planet.

**10 STEPS TO HAVING A MORE FULFILLED LIFE AND RELATIONSHIP!!!**

Recognition (of whatever)

Investigate ( describe)

Acknowledge (need for ……)

Acceptance (vulnerability to ……..)

Respond…….

Incorporate (measures of change…….)

Practice it (Fake it until you make it if necessary)………

Take time to listen to your inner self while practicing………(Mindfulness daily…….)

Restoration (Results/outcomes ……….)

**12 ROADBLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Discuss these roadblocks and how they create problems:

1. Ordering, directing, commanding

2. Warning, admonishing, threatening

3. Moralizing, preaching, imploring

4. Advising, giving suggestions or solutions

5. Persuading with logic, lecturing, arguing

6. Judging, criticizing, disagreeing, blaming

7. Praising, agreeing, evaluating positively, buttering up

8. Name calling, ridiculing, shaming

9. Interpreting, analyzing, diagnosing

10. Reassuring, sympathizing, consoling, supporting

11. Probing, questioning, interrogating

12. Distracting, diverting, kidding

**ANGER AND THE BRAIN**

Understanding how the brain and anger work together is important to laying the foundation for controlling anger. We can teach our brains how to respond to the triggers of our anger and our response to them.

The Cerebral Cortex is the “thinking” part of the brain where logic and judgment reside. It is the outer portion of the brain and it divides the lobes. It is also the “strategy” center of our brain.

The Limbic System is the “emotional” center of our brain. Located in the lower portion and is more primitive than the Cortex. When a person is in “anger” they are not using the “thinking” or Cortex part of their brain – but the Limbic Center.

The Amygdala lies within the Limbic System and stores emotional memories. It is also responsible for our “fright and flight” reactions. Data comes into and passes through the Amygdala where the decision is made to send the data it receives into the Limbic System or Cerebral Cortex. If the incoming data triggers enough of an emotional charge, the Amygdala can override the Cortex, which means the data will be sent to the Limbic System causing the person to react using the lower brain.

During the overriding event – the Amygdala goes into action without much regard for consequences since this area of the brain is not involved in judging, thinking or evaluating. When the Amygdala does this it floods the brain with hormones that cause a physical and emotional alarm. A “surge” of energy follows, preparing for fright or flight responses. The impact of this is an “emotional flush” that lasts for several minutes during which time a person is usually out of control and may say and do things that they will later regret. Further, an additional, longer lasting hormone is released – its impact can last several hours to several days.

Having a long lasting hormone in the body can explain why someone has an initial, powerful, angry reaction then seem to calm down, but then later flair up again disproportionally to the situation.

On average, **it can take 20 minutes for a person who has experienced an angry state** **of arousal to calm down** – to move functioning from the emotional area to the thinking area of the brain.

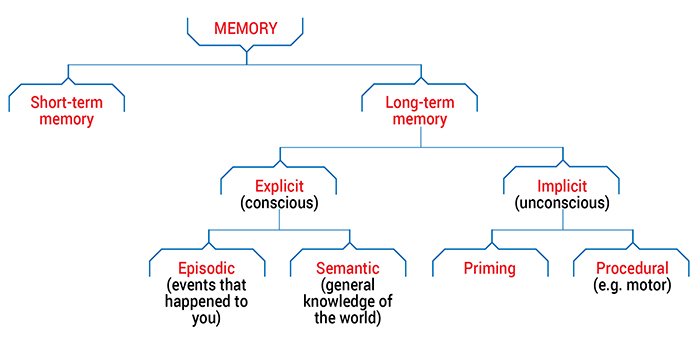
These facts are important to know in anger management:

1. Anger involves a trigger to the emotions “charging” us up to “lose it” (but this can be controlled)
2. It will take approximately 20 minutes before we can become more logical after this “charging” up
3. Triggers often result from core beliefs and values being challenged or violated
4. Anger exists on a continuum
5. Anger ranges from mild frustration to outright rage

The University of New York did research using MEG (Magneto Encephalo Graphic) scanners testing responses in the brain to facial expressions and sounds. Outcomes showed that the brain showed a “supra addictive response” to fearful sounds and facial expressions. It showed that the hemispherical laterization of neural responses to facial expressions develops by age of 6 months. (Natl. Institute of Physiological Sciences, 2010).

This is important in showing that babies learn from a very early age to respond to the sounds and facial expressions of anger in their parents and siblings. This supra addictive response can be the first step in creating anger addiction in some people.

**Here are the 7 types of memory.**

*Image credit: Queensland Brain Institute*

**1. Short-Term Memory**

Short-term memory only lasts 20 to 30 seconds. It stores information temporarily and then either dismisses it or transfers it to long-term memory.

It is also sometimes called working memory, although working memory is more specific to information that we receive, **use quickly, then discard**. For example, a phone number, a person’s name, or what you’re going to buy from the market are stored in your short-term working memory for just as long as it takes you to use it.

**2. Long-Term Memory**

Our long-term memories are a bit more complex than our short-term memories. Anything that happened **more than a few minutes ago** would be stored in long-term memory. Depending on how often we recall or use a certain piece of information, the strength of the memory varies.

Long-term memory is **divided into explicit and implicit** memories.

**3. Explicit Memory**

Explicit memories are a type of long-term memory which you remember after consciously thinking about it. For example, **the name of your childhood dog** or your best friend’s house phone number!

There are two types of explicit memory--**episodic and semantic**.

**4. Episodic Memory**

Episodic memories are **a type of explicit memory** that relate to our own personal lives. For example, a particularly exciting Christmas morning, the day you got married, or even what you had for dinner last night.

Studies have shown that autobiographical, or "episodic", memories aren’t necessarily accurate because **we reconstruct them over time** and they change and adapt to the new context in which we recall them.

Our ability to retain episodic memories depends on how emotionally powerful the experiences were.

For example, many people remember where they were and what they were doing when 9/11 happened.  Not only would this involve a very powerful emotional reaction, you would probably also have been very focused as it occurred.

**When our**[**brains are extremely focused**](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/5-best-practices-for-handling-outside-normal-range-alertmeter-scores)**, it becomes easier to process and store sensory input which in turn makes it easier to later recall the experience.**

**5. Semantic Memory**

Semantic memory accounts for our **general knowledge of the world**.

For example, the fact that the sky is blue, giraffes have long necks, and puppies are cute.

Unlike episodic memory, we are able to maintain the strength and accuracy of our semantic memory over time. As we age, it begins to decline slowly.

**6. Implicit Memory**

Implicit memory is the second major type of long-term memory. It comprises memories that you don’t have to consciously recall.

For example, **riding a bike** or speaking a language. Even though it may require a lot of conscious thought while learning, at some point it became implicit and you did it **automatically.**

In the 1990 movie Total Recall, Arnold Schwarzenegger dreamed of becoming a secret agent in Mars without consciously knowing that he actually was a secret agent in Mars before his memory was wiped and rewritten.

This **subconscious** attraction to espionage and other planets might have been a type of implicit memory for Arnold.

**7. Procedural Memory**

Procedural memory is a **type of implicit memory** allows us to **do certain tasks** **without thinking** about them.

Besides riding a bike, it also includes tying a shoe, brushing our teeth, or driving a car.

It is likely that procedural memory is stored in a different part of the brain than episodic memory because people who experience traumatic brain injuries often either forget autobiographical information or forget how to perform simple tasks like walking or feeding themselves.

Now that you know about each of the types of memory, here are some ways to keep each one in tip-top shape.

**Methods to Sharpen Your Memory**

**1. Testing**

Several studies have found that being tested for information helps create stronger memories.

For example, students who were repeatedly tested on a list of vocabulary words in a foreign language performed better on the final test than students who were given extra time to study.

This concept is known as test-enhanced learning and is based on the theory that **repeated retrieval of information has a greater impact on the memory than longer study periods**. This effect can be further enhanced by immediate feedback after each retrieval.

So, the next time you’re giving a presentation or teaching something, instead of lecturing your audience, ask them questions. Get their neurons to fire up and form new connections by making them continually retrieve the new information. Cement the new long-term memory by giving them **immediate feedback**.

You don’t need to be a child to enjoy feedback. Anyone can get a release of dopamine when they receive positive feedback.

**2. Sleep**

I know we haven't shut up about sleep recently; however, as sleep expert and neuroscientist Dr. Matthew Walker said:

**“Sleep is the greatest legal performance enhancing drug that most people are probably neglecting.”**

While we sleep, our brains process and store long-term memories.

During Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep, the brain replays memory sequences that we learned while awake, except 20 times faster. Through this process, memories are consolidated and stored for long-term use.

In addition to **strengthening our memories**, sleep also helps us **learn new information**.

Researchers found that students who were deprived of sleep after learning a new skill had a significantly weaker memory of that skill than students who received adequate sleep.

Not only will getting at least 8 hours a night help you learn and remember new information, it can also **lessen the risk of developing Alzheimer’s** as you age (according to Dr. Walker, see below).

**3. Sensory Input**

In addition to exercising your brain by frequently retrieving information, engaging all your senses with the experience also makes a big impact on how well you’ll remember it later on.

If you**involve all 5 senses** in the experience--if you can hear, see, smell, taste, and smell it--then you will be able to recall it better in the future.

Smells seem to be especially powerful in evoking strong, emotional memories. For me, the smell of petunias and jasmine flowers immediately transport me to my childhood summers while living in Turkey.

For some, the smell of fresh-baked cookies may carry them back into their grandma’s kitchen.

So, when improving memory, we must **try to engage each sense as powerfully as possible**. We remember experiences that smell amazing, look beautiful, taste delicious, or sound lovely.

We also remember horrible experiences--nearly freezing to death on a camping trip, getting food poisoning from eating something disgusting, or even seeing a really gruesome scary movie.

I accidentally saw Saw when I was young and will never be able to get the memory out of my head. If you don’t have the resources to make an experience powerfully pleasant, then you may remember it just as well by making it powerfully unpleasant.

**4. Drink some coffee.**

If you’re one of those people who need coffee in the morning before you do anything or talk to anyone, you’re probably a firm believer in the strong [cognitive boost](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/what-are-fatigue-countermeasures) it offers.

Caffeine is one of the most popular cognitive enhancers in the world, and besides preventing drowsiness, [**it can enhance cognitive functions**](https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/caffeine-healthy-diet-may-boost-memory-thinking-skills-alcohols-effect-uncertain-201406187219)**such as memory, motivation, or creativity.**(*Health.Harvard.edu)*

Overuse and misuse of caffeine and other cognitive enhancement drugs can be dangerous and disruptive of your natural sleep cycle.

So, have your cup or two of coffee in the morning but limit caffeine 4-5 hours before bedtime.

A [good night’s sleep](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/6-ways-sleeplessness-affects-your-day-a-glimpse-inside-your-fatigued-brain) will always be the safest and most effective cognitive enhancer.

**5. Minimize Stress**

Although we are more likely to remember a particularly stressful experience for a long time, **attempting to learn or form new memories *while*under stress is rarely successful**.

Stress alters the way our brains process information and how the memory is stored.

**6. Minimize Distractions**

It may be obvious, but few people actually make the commitment to reduce distractions while attempting to learn new information or create new memories.

Instead of getting up for another cup of coffee or *looking*for new distractions to “clear our minds” or “switch it up”, **our brains could function much more efficiently just by reducing noise, disabling digital notifications, and clearing clutter from our work/study areas.**

Multitasking also counts as distraction. Although many people believe themselves to be quite adept at it, scientific [studies](https://link.springer.com/article/10.3758/s13423-015-0907-3) have repeatedly proven that the brain actually rapidly switches between tasks rather than doing both simultaneously, thereby reducing the quality and efficiency of our performance in each task. [Studies](https://link.springer.com/article/10.3758/s13423-015-0907-3)have also shown that **multitasking impairs both long-term and short-term memory.**

**7. Smell rosemary**

[In a 2003 study](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12690999), a group of volunteers were given a series of long-term memory, short-term memory, and attention and reaction tests.

Some of the participants took the test in a room infused with lavender oil, some took it in a room infused with rosemary oil, and others took the test scent-free.

Those who took the test in the **rosemary scented room reported feeling more alert and performed significantly better** on the memory tests than those in the unscented room.

Those in the lavender scented room performed the worst and reported feeling less alert.

Although more studies are required to confirm the alertness-inducing effects of rosemary, it wouldn’t hurt to test it out yourself in the meantime and deck your workplace out with a few new plants.

**8. Eat well**

Scientists recommend **eating foods high in antioxidants** to keep the brain young and maintain memory function as we age.

This is because antioxidants kill “free radicals” that enter our bloodstream before they can kill our brain cells.

These include **blueberries, apples, bananas, dark green vegetables, garlic and carrots**. Chocolate also has antioxidants called flavanols. However, eating too much of it can backfire and give you a sugar rush and crash instead.

In addition to antioxidants, the brain benefits extremely from healthy fats like Omega-3 fatty acids which are found in **fish and nuts**. So, try to be understanding when your coworkers come in smelling like tuna or  peanut butter.

**9. Chew gum**

Similar to the rosemary theory, the gum chewing theory is one that does not guarantee results but wouldn’t hurt to try.

[In a 2002 study](https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/the-quirky-brain-chewing-gum-and-memory), gum-chewers performed significantly better on tests of both long-term and short-term memory than non-gum-chewers.

Many studies since then have also identified a **small but significant effect of gum chewing on memory and cognition**.

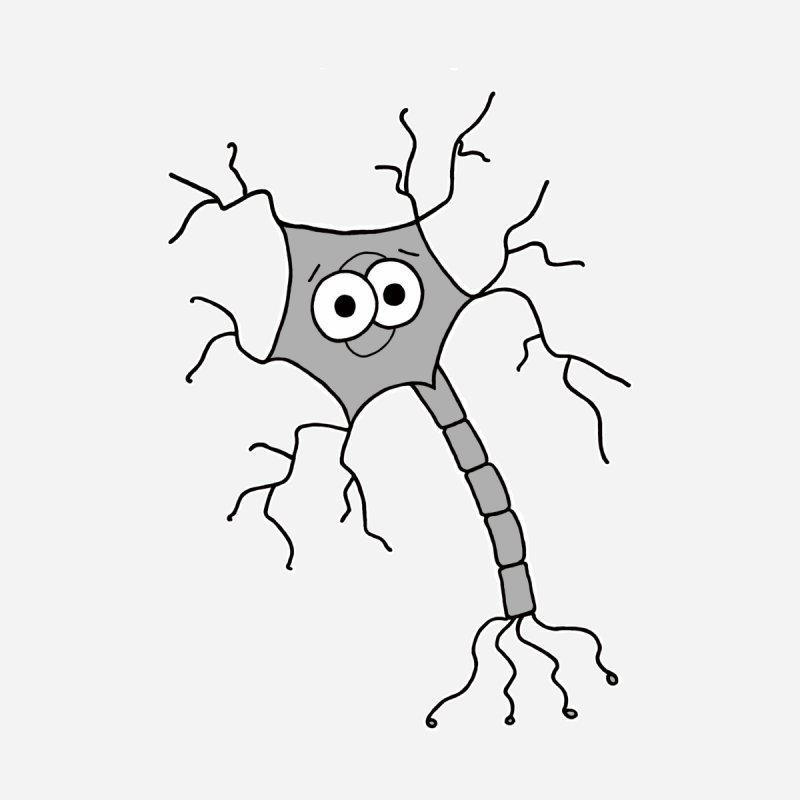
**10. Play brain games**

**The more you use your brain, the better it will run.** So, exercise it just like you would your body (and if you don't exercise your body, get that done too while you're at it).

There are many brain exercise programs on the internet that are quickly gaining popularity.

[Lumosity](https://www.lumosity.com/en/landing_pages/landing?gclid=CjwKCAjwqJ_1BRBZEiwAv73uwOeNNgYfz-xGsJE9dnYPyix8j20fswfZQbu8TBZ0GfXXNARND6l9rhoC_IoQAvD_BwE), for example, was designed by neuroscientists to help aging people improve their memory, concentration, alertness, and even mood. You don’t have to be old to use it.

If you’re not into that, there’s always sudoku and crossword puzzles to **keep your neurons on their toes.**

A neuron on its toes. (clipart.email.com)

**11. Exercise**

Even if you fill up your office with rosemary and chew more gum than Violet Beauregarde, you will be brain-dead without adequate sleep, a proper diet, and frequent exercise.

Scientists believe that **increased blood flow to the brain, as well as the mild stress of exercising, may result in the production of growth factors in the brain leading to**[**improved cognitive performance**](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/5-best-practices-for-handling-outside-normal-range-alertmeter-scores)**.**

[Recent research](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3041121/) has shown that **adults who walk regularly gain hippocampus volume**(memory center of brain) as opposed to losing it as they age.  So, just by walking, the participants reversed the impacts of aging on a major part of their brain.

**Conclusion**

Now that you know about the 7 different types of memory and how to keep your brain in tip-top shape, begin measuring how your daily choices may actually be affecting your cognitive functions.

[**101 Happiness Strategies**](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/101-happiness-strategies/)

We all want more happiness in our lives. There is literally many advantages to being happy: more healthiness physically, mentally, spiritually; better relationships with others; improved immune systems and so on. However most of us wait for someone else to make us happy rather than understanding that it is “US” who brings happiness in our lives. There is a saying that goes “there are seven days in a week and someday is not one of them.” When it comes to happiness in our lives, today is the day we can begin to CHOOSE it in our lives. Below are some simple strategies to look at as you begin improving the happiness advantage in our life.

**How to be happy: 101 practical strategies drawn from positive psychology research**

You can be happier

Good news: research emerging from the new and exciting field of [**positive** **psychology**](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/09/26/what-is-positive-psychology/) says your happiness level is neither static nor beyond your control. Not only can you boost your own ‘happiness quotient’, but doing so will bring many benefits to you and the people around you.

How to use the strategies

The lessons and strategies are numbered but you needn’t read them in order. Just choose a strategy\* that appeals to you where you are today. Some will strike you as intuitively right. Others will challenge your assumptions about what makes people happy – and perhaps give you a new perspective on your current approach to happiness.

If you’re wondering how happiness is studied…

You might be dubious about happiness ‘research’ – is it really possible to study happiness?

The research in this series comes mainly from the emerging science of [positive psychology](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/09/26/what-is-positive-psychology/), and also draws from old-school psychology and even economics.

What the findings have in common is that they’re the results of studies and experiments using the [scientific method](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_method). They’re undertaken with careful definitions, hypotheses and methodology and subjected to [peer review](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peer_review). That doesn’t mean they’re the ultimate truth on happiness – but it does suggest you can rely on them more than you could rely on opinion, vague theory, or old wives’ tale in helping you to be happy.

Read the findings and decide for yourself what you make of them. I hope that, like I did, you’ll find them fascinating and fun. More practically, I hope these lessons and strategies inspire and equip you to increase your own happiness level.

Being happy is a choice

By seeing happiness as an achievable and worthwhile goal you’ll open yourself up to wonderful changes in your life – and the lives of people around you.

[001. Get clear about happiness](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/10/15/how-to-be-happy-1-get-clear-about-happiness/)

[002. Measure your happiness level](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/10/23/how-to-be-happy-2-measure-your-happiness-level/)

[003. Choose happiness for your health](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/10/24/how-to-be-happy-3-choose-happiness-for-your-health/)

[004. Be happy now](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/10/25/how-to-be-happy-4-be-happy-now/)

[005. Spread it around](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/10/29/how-to-be-happy-5-spread-it-around/)

[006. Make happiness a goal](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/10/30/how-to-be-happy-6-make-happiness-a-goal/)

[007. Don’t just ease the bad, boost the good too](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/11/05/how-to-be-happy-7-dont-just-ease-the-bad-boost-the-good-too/)

[008. Make happiness an inside job](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/11/09/how-to-be-happy-8-make-happiness-an-inside-job/)

[009. Get off the hedonic treadmill](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/11/13/how-to-be-happy-9-get-off-the-hedonic-treadmill/)

[010. Don’t keep up with the Joneses](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/11/15/how-to-be-happy-10-dont-keep-up-with-the-joneses/)

[011. Focus on what you can do to be happier](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2007/11/16/how-to-be-happy-11-focus-on-what-you-can-do-to-be-happier/)

[012. Make peace with your personality](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2008/01/24/how-to-be-happy-12-make-peace-with-your-personality/)

[013. Act like you’re an extravert – even if you aren’t](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2008/02/01/how-to-be-happy-13-act-like-youre-an-extravert-even-if-you-arent/)

[014. Concentrate on intentional factors](http://www.happinessstrategies.com/blog/2008/02/08/how-to-be-happy-14-concentrate-on-intentional-factors/)

**ACCEPTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY**

Every one of us who has suffered from some hardships in our lives and should acknowledge that healing is a choice. Acceptance of your responsibility for your attitudes and behaviors can be the beginning. The way you handle tough times is entirely up to you.

Blaming others for your behaviors and attitudes is abusive, inappropriate, and a waste of time. You may want to pretend to be the victim in these situations but the downside of this is you not getting the insights on how to heal and deal with yourself, your life, your relationship. Not learning from your experience that may even lead to you not getting over that brokenness in your life. You can't always blame others for your actions.

Choosing to accept responsibility of what has happened and acknowledging your imperfections should be a better option when you begin the process of healing. Recognizing your faults and misconceptions you have made during the course of your relationship could give you a clearer view of your emotional state.

Beginning to understand your feelings and emotions as your body's response of your thoughts could enable you to understand that they can be the cause and effect of everything that you do and feel.

What happens in your life is merely a reflection of your emotional and mental state. How much love you give is exactly how much you're getting. What you become in your lifetime is exactly what you choose to see yourself in. Learning how to see yourself outside of your comfort zone will enable you to understand that what you're putting out there is precisely what you want the world to see you.

If you decide to change how you view the world through your emotional well being should start from your inner self. Examine your inner depths. Recognize and acknowledge that you are responsible for your emotional wellness. No outer forces could influence your inner emotional state if you choose them not to. Bottom line is how you deal with your life and consequently, your emotions could reflect outwards.

Bear in mind that there are always choices in life. It is our own perception and decision with how we choose what we think if right for us. Acceptance and being responsible for our emotional well being comes as we recognize our choices and standing up to it.

Self acceptance is being loving and happy with who you are. It is an agreement with yourself to appreciate, validate, accept and support who you are at this very moment, while working on those parts of you that need improvement and changing.

Questions:

1. What do you like about you that you can accept as being good?
2. What attitudes do you need to focus on as you accept your need for change?
3. What behaviors do you need to change to be accepted by your loved ones?
4. What behaviors do you need to change to be accepted by yourself?
5. What does acceptance of your behaviors mean to you?
6. How badly do you want to change?
7. What does responsibility mean to you?

**ABCDE MODEL OF ELLIS: COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS**

A: adversity that serves as the trigger

B: beliefs that the trigger automatically activates

C: consequences of the belief

D: disputing the belief by looking at the evidence, seeing if it is true or need, looking at alternatives, making sure the conclusions or implications of the belief are useful even if it is true

E: the energizing quality of successfully disputing a harmful belief

Paul, Albert Ellis' theory is cognitive in nature like Beck. He developed this approach as a formula to analyzed a clients pattern of thought. Cl (Cognitive Interventions) can learn that it is not the external event that is causing their problem, but the beliefs they hold. Here is my understanding and the way I use it with my clients.

A = Activating Event: An observation of something that catches your attention. Can be anything that you focus on.

B=Belief System: Major focus of the intervention. Cl's belief is either a rational belief (supported by data and facts) or an irrational belief (source of the problem) that represent a Cl's reality.

C=Consequences: Emotional consequences of the activating event that usually cause guilt, anger, depression and anxiety, and determine the behavior that follows the thoughts about the activating event.

D=Dispute: Challenge the way the Cl is thinking about C; see it differently, challenge the belief and internalize a new more rational belief in its place.

E=Effect: Helps the Cl to see the effect of disputing the belief and obtaining more positive consequences.

**MIND/TIME CHART**

There are two ways to understand people: observe their behaviors and categorize them into traits, or understand the governing principles behind all behavior. When we want to understand human behavior we can either ask WHY people do what they do, or we can observe WHAT they are doing. Mind-Time describes the WHY, the deepest motivating drivers behind behaviors; personality models describe WHAT people do.

The often confusing world of personality traits

Nearly all personality type test such as MBTI, DiSC, and Big 5\*, use a number of observable behavioral traits to describe a person’s personality.

The Big 5 for examples uses: *extraversion*; *agreeableness*; *conscientiousness*; *neuroticism*; and *openness*.

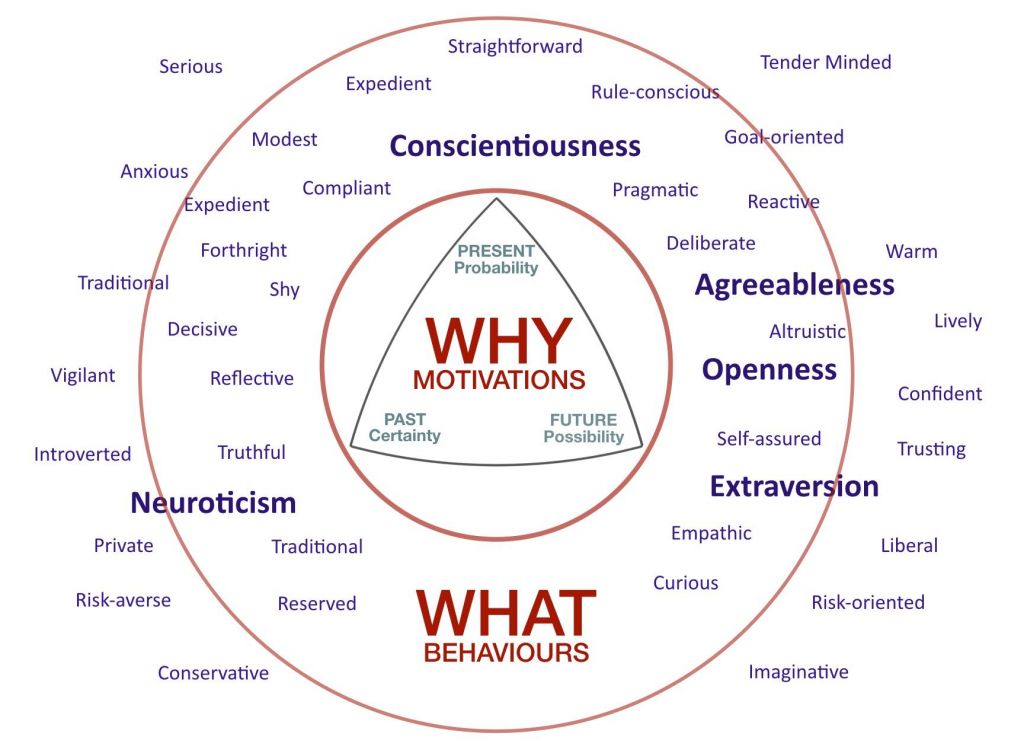
There are literally hundreds of such personality traits to choose from, very few of which have any meaningful predictive value. In the world of these trait based models there is no true framework or overarching theory of differences, just a lot of descriptions of behaviors (traits).

However, Mind-Time changes the game. It is a scientifically validated theory that explains **WHY people behave the way they do** and as such Mind-Time provides powerful predictive insight into why we are the way we are.

Mind-Time is highly parsimonious with findings in individual trait based research, findings in neuropsychology, and cultural sciences.

\* Myers-Briggs is a trademark or registered trademark of The Myers & Briggs Foundation in the United States and other countries.  DiSC® is a registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. or its affiliated companies.

MIND-TIME "WHY" CHART



Why Mind-Time is different

There are three fundamental priorities that drive the behavior of every sentient being. These priorities act as the filters we perceive through, the mechanisms behind how thoughts are shaped, the drivers of what motivates us at the most fundamental level, and the origins of why we behave the way we do. Mind-Time is highly predictive because it is measuring these motivating forces in each person, the origins of behaviors, rather than the behaviors as described by traits.

Unlike personality models, and far beyond their capabilities, Mind-Time is able to describe individuals, team cultures and organizations as thinking systems all within one common framework and language.

Mind-Time is a priori [theory](https://www.mindtime.com/science/), supported by over two decades of [reliable science,](https://www.mindtime.com/science/) that provides us with a framework to understand the forces or priorities that shape our individual differences. In psychology, these individual differences are also referred to as personality traits, which are used to describe a person’s personality.

**AFFIRMATIONS**

What is an affirmation?

Affirmations are **positive statements that can help you to challenge and overcome self-sabotaging and negative** thoughts. When you repeat them often, and believe in them, you can start to make positive changes.

Why is an affirmation the most important tool in behavior and attitude change? The brain does exactly what we tell it to do. It's that simple.

**BRAIN AND RESEARCH ON HOW LONG IT TAKES THE BRAIN TO CHANGE WHEN LEARNING**:

Phillippa Lally is a health psychology researcher at University College London. In [a study](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.674/abstract) published in the European Journal of Social Psychology, Lally and her research team decided to figure out just how long it actually takes to form a habit.

**On average, it takes more than 2 months before a new behavior becomes automatic — 66 days to be exact.** And how long it takes a new habit to form can vary widely depending on the behavior, the person, and the circumstances**.**

Hadley Bergstrom is a neuroscientist at the National Institutes of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in Rockville, Md. His research states that it’s important to spread out learning over many days. That means learning a little bit at a time. Doing so allows links between neurons to steadily strengthen.

1-3 months for the brain to believe a change; 3-6 months for brain to solidify new change; 6-9 months for the brain to cement and have a new belief or behavior or change.

Studies show that another way to add to behavior/attitude change is to add meditation. Researchers say that meditating for 20 minutes a day grow better connection **in 8 weeks**. The cognitive abilities improved are linked to well-being (focus, calmness, ability to observe emotions and thoughts for just what they are, resilience).

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS FOR GROUP/INDIVIDUALS TO START OUT WITH:

1. I am an honorable man/woman

2. I am a respectful man/woman. I respect others/spouse's name

3. I am a loving man/woman

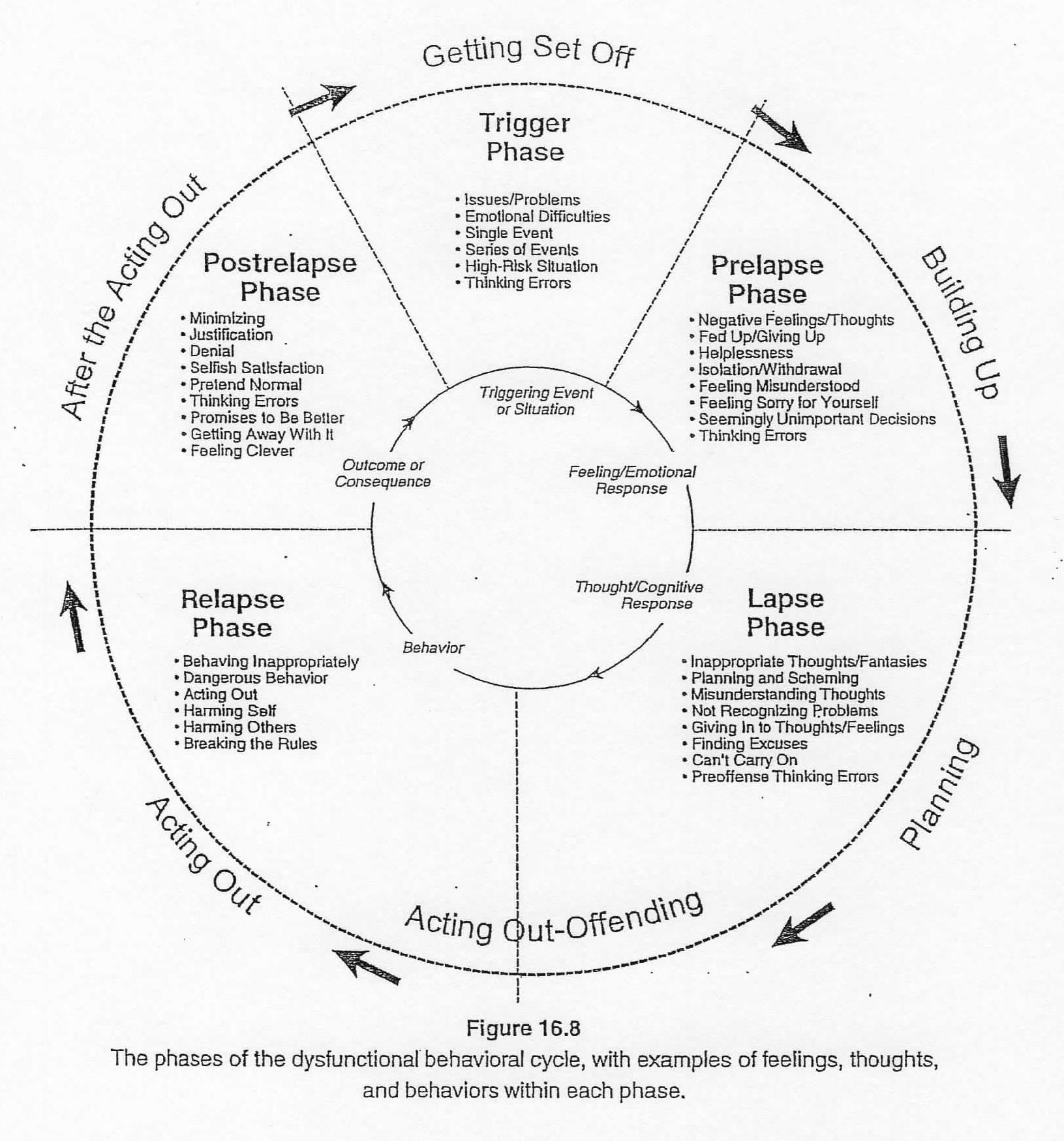
4. I honor my family

5. Every day I am kind and empathetic

6. Etc.

7. Have them come up with their own affirmations that are things they need to add to their own lives and have them share those with you to ensure they are in present/positive formats/sentences.

**ANGER WHEEL**



***Are You Highly Sensitive?***

**A Self-Test**

Copyright, Elaine N. Aron, 1996

*Instructions:* Answer each question according to the way you personally feel. Check the box if it is at least somewhat true for you; leave unchecked if it is not very true or not at all true for you.

Top of Form

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | I am easily overwhelmed by strong sensory input. |
|  | I seem to be aware of subtleties in my environment. |
|  | Other people's moods affect me. |
|  | I tend to be very sensitive to pain. |
|  | I find myself needing to withdraw during busy days,into bed or into a darkened room or any place where I can have some privacy and relief from stimulation. |
|  | I am particularly sensitive to the effects of caffeine. |
|  | I am easily overwhelmed by things like bright lights, strong smells,coarse fabrics,or sirens close by. |
|  | I have a rich, complex inner life. |
|  | I am made uncomfortable by loud noises. |
|  | I am deeply moved by the arts or music. |
|  | My nervous system sometimes feels so frazzled that I just have to go off by myself. |
|  | I am conscientious. |
|  | I startle easily. |
|  | I get rattled when I have a lot to do in a short amount of time. |
|  | When people are uncomfortable in a physical environment I tend to know what needs to be done to make it more comfortable (like changing the lighting or the seating). |
|  | I am annoyed when people try to get me to do too many things at once. |
|  | I try hard to avoid making mistakes or forgetting things. |
|  | I make a point to avoid violent movies and TV shows. |
|  | I become unpleasantly aroused when a lot is going on around me. |
|  | Being very hungry creates a strong reaction in me, disrupting my concentration or mood. |
|  | Changes in my life shake me up. |
|  | I notice and enjoy delicate or fine scents, tastes, sounds, works of art. |
|  | I find it unpleasant to have a lot going on at once. |
|  | I make it a high priority to arrange my life to avoid upsetting or overwhelming situations. |
|  | I am bothered by intense stimuli, like loud noises or chaotic scenes. |
|  | When I must compete or be observed while performing a task, I become so nervous or shaky that I do much worse than I would otherwise. |
|  | When I was a child, my parents or teachers seemed to see me as sensitive or shy. |

***Self-Test Results***

**Scoring:**  
If you answered more than fourteen of the questions as true of yourself, you are probably highly sensitive. But no psychological test is so accurate that an individual should base his or her life on it. We psychologists try to develop good questions, then decide on the cut off based on the average response.

If fewer questions are true of you, but extremely true, that might also justify calling you highly sensitive.



**BOUNDARIES – WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT**

|  |
| --- |
| A successful relationship is composed of two individuals - each with a clearly defined sense of her or his own identity. We need a sense of self in order to clearly communicate our needs and desires to our partner. When we have a strong sense of our own identity, we can respect and honor those qualities in our partner that make him/her a unique person. When two people come together, each with a clear definition of her/his own individuality, the potential for intimacy and commitment can be astounding. The similarities between two people may bring them together, but their differences contribute to the growth, excitement and mystery of their relationship.  One feature of a healthy sense of self is the way we understand, incorporate and work with boundaries**. Personal boundaries are the limits we set in relationships** that allow us to protect ourselves and let others know what can be expected with and from us. Boundaries come from having a good sense of our own self-worth. They make it possible for us to separate our own thoughts and feelings from those of others and to take responsibility for what we think, feel and do. Boundaries allow us to value our own uniqueness. Intact boundaries are flexible - they allow us to get close to others when it is appropriate and to maintain our distance when we might be harmed. Good boundaries protect us from abuse and pave the way to achieving true intimacy. They help us take care of ourselves.    Unhealthy boundaries often emerge from dysfunctional family backgrounds. The needs of parents or other adults in a family are sometimes so overwhelming that the task of raising children is demoted to a secondary role, and dysfunction is the likely result. What the children are likely to learn in this situation is that boundaries don't matter. Children may learn that rigid and inflexible boundaries might be the way to handle their relationships with other people. They wall themselves off in their relationships as a way of protecting themselves, and, as a consequence, may find it difficult to form close interpersonal bonds with others in adulthood.  1.Name some ways in which unhealthy boundaries may show themselves in your relationships  2. A healthy relationship is one in which our boundaries are strong enough, yet flexible enough, to allow us to flourish with our own uniqueness. There is a sense of respect on the part of both partners that allows each to live as full a life as possible and to explore their own personal potential. Discuss how this is going to happen in the participants life and how they are going to apply boundaries in their lives.  **Over-Responsibility and Guilt**  3. A healthy response is to show our partners respect by allowing them to succeed or fail on their own terms. When boundaries are healthy, you are able to say, "I trust and respect you to make your own life choices. As my equal partner, I will not try to control you by taking away your choices in life." Discuss this concept and how they use control to get their way instead of setting up boundaries.  **The Difference Between Love and Rescue**  4. Unhealthy boundaries, where we collude with our partner in believing the myth that everything is fine, make it difficult to come to terms with the troubles of the relationship. Discuss this and what it means to participants.  **"Good fences make good neighbors"**  **- Robert Frost**  Healthy boundary setting is an exciting adventure, and exercise in personal liberation. It means coming to know ourselves and increasing our awareness of what we stand for. When two people with healthy boundaries enter into a relationship, they encourage wholeness, independence and a zest for life in their partner. They know that trust is possible and that the normal expected difficulties found in all relationships can be worked on constructively. They can find true intimacy as whole, complete and equal people. It often means letting go of some of our old misconceptions about the nature of the world. It means treating ourselves with respect and appreciating ourselves for what we really are. When we can do this for ourselves, we can take the same approach toward our partner - and then the true happiness and love that our relationship deserves can become a reality. |

**Healthy** **Unhealthy**

Being your own person Feeling a need to be complete with someone else

Being responsible for your own happiness Relying on others for your happiness

Balance in separate and togetherness Too much/little in togetherness

Outside friendships exist and enjoyed Don’t allow outside friendships

Focus on the positive qualities of both Focus on the negative qualities of partner

Open, honest, respectful communication Criticism, lying, manipulative communication

Name other qualities of healthy boundaries vs unhealthy boundaries:

1.

2.

3.

**LOVE LANGUAGES**

Discuss why we need to know our love language and our family members love language. If we don’t know them then how can we be fulfilled and how can we fulfill the love needs of our family members (including children)

**Chapman's Five Emotional Love Languages:**

* **Words of Affirmation**  
  This is when you say how nice your spouse looks, or how great the dinner tasted. These words will also build your mate's self image and confidence.
* **Quality Time**  
  Some spouses believe that being together, doing things together and focusing in on one another is the best way to show love. If this is your partner's love language, turn off the TV now and then and give one another some undivided attention.
* **Gifts**  
  It is universal in human cultures to give gifts. They don't have to be expensive to send a powerful message of love. Spouses who forget a birthday or anniversary or who never give gifts to someone who truly enjoys gift giving will find themselves with a spouse who feels neglected and unloved.
* **Acts of Service**  
  Discovering how you can best do something for your spouse will require time and creativity. These acts of service like vacuuming, hanging a bird feeder, planting a garden, etc., need to be done with joy in order to be perceived as a gift of love.
* **Physical Touch**  
  Sometimes just stroking your spouse's back, holding hands, or a peck on the cheek will fulfill this need.

**Determining Your Own Love Language**

Since you may be speaking what you need, you can discover your own love language by asking yourself these questions:

* How do I express love to others?
* What do I complain about the most?
* What do I request most often?

Speaking in your spouse's love language probably won't be natural for you. Dr. Chapman says, "We're not talking comfort. We're talking love. Love is something we do for someone else. So often couples love one another but they aren't connecting. They are sincere, but sincerity isn't enough."



**Motivation Techniques to Raise your Energy Level**

Before you start your day, always do something that brings your energy level up and puts you in a good mood. For some people this can be inspiring music. For me I always have what I call my motivational music on when I am driving to any type of presentation.

I listen to songs that pump me up. Songs that say things like you are a winner, and go for the gold and you can do anything. By the time, I get out of the car I know I am winner and I for sure can do anything.

It is a known fact that music produces serotonin in your brain, which is the feel good endorphin. If music is not your thing then listen to motivational tapes. You can find some that make you feel like you are sitting on top of the world.

**Choose one or all these**[**motivation techniques**](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Words_of_Encouragement.html)**to get you going:**

**1. Listen to visualization Mp3's that guide you to opening your mind and creating your ideal life.** Any type of [mp3 that takes you through the process of seeing what you want to happen in your life.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Free_Life_Coaching_Products.html)

**2. Read about how someone else** is successfully doing what you are having difficulty with.  Read one page every morning to get motivated and to remind yourself it is *possible*. That is a surefire motivator that is easy to do.

**3. Help someone else get motivated.** Use your skills to show them how good life really is, motivating them with a pep talk. This way you hear exactly what you need to get motivated while helping another.

**4. Join a Mastermind Group or Support Group** when you are involved in a group where succeeding is the main goal you will get motivated every meeting. It's important you have other people who share the same goals. You will end up staying motivated longer knowing you have support.

**5. Expect to be motivated and believe you will.** Let people know that you feel really motivated about your career or life and that you cannot wait to start your next project or adventure.

Whatever you tell yourself all day long is what you will experience so carefully select the words you are repeating to yourself. If you are hard, on yourself that will de-motivate you and it is difficult to come back from that.

The way to deal with this is do not even go down that road at all. Learn to talk to yourself with love and respect and that goes hand in hand with loving yourself.

[](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/images/orangestar.gif)

**Motivation Techniques for Finding Your Career Purpose**

One of the first things is get inspired first. This is easy if you focus on something or on a subject that gets you fired up.

As opposed to, trying something only because certain people think that is what you should be doing.  That will never result in fulfillment for you and therefore motivation would be out of the question. Choose a career that gives you natural inspiration.

If you feel connected and excited about what you do for a living, you will be able to get other people to feel the same way. It does not matter if you do not know anyone who ever succeed at your passion it is your passion and if you’re into it... **YOU WILL SUCCEED!**

**Follow these five motivation techniques for a happy and successful career:**

**1.** Choose a profession that is your[passion in life.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Life-Purpose.html)

**2.** Be true to yourself when choosing a career.

**3.** If you're unhappy with your current career, that is a sign that something is wrong. You want to take a look at the reasons why you are unhappy. Ask yourself if you would be happy in another profession or is your attitude the problem. You may need a [shift in your perception](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Creating.html)and everything may end up working out once you do that.

**4.** Re-evaluate if this is the career or business for you. Write out a pros and cons list and if the cons far outweigh the pros then it's time to move on.

**5.** Take a[career evaluation test](http://www.assessment.com/) to determine what career would be best suited for you. After you have that down, the momentum will flow.

**Motivation Techniques for Boosting Your Business**

One of the secret [motivation skills](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Increase_Energy.html) is getting back the passion you once had for you career.

Write an appreciation list of all the reasons you chose this career to begin with. You want to re-energize yourself by remembering what stood out in the first place about your product or service.

[](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/images/doitwithpassionbydawn.jpg)

**Lists for Motivation Techniques that Increase Business**

**1.** Make a top ten list of the benefits of your service or product.

**2.** Make a top five list of why someone would use your product over the competition.

**3.** Make a top five list of how you or your company goes the extra mile for your clients.

Once you're there and can remember what really gets you jazzed about your business the motivation comes naturally. It will be in your voice, people will sense it in your body language and energy. When motivated that energy and enthusiasm spreads like wildfire, it’s electric!

Everyone wants success and motivation. The reason is who wouldn't want to feel that great. If I'm energized it must be good is what people feel.

It is very important that people understand why they should do business with you and[what makes you stand out from the crowd.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Niche_Marketing.html)

**Share here what has worked for you in the past or what challenges you may be having with your motivational skills.**

**Related Articles:**

[How to Increase Your Energy in 17 minutes and feel wonderful.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Increase_Energy.html)

[How You Can Keep Your Self Confidence High When It Feels Everything is Against You](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Confidence.html) [My Positive Thinking Secrets Mindset that Produce Peace of Mind, Wealth & Joy](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Positive_Thinking.html)

[Motivational Sayings & Inspirational Quotes that Get You Pumped Up and Ready to Rock!](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Motivational-Sayings-Inspirational-Quotes.html)

**Motivation Techniques to Raise your Energy Level**

Before you start your day, always do something that brings your energy level up and puts you in a good mood. For some people this can be inspiring music. For me I always have what I call my motivational music on when I am driving to any type of presentation.

 Listen to songs that pump you up. Songs that say things like you are a winner, and go for the gold and you can do anything.

It is a known fact that music produces serotonin in your brain, which is the feel good endorphin. If music is not your thing then listen to motivational tapes. You can find some that make you feel like you are sitting on top of the world.

**Choose one or all these**[**motivation techniques**](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Words_of_Encouragement.html)**to get you going**

**1. Listen to visualization Mp3's that guide you to opening your mind and creating your ideal life.** Any type of [mp3 that takes you through the process of seeing what you want to happen in your life.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Free_Life_Coaching_Products.html)

**2. Read about how someone else** is successfully doing what you are having difficulty with.  Read one page every morning to get motivated and to remind yourself it is *possible*. That is a surefire motivator that is easy to do.

**3. Help someone else get motivated.** Use your skills to show them how good life really is, motivating them with a pep talk. This way you hear exactly what you need to get motivated while helping another.

**4. Join a Mastermind Group or Support Group** when you are involved in a group where succeeding is the main goal you will get motivated every meeting. It's important you have other people who share the same goals. You will end up staying motivated longer knowing you have support.

**5. Expect to be motivated and believe you will.** Let people know that you feel really motivated about your career or life and that you cannot wait to start your next project or adventure.

Whatever you tell yourself all day long is what you will experience so carefully select the words you are repeating to yourself. If you are hard, on yourself that will de-motivate you and it is difficult to come back from that.

The way to deal with this is do not even go down that road at all. Learn to talk to yourself with love and respect and that goes hand in hand with loving yourself.

[](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/images/orangestar.gif)

**Motivation Techniques for Finding Your Career Purpose**

I want to point out that is one of the main motivational techniques. If you love what you are doing and you love what you're  talking about your motivation around that will naturally soar.

As opposed to, trying something only because certain people think that is what you should be doing.  That will never result in fulfillment for you and therefore motivation would be out of the question. Choose a career that gives you natural inspiration.

If you feel connected and excited about what you do for a living, you will be able to get other people to feel the same way. It does not matter if you do not know anyone who ever succeed at your passion it is your passion and if you’re into it... **YOU WILL SUCCEED!** That I know from experience.

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Everyone wants what I’m selling or offering. The reason is who wouldn't want to feel that great. If I'm energized it must be good is what people feel. People can sense if what you're offering them is sincere.  Just like, they can sense when someone only wants to only make a buck with no regard for their well-being or if the service or product will benefit them.

Use the list you just made when talking to potential clients and when writing your sales copy. It is very important that people understand why they should do business with you and[what makes you stand out from the crowd.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Niche_Marketing.html)

This is worth repeating, the best motivation technique I ever found is doing what you love and you will naturally be motivated**.**

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**The Law of Attraction, What You Need to Know!**

**Are you having a difficult time with the law of attraction** and getting the results you want? You are not alone.

**BELIEVE YOU CAN AND YOU WILL!!!!**

**The concept of the law of attraction is so simple,** yet most people haven't been able to master this incredible power.

Many people believe something this good has to be difficult, right? Actually no that's not right. We are conditioned to believe that you have to pay a steep price if you want the best. That is one of those limiting beliefs that you don't need any more. Break down the law of attraction into simple bit size steps that you will have no problem putting into action.

The basic concept is, what you focus on will manifest in your life. It’s about where you put your attention. How simple is that or is it?

**It’s easy enough to say that but try doing it when your habit is to react to everything instead of create.**The old saying, “Let the chips fall where they may”, is a good analogy but not a good practice.

If this rings true for you the concept behind the law of attraction may be slow in coming but you will come to understand how to use this law it is here for a reason.

With the law of attraction it is essential that you first understand you are a creator. That means you create every experience you have in your life good or bad.

**The Magic of Being a Creator**

In order to reap the benefits of the law of attraction you want to start with creating what you **want** to attract. You might be surprised to find out the high majority of people have never really taken the time to find out what they want. If you don't know what you want you can't create it.

The sooner you clear up what you desire in life the quicker you can get on with creating your ideal life.

**Putting it out into the Universe**

**Next, put your dreams and aspirations down on paper.** It is important that you go through the process of writing down what your ideal life looks like. The act of writing out your dreams, wishes or goals starts the process of imprinting them in such a way that your subconscious perceives this as a contract and in turn gets it done.

For example, if you want to open your own business where you are the boss you would write: Own and operate a small business from my house that generates $250,000.00 a year income. If you want to be a famous singer write that down. Whatever it is, start by writing it down.

If you were writing a novel you wouldn't hope your audience figures out what is going to happen next you would tell them what is going to happen next by typing it on the page.

**The Importance of Allowing**

The next step in the law of attraction is allowing your desires access to your life. It’s not enough to just write down, say or even [visualize what you want.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Visualization.html)That part is important but alone it will not create what you want in your life.

**Once you know what you want and you have put it out there** believing it will happen and allowing it to happen is vital. At this point it is important to know that you have started something very powerful in putting out to the world what you want. You have made it clear. Now you want to look and see if you *really believe* it can happen.

It is in the believing that you allow the vibration of what you want to match the vibration of what you are asking for. In other words your excitement and enthusiasm will let your subconscious know you have already received what you want and it will act accordingly without question.

**How you will know if you are not allowing your dream to happen**is when you have put your desire out there and nothing moves.

If someone really believes they don’t deserve something when an opportunity is presented they often over look it or make an excuse for why they have to say no. The opposite of that is when someone is in tune with their desire then they see opportunities everywhere and act on them.

**Understand that you will feel uncomfortable even fear when your dream is starting** to come true. Don't let that bother you, just notice it and be happy it's there as a sign that you're on the right track. You asked for what you wanted, you attracted it, now it will show up that is the law, your job: simply is to trust it and follow its lead.

If people start showing up in your life that have what you want that is no mistake, talk to those people. There is some reason they have come into your life at that exact time. Seize the opportunities they will be everywhere.

Divider

**Be Open to Receive in Many Different Ways**

When the law of attraction is set in motion is important to ride the wave and not stop it. You may have had a picture in your mind about what you want and how you were going to get it.

**If something comes up to lead you in the direction of your desire and it looks different** than what you thought, don't panic. It is your responsibility to investigate that path. Don't worry that it doesn't look exactly like you thought it would, that is the beauty of the law of attraction it sometimes comes in a different package. Be willing to open it happily and remember that different is not bad it's just not what you expected.

**How to Change Your Life in 4 Simple Steps**

**Do you know how to change your life?  Think about it, what would a wonderful life look like for you?**If your life isn't working out the way you hoped, all that is about to change.

**Have you ever thought about why one person seems to skate through life never falling,** simply scraping their knee, and brushing it off? Then there is the person who can't even stand up straight without falling over.

I bet you thought the skaters in life are simply lucky or better yet, *born that way*. It is easier to come to that conclusion. That way we do not have to take responsibility for our life when it isn't functioning.

After all, if you didn't draw the four-leaf clover in this life it is going to be a bumpy ride as Bette Davis said. Well it *doesn't have to be that way* no matter what card you drew upon entry to earth.  I'm here to tell you that today you get to pick the card you WANT.

**1. How to Change Your Life Means Stepping outside Your Comfort Zone. That is Where all Real Change Takes Place.**

**Going outside of your comfort zone isn't as scary as it seems**. You want to stretch and grow so you have the best life possible. This doesn't have to be drastic, start with something simple. This would be anything you have wanted to do for a while but fear or  your ego is stopping you.

How do you know if you are truly going outside your comfort zone.  If your heart isn't beating fast, you did not move out of your comfort zone. Outside means, you are no longer comfortable.

This is the reason why some people have so much and others have nothing.  **The risk takers get all the excitement in life because they *pursued it.*** You can ask anyone who has achieved anything significant and you'll find they were terrified when they went after their dreams and goals.  That didn't delay them they did it anyway.

Remember this as you too[begin today to do one thing that scares you.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Do_one_thing_that_scares_you_today.html)  Yes that's right you have to start today. And choose something that will bring you closer to one of your dreams.

**Pretending is the fastest way to believing, and believing is the fastest way to receiving.**

**2. How to Change Your Life by Adjusting your Outlook**

Shocking as it is without a terrific attitude it's going to be pretty challenging to have a fulfilling well adjusted life forget successful.

**I know it can seem like there are lucky people that for no apparent reason get a pass in life.** Not true, what they possess is the same thing you have, the ability to CHOOSE how you are going to experience life. You may need a little practice and some guidance at choosing different thoughts.

You want to choose thoughts where everything goes your way. The thoughts should make you feel good when you think of them and right afterward you'll get a small ping in your stomach  that's the fear.  Embrace it that feeling is your *new best friend.*

**Now let us try the positive side.  You are the person who woke up saying, “It’s a gorgeous day!”** If you are laughing at that, good keep it up.  That creates serotonin and dopamine in your brain the perfect boost to start your day.  :)

When you say aloud this is a gorgeous day, or my day is wonderful, perfect it sets the tone.

Your next thought may be.  “I'm excited to get up and start my day.”

"I have so many new ideas I can’t wait to get to the office or start working today so I can implement them into my latest project.”

**This is where the creating begins.**  You decide what kind of day you're going to have. You put your message out into the universe about what you are going to create that day.

But if you haven't remedied your negative self talk, nothing will work. That must come first.  It is noticing what you are actually saying to yourself that is imperative here. That is where your reality starts to form.  Right now at this beginning point, you want to pay attention to what it is you're saying to yourself.

If you're not conscious of what you saying to yourself you may wonder why some days are good and other days are not. You're committee that lives in your head is controlling your day you aren't the one doing the manifesting; you are reacting to what you see instead of deciding what to see.

If you start your day saying anything negative, that is most likely the kind of day you will have.  Even if it’s something small like I have to clean my house today and I hate cleaning.

**How to Change Your Life Once a Negative Thought Pattern Starts it can Snowball**

**You next thought most likely will be on that same wavelength.**  For example, you may say, “I barely have time to brush my teeth how am I supposed to clean the house?”…”well if I made more money I could hire a maid”…etc.

Most likely, you don’t even know you are having these distorted thoughts. Most people don't realize what they say or think intensifies.  Before you know it, your day is sliding down a dead end hill.

**“Nothing can occur in your life experience without your invitation of it through your thought.”   Patanjali**

**HOW TO CHANE YOUR LIFE SELF-AWARENESS IS KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS!!**

**A major factor is**[**self-awareness**.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Spiritual_Awareness.html) For the next, couple of days begin to notice what you are saying to yourself, throughout the day.

[How are you going to change your life when you don't know](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Dream-Board.html)what you need to change? The first thing I did was just to observe what I was telling myself all day, as if I were a bystander simply witnessing.

**I discovered that when I would make a mistake** I wanted to go over,” how could I do that?” “ Didn't I know that would happen?” I even had the nerve to tell myself,” I told you not to do that.” It was really interesting and completely ineffective. I felt excited.

**What a setup never make a mistake? Who told us when we were young we need to be perfect?** We all heard that somehow and it is one of the chief reasons people are unhappy and angry with themselves.

This constant badgering would be enough to put anyone in a bad mood. As you pay more attention to what you are saying, you realize the tone you used with yourself was rude, loud, and annoying.

I wouldn't dream of talking to a friend like this, so why was I talking to myself this way?

**4. WHEN CREATING THE LIFE YOU WANT START WITH TREAT YOUR SELF WITH RESPECT AND LOVE!**

There are many people that are aware they have this voice inside of them whether they call it their critical parent, Gremlin or the ego. However, most don't realize how it dictates our day-to-day life, and it can, and does alter how we feel about life.

If you are feeling terrible and you're not sure why, that is a sign that your inner critic is talking to you and it’s not saying how wonderful you are. :)

One suggestion here is when you first hear your inner critic and it’s saying something non-constructive right then on the very first thought, stop and say…”No judgment.” Do not let this dialogue continue.

**Don't even start the negative self-talk.** Try to catch it right away before it gets a chance to grab a hold of your day and destroy it.  This requires your full attention in the present moment.

[By paying attention, you can catch the critical self-talk at the beginning.](http://www.wellness-decisions.com/stress.html)

[**How to change your life**](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/HowToBeHappy.html)**using these four methods gives you the tools that will change your life forever.**  Write these down and live by them.

1. Treat yourself with respect and love.

2. Live with self-awareness.

3. Adjust your outlook on life.

4. Step outside your comfort zone.

 You will see how your world will go from awful to awesome.  This is just the beginning once you get this part down you can take it to the next level.  Stay tuned for part two, which will show you how to take it up a couple notches.

*Have fun enjoy your life, dream big because your dreams WILL come true.*

**Personal Development Plan**

If you have things you have wanted to accomplish but have put on the back burner, because you are waiting for the right time or the right circumstances, here is a simple guide to get you started.

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step." Chinese Proverb

1) **Get a notebook or a journal to write** your Personal Development Plan in. Keeping a small pocket notebook helps to jot down ideas that come to you when you out on the road or traveling.

**Decide what it is you really want to accomplish** and start to accomplish it by making a goal.

1. **How are you going to get there?** What is your interest? What steps do you need to take to get there? Set a deadline.  
  
2. **Reality Check:** What skills, certifications, and education, do you need to obtain this goal? What books, videos, blogs, and websites can you read or view to help in obtaining the knowledge you need, to further your goal.

3) **Obtain a Mentor** or Someone in the field with the expertise you are seeking. What internships, networking, volunteering, or leadership organization can help you pursue your goals?  
  
4. **Resources:** Have a garage sale; Utilize EBAY or Craig’s List to help get the resources you need. Try an online job. There are many at work at home jobs from Dell, Apple, Neiman Marcus, Virtual Call Centers, Eddie Bauer, etc...

5. **Get A Buddy System**: Parent, sibling, friend, academic adviser at a college of your choice— someone to help hold you accountable for it.

6. **Use My 5 Step System**: List 5 things you can do each day to further your goal; such as people to contact; something to read or learn; and try to finish all five steps. Even if you don't the point is to keep moving forward. Draw your progress on a board of long term and short term goals.

Perseverance, Determination, and Commitment will get you everywhere.

**How to Discover your Life Purpose and Turn it into Your Dream Career**

**How do you find your life purpose? Once you do find it, than what?**

I want to define what life purpose means. Besides Eckhart Tolle's description  “To awaken.”

It is your motivation for living. It is what makes you get up in the morning. What you love to do and what you naturally do best.

**This is where the journey starts to find a meaningful life purpose.**

When you are living your purpose it lights you up inside and everyone you encounter can feel that electric energy.

Have you ever been around someone whose energy is so bright you are instantly attracted to that person? They are living in the light and when they are in the light, they know many things that others cannot sense including their life purpose.

**How to Find Your Life Purpose**

**1. Write Out What You Love to Do**

**What makes you Smile?**

(At this point you should get a piece of paper because you are going to start writing your list…you will see how this works once we go through the steps)

Example: I love to write, I love to inspire people to grow, I love music, I love to sing, I love to read, I love Yoga, I love to meditate, I love to share with people, I love shopping…etc.

(Write down everything you truly love don't leave anything out at this point*)*

**2.  Write Down what Comes Naturally to You- Things You Do Easily**

* Communicating
* Motivating people
* Writing, creating new concepts
* Putting them into action
* Thinking outside of the box
* Dancing
* Sensing people's energy
* Successfully Starting New Businesses
* Marketing
* Promoting people
* Teaching people how to have a better life.

**Once you come up with a couple things then you have to put that together with a profession.**I started to examine the numerous ways I would best assist people.  I looked at the writing aspect. That was one way. I looked at teaching. Maybe a yoga or meditation instructor. I looked at how I love to help people build and grow their business.  I also considered that I am a natural motivator.

***Narrowing it down***



**3. Combine both of your Lists and look for the Correlations**

**New list:**

* Helping people
* Communicating
* Motivating people
* Thinking outside the box
* Writing
* Marketing
* Advertising
* Promotion

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **"It's OK to BE You!"** our Wild and Crazy Radio Show.  **Topic:**  **How to Discover your Life Purpose**  My Book is Featured  How to Discover Your Life Purpose.  ***Taking it to the next level***  Putting it all together**Your Dream Career** |

**4. Investigating Career Paths**

**Search the web under:**

* Yoga
* How to become a yoga instructor
* Helping people
* Motivating people
* Becoming a motivational speaker
* Becoming a therapist
* Teaching business techniques
* Marketing and promotion

**Next, search people that were living these professions.**How much did they charge? What were they offering?

Thoroughly investigate their websites and speak to theses professionals that were already in business.



**5. Putting it all Together and Getting into Action**

First action step was to POW WOW with a group of friends or support group, as I like to call them.

Second action step was to investigate.

**Dreams really do come true** and I am living proof.

*I wish for you all the happiness and success the universe has to offer. . .*

**IMPOSTER SYNDROME AND PROFESSIONALS**

If you suffer from [imposter syndrome](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/trust/201607/feeling-fraud-its-not-your-fault) as a therapist, you’re not alone. Even therapists who have been in the business for years experience this feeling—myself included. I’ve given more than 100 presentations at workshops and conferences around the country, and I’ve been a mental health professional years now over 35 years now and I’m still occasionally surprised that people listen to me and let me train them.

How to Overcome Imposter Syndrome

To some degree, this feeling is normal. Of course it feels unnatural taking on the role and responsibility of a therapist, especially when that role is new to you. That’s why we get so much [training](https://www.simplepracticelearning.com/collections). And indeed, a lot of that training focuses on how we should change how we act, how we think, and what we do when we operate in the therapist role.

Early in our careers, maintaining that role can sometimes feel like wearing a costume. But becoming a therapist starts with letting go of a lot of your natural responses. It’s only over the course of time that we bring our full personhood back into our professional work.

If the anxiety that comes with imposter syndrome stands in your way, there are steps you can take to help overcome it.

1. **Investigate it.**  
   When does the therapist role feel most unnatural? For a lot of us, imposter syndrome isn’t an everyday occurrence. It rears its head when we’re asked to do specific tasks for which we feel unprepared. Take an honest look at the times when it’s hard to be a helping professional. If you can name those specific tasks, working to get more comfortable with those tasks may help.
2. **Challenge it.**  
   Remember: If you finished a graduate degree, [fewer than 1 in 7](https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2019/02/number-of-people-with-masters-and-phd-degrees-double-since-2000.html) US adults have done that. [Far fewer are licensed](https://www.apa.org/monitor/2014/06/datapoint) in the major mental health professions—about 600,000 out of 250 million US adults, or fewer than 1 in 400. Whether you feel like it all the time or not, you actually are your community’s expert in mental health and behavior change.

If you are concerned that you don’t know enough, you may just be spending too much time around other therapists. Conversations with friends or family members outside of the field can serve as a great reminder of just how much you do know, and how well-prepared you are to help people in distress, compared to the average person.

At the same time, if you’re concerned that you don’t act professional enough, it may be worth revisiting your expectations of how professionals are supposed to act. No one expects you to be perfect or to have a life free of struggles. If you were, you wouldn’t be able to relate to your clients. Even the most successful professionals in the world are still people, with [their own flaws](https://www.simplepractice.com/blog/pain-is-a-teacher/), anxieties, eccentricities, and mistakes.

**3. Accept it.**  
Truly overcoming imposter syndrome isn’t a matter of curing it. Use investigating and challenging imposter syndrome to minimize the sensation, and then work to accept what’s left.

Every time your professional role calls on you to do something that you wouldn’t necessarily otherwise do, it’s easy and normal to feel like you’re wearing a therapist costume instead of actually being a therapist. If you understand that as part of the job, rather than something you’re doing wrong, then you change your whole relationship with imposter syndrome. You’re not a faker—you behave professionally even in times when it isn’t easy. That’s what our clients want from us, and what we ask of our ideal selves.

**4.** **Embrace it.**  
For an advanced approach, take that acceptance a step further. What you’re feeling is transition. You are achieving a more idealized version of yourself. Imposter syndrome may be some part of your mind resisting a very positive change in who you are. Stop fighting it, and embrace that change.

You are an expert, and now is the time to start referring to yourself as such. Invest in your practice with the expectation that you will succeed as a professional and as a leader.

If you’re in private practice, move past the dreary office space and second-hand furniture that agencies rely on, and give yourself and your clients a space that truly communicates safety, professionalism, and healing.

You’re not an imposter. You’re a professional. That role isn’t always easy, but it’s precisely the thing you spent years preparing for. You’re not faking, you’re changing, and both you and your clients are better off because of it.

**Imposter Syndrome**

Have you ever felt a feeling of not belonging, even when you earned that spot at your school or worked your way up in your career? This might be imposter syndrome. Impostor syndrome refers to the phenomenon when an individual internalizes their accomplishments, due to fear of being exposed as a “fraud.”

Those with imposter syndrome are psychologically uncomfortable with acknowledging their role in their own success, but their negative thoughts (often referred to as “[cognitive distortions](https://blog.zencare.co/cognitive-reframing-distortions/)”) are based on [anxiety](https://zencare.co/mental-health/anxiety), rather than objective facts. Although it was initially believed that imposter syndrome predominantly affected women, subsequent gender-related data on the subject has revealed this isn’t the case — many people of all backgrounds and identities can sometimes feel out-of-place amongst their achievements.

**Prevalence of imposter syndrome**

While feelings of unworthiness can happen to anyone, anywhere, impostor syndrome is especially prevalent in the workplace. People feel like they’ll soon get in trouble for being in a role that they rightfully earned through a rigorous interview or competitive application process. They might even think, “I don’t deserve this good fortune! My boss must have made a mistake, hiring me.”

Imposter syndrome isn’t limited to professional life, though. It can impact personal life in hard-hitting ways. This includes feeling inadequate in a relationship or as a partner, which could become a prolonged conflict in the relationship. It might also look like the incapacity to accept personal praise or going overboard on challenging, often ambitious, goals

**Symptoms of impostor syndrome**

Symptoms of impostor syndrome can look different for different people, though there are some consistent and tell-tale red flags. Symptoms might include:

* Extreme lack of self confidence
* Feelings of inadequacy
* Constant comparison to other people
* Anxiety
* Self doubt
* Distrust in one’s own intuition and capabilities
* Negative self-talk
* Dwelling on the past
* Irrational fears of the future

In professional settings, typical examples include:

* Taking on extra work to make sure you’re “doing it all”
* Shrugging off accolades
* Not applying to job postings unless you meet every single requiremenTop of Formt

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**How to overcome imposter syndrome**

Here are some small steps you can take to identify and overcome your unique imposter syndrome patterns:

* Remember that success is subjective
* Set [boundaries](https://blog.zencare.co/set-relationship-boundaries/) around systems or individuals who detract from your personal wellness and growth
* Take ownership of objective successes
* Perform consistent self-care check ins
* Speak with a therapist

What Is Imposter Syndrome?

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Impostor syndrome is the internal psychological experience of feeling like a phony in some area of your life, despite any success that you have achieved in that area.

You might have imposter syndrome if you find yourself consistently experiencing self-doubt, even in areas where you typically excel.1 Imposter syndrome may feel like restlessness and nervousness, and it may manifest as [negative self-talk](https://www.verywellmind.com/negative-self-talk-and-how-it-affects-us-4161304). Symptoms of anxiety and depression often accompany imposter syndrome.

Imposter syndrome is not a [diagnosable mental illness](https://www.verywellmind.com/definition-of-mental-illness-4587855). Instead, the term is usually narrowly applied to intelligence and achievement, although it also has links to perfectionism and the social context. Psychologists Suzanna Imes and Pauline Rose Clance first used this term in the 1970s.2

Types of Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome can be broken down into five basic types:

* **The Perfectionist**. This type of imposter syndrome involves believing that, unless you were absolutely perfect, you could have done better. You feel like an imposter because your [perfectionistic traits](https://www.verywellmind.com/signs-you-may-be-a-perfectionist-3145233) make you believe that you're not as good as others might think you are.
* **The Expert**. The expert feels like an imposter because they don't know everything there is to know about a particular subject or topic, or they haven't mastered every step in a process. Because there is more for them to learn, they don't feel as if they've reached the rank of "expert."
* **The Natural Genius**. In this imposter syndrome type, you may feel like a fraud simply because you don't believe that you are naturally intelligent or competent. If you don't get something right the first time around or it takes you longer to master a skill, you feel like an imposter.
* **The Soloist**. It's also possible to feel like an imposter if you had to ask for help to reach a certain level or status. Since you couldn't get there on your own, you question your competence or abilities.
* **The Superperson**. This type of imposter syndrome involves believing that you must be the hardest worker or reach the highest levels of achievement possible and, if you don't, you are a fraud.

Characteristics of Imposter Syndrome

Some common characteristics of imposter syndrome include:

* An inability to realistically assess your competence and skills
* Attributing your success to external factors
* Berating your performance
* Fear that you won't live up to expectations
* [Overachieving](https://www.verywellmind.com/are-you-an-overachiever-4580606)
* [Sabotaging your own success](https://www.verywellmind.com/self-handicapping-protecting-the-ego-at-a-cost-4125125)
* Self-doubt
* Setting very challenging goals and feeling disappointed when you fall short3

Impact of Imposter Syndrome

For some people, impostor syndrome can fuel [motivation](https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-motivation-2795378) to achieve, but this usually comes at the cost of experiencing constant anxiety. You might over-prepare or work much harder than necessary, for instance, to "make sure" nobody finds out you are a fraud. Eventually, anxiety worsens and may lead to [depression](https://www.verywellmind.com/depression-facts-you-should-know-1067617).

This sets up a vicious cycle, in which you think that the only reason you survived that class presentation was that you stayed up all night rehearsing. Or you think the only reason you got through that party or family gathering was that you memorized details about all the guests so you would always have ideas for small talk.

The problem with impostor syndrome is that the experience of doing well at something does nothing to change your beliefs. The thought still nags in your head, "What gives me the right to be here?" The more you accomplish, the more you just feel like a fraud. It's as though you can't *internalize* your experiences of success.

This makes sense in terms of [social anxiety](https://www.verywellmind.com/social-anxiety-disorder-4157220) if you received early feedback that you were not good in social or performance situations. Your core beliefs about yourself are so strong that they don't change, even when there is evidence to the contrary. The thought process is that if you do well, it must be the result of luck.

People who experience impostor syndrome tend not to talk about how they are feeling with anyone and struggle in silence, just like those with [social anxiety disorder](https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-social-phobia-2671698).

Examples of Imposter Syndrome

To better understand what imposter syndrome is, it might be helpful to see what it looks like in everyday life. Here are a few examples of what it's like to experience imposter syndrome:

* You've been working in a certain role for a couple of months, yet when people call you by your formal title, you feel like a fraud because you haven't mastered that position.
* You've [started your own business](https://www.verywellmind.com/the-plight-of-the-small-business-owner-5222431); however, you don't like to promote yourself because you don't have the same level of experience or expertise as others in your field, making you feel like a fraud.
* You've been nominated for an award, but you feel like an imposter at the recognition ceremony because you don't feel that your achievements are good enough to warrant the nomination.

Signs of Imposter Syndrome

Originally, the concept of imposter syndrome was thought to apply mostly to high-achieving women. Since then, it has been recognized as a more widely experienced phenomenon. Imposter syndrome can affect anyone—no matter their social status, work background, skill level, or degree of expertise.2

While impostor syndrome is not a recognized mental health disorder in the [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)](https://www.verywellmind.com/the-diagnostic-and-statistical-manual-dsm-2795758), it is fairly common. It is estimated that 70% of people will experience at least one episode of this phenomenon at some point in their lives.3

If you wonder whether you might have imposter syndrome, ask yourself the following questions:

* Do you agonize over even the smallest mistakes or flaws in your work?
* Do you attribute your success to luck or outside factors?
* Are you sensitive to even constructive criticism?
* Do you feel like you will inevitably be found out as a phony?
* Do you downplay your own expertise, even in areas where you are genuinely more skilled than others?

If you often find yourself feeling like you are a fraud or an imposter, it may be helpful to [talk to a therapist](https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-choose-the-right-therapist-for-you-4842306). The negative thinking, self-doubt, and self-sabotage that often characterize imposter syndrome can affect many areas of your life.

Causes of Imposter Syndrome

In the earliest studies, researchers found that imposter syndrome was connected to factors including early family dynamics and gender stereotypes.2 Subsequent research has shown, however, that the phenomenon occurs in people of all backgrounds, ages, and genders.

Family Upbringing

Research suggests that upbringing and family dynamics can play an important role in imposter syndrome. Specifically, [parenting styles](https://www.verywellmind.com/parenting-styles-2795072) characterized by being controlling or overprotective may contribute to the development of imposter syndrome in children.4

For example, you might have come from a family that highly valued achievement. Or you may have had parents who flipped back and forth between offering praise and being critical.

Studies also suggest that people who come from families that experienced [high levels of conflict](https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-handle-unresolved-conflict-in-your-family-3144978) with low amounts of support may be more likely to experience imposter syndrome.5

New Work or School Opportunities

We also know that entering a new role can trigger impostor syndrome. For example, starting college might leave you feeling as though you don't belong and are not capable. You may also experience the same feelings when starting a new position at work.

Imposter syndrome appears to be more common when people are going through transitions and trying new things.The [pressure to achieve](https://www.verywellmind.com/pressure-to-be-high-achievers-impacts-mental-health-of-teen-girls-5214326) and succeed, combined with a lack of experience, can trigger feelings of inadequacy in these new roles and settings.

Personality

Certain personality traits have also been linked to a higher risk of experiencing imposter syndrome. Some traits or characteristics that might play a role include:

* **Low self-efficacy**: [Self-efficacy](https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-self-efficacy-2795954) refers to your belief in your ability to succeed in any given situation.
* **Perfectionism**: [Perfectionism](https://www.verywellmind.com/overcoming-perfectionism-how-to-work-past-perfectionism-3144700) plays a significant role in impostor syndrome. You might think that there is some perfect "script" for conversations and that you cannot say the wrong thing. You may also have trouble asking for help from others and procrastinate due to your own high standards.
* [**Neuroticism**](https://www.verywellmind.com/how-neuroticism-affects-your-behavior-4782188): Neuroticism is one of the [big five personality dimensions](https://www.verywellmind.com/the-big-five-personality-dimensions-2795422) that is linked to higher levels of anxiety, insecurity, tension, and guilt.

Social Anxiety

Impostor syndrome and social anxiety may overlap. A person with social anxiety disorder may feel as though they don't belong in social or performance situations, for instance.

You might be in a conversation with someone and feel as though they are going to discover your social incompetence. Or you may be delivering a presentation and feel as though you just need to get through it before anyone realizes you really don't belong there.

While the [symptoms of social anxiety](https://www.verywellmind.com/social-anxiety-disorder-symptoms-and-diagnosis-4157219) can fuel imposter syndrome, this does not mean that everyone who experiences imposter syndrome has social anxiety or vice versa. People without social anxiety can also feel a lack of confidence and competence. Imposter syndrome often causes normally non-anxious people to experience a sense of anxiety when they are in situations where they feel inadequate.

Imposter Syndrome vs. Discrimination

Feeling like an outsider isn't necessarily a result of imposter syndrome. In some cases, it can occur due to actual discrimination or exclusion due to systemic bias. With imposter syndrome, the feeling of being an outsider is caused by internal beliefs. With discrimination, the feeling is caused by the actions of others.

Coping With Imposter Syndrome

To get past impostor syndrome, it helps to start asking yourself some hard questions. Here are a few to consider:

* What core beliefs do I hold about myself?
* Do I believe I am worthy of love as I am?
* Must I be perfect for others to approve of me?

To move past these feelings, you need to become comfortable confronting some of the deeply ingrained beliefs you hold about yourself. This exercise can be hard because you might not even realize that you hold them, but here are some techniques you can use:

* **Share your feelings.** Talk to other people about how you are feeling. [Irrational beliefs](https://www.verywellmind.com/do-your-thoughts-cause-panic-disorder-2584063) tend to fester when they are hidden and not talked about.
* **Focus on others.** While this might feel counterintuitive, try to help others in the same situation as you. If you see someone who seems awkward or alone, ask them a question to bring them into the group. As you practice your skills, you will build confidence in your own abilities.
* **Assess your abilities.** If you have long-held beliefs about your incompetence in social and performance situations, make a realistic assessment of your abilities. Write down your accomplishments and what you are good at, then compare these with your self-assessment.
* **Take baby steps.** Don't focus on doing things perfectly, but rather, do things reasonably well and reward yourself for taking action. For example, in a group conversation, offer an opinion or share a story about yourself.
* **Question your thoughts.**As you start to assess your abilities and take baby steps, question whether your thoughts are rational. Does it make sense to believe that you are a fraud given everything that you know?
* **Stop comparing.**Every time you [compare yourself to others](https://www.verywellmind.com/the-stress-of-social-comparison-4154076) in a social situation, you will find some fault with yourself that fuels the feeling of not being good enough or not belonging. Instead, during conversations, focus on listening to what the other person is saying. Be genuinely interested in learning more.
* **Use social media moderately.** We know that the [overuse of social media](https://www.verywellmind.com/social-network-use-and-social-anxiety-disorder-4117143) may be related to feelings of inferiority. If you try to portray an image on social media that doesn't match who you really are or that is impossible to achieve, it will only make your feelings of being a fraud worse.
* **Stop fighting your feelings.** Don't fight the feelings of not belonging. Instead, try to lean into them and accept them. It's only when you acknowledge these feelings that you can start to unravel the core beliefs that are holding you back.
* **Refuse to let it hold you back.**No matter how much you feel like you are a fraud or that you don't belong, don't let that stop you from [pursuing your goals](https://www.verywellmind.com/goal-setting-and-social-anxiety-disorder-3973936). Keep going and refuse to be stopped.

Strategies to cope with imposter feelings include talking about what you are experiencing, questioning your negative thoughts, and avoiding comparing yourself to others.

Remember that if you are feeling like an impostor, it means you have some degree of success in your life that you are attributing to luck. Try instead to turn that feeling into one of [gratitude](https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-gratitude-5206817). Look at what you have accomplished in your life and be grateful for your achievements.

Don't be held back by your fear of being found out. Instead, lean into that feeling and get to its roots. Let your guard down and allow others to see the real you. If you've done all these things and still feel like an impostor, which is holding you back, a [mental health professional](https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-choose-the-right-therapist-for-you-4842306) can help you learn how to overcome these feelings.

***LIFE SKILLS TOOL BOX FOR COACH’S***

QUESTIONS YOU ASK AS A COACH:

To be effective, a life skills coach needs to understand their client’s envisioned future and their existing situation. Understand their mindset and what makes them happy, sad, angry, and what brings positive emotions.

Establish Direction: What is your client’s hopes to achieve from their sessions with you: clarity helps you tailor your process to their time frame, whether it is longer or a shorter time frame.

What do you hope to have accomplished by the end of our sessions together?

How will you specifically know what success looks like for you?

What would be the most significant success you could hope for from our meeting?

TAPPING INTO VALUES:

Often, clients will be look to solve a problem as well as achieve a goal. For instance, a client may feel he is not living up to the values he/she believe in by being an interactive father/mother. If you think this is appropriate, you might dig just a bit deeper into these to tease out a compelling why – helping you later to gain commitment and motivation.

With a little tie, it can also help to use a structured values assessment to pin down what your client considers important.

1. What other aspects of your life do you feel will be improved by accomplishing this?
2. How will you achieve this goal?
3. Why is it important to accomplish this goal?

ENCOURAGE SELF-INQUIRY:

Coaching is not about spoon feeding answers: it’s about inviting the coachee to take a good look inside at their perspectives. Self-inquiry is vital in helping clients motivate, plan for barriers, and develop a persuasive rationale for action.

1. How do you feel you could best motivate yourself?
2. What are the best ways for you to support yourself at this point?
3. If you had no restrictions at all, who would you be?

When asking about or discussing a client’s goals, it helps to make it relevant. These questions are phrased generically, but should ideally be customized to the coachee. “How will achieving this goal enrich your life?” would thus become “how would becoming a professional builder enrich your life?”

Many life skills coaches choose to use some form of framework to structure their sessions.

QUENZA is an online coaching application that allows you to assign customized questionnaires to your client. (Quenza website).

The “GROW MODEL” Coaching Questions:

The Grow Model is a four step framework for coaches to help structure coaching sequences.

G – Goal: Establish a client’s overall objectives

R – Reality: Understanding their current situation or “reality” before taking action

O – Options/Opportunities: Looking possible options they might pursue

W – Way Forward/What’s next/Will: Deciding on the actions they will take going forward

California Cognitive Behavioral Institutes Model: AWARENESS + ACTION = CHANGE

Given that each stage has a distinct aim, a coach will be required to ask different relevant questions as the process unfolds.

Goal:

The core question of this first stage is “What is your long term goal?” This stage aims to tap into the personal values that underpin your client’s desires and create some clarity around what they want to achieve.

Example:

1. What matters to you the most concerning this value/life domain?
2. What are you keen to accomplish through this personal coaching session?
3. What would you like to see happen?
4. What is it specifically that you want to achieve?
5. Describe your ideal outcome from this coaching…..
6. Tell me more about this perfect result?
7. Why do you want to achieve this goal?
8. What is the deeper meaning or personal significance that this goal has for you?
9. What positive things do you feel will happen if you accomplish what you’re trying to achieve?
10. Tell me how you will know if you’ve attained your desired outcome?

Current Reality:

This primary question here is “What is your context or situation right now?”

In this phase, your primary goal as a coach is to help your client with more awareness of their existing situation. “Current Reality” questions also help you understand a little more about where you’re starting from together so that you can help them as you progress.

Questions in this stage are designed to facilitate self-evaluation, helping your client discover what may have been standing in their way of achieving their goal. Active listening plays a vital role during this stage – as you probe deeper into a client’s responses, it’s not unusual to uncover thought patterns or schema that are worth challenging.

Questions:

1. At this point, what’s happening now to you? What impact or influence is this having?
2. Tell me more about this……with whom? Where? When?
3. Have you tried doing anything thus far to achieve your goal?
4. I’m curious about what you did …..How did it go for you? Share some examples with me….
5. Where do you feel you are now concerning your life goal? Would you be able to rank this out of 10?
6. So far, what has helped you progress? What has held you back? Tell me about the last time this happened……
7. What do you feel you need to achieve your goal?
8. If you asked for this resource, what would happen?
9. What could you do differently this time around?
10. Has anybody you know achieve the same goal? How did they manage?

OPTIONS:

The main underpinning question here is “What are your options or opportunities for action?

This stage focuses on a client investigating different possible pathways, solutions, or routes to accomplishing their goal. Brainstorming with a coach may be beneficial to them.

Questions:

1. What do you see as the first step to accomplishing your goal?
2. What might you do to take you closer after that?
3. Can you think of some alternatives? Is there another way?
4. Who might you ask for help? Who else?
5. In the past what has worked for you? What did you learn from that?
6. Tell me what you think would happen if you tried doing that?
7. What are the pros and cons of this option?
8. Which possible pathway do you feel prepared to go down?
9. What would you do if time/money/resources weren’t an issue?
10. How will you measure your progress using this option?

WILL/WHAT’S NEXT/WAY FORWARD

The key questions of this stage are “What will you do next? What’s the way forward?”

Having generated multiple pathways for your client to pursue, it’s time to narrow it down to a single realistic option and garner commitment to it. Asking the right questions in this stage will help your client solidify an action plan and feel motivated to start following it.

Questions:

1. Which opportunity are you going to pursue?
2. What specific actions will you take to achieve your goal? What is your time frame?
3. What are the steps you’re going to take? What is the very first thing you will do?
4. What are the next 3 steps? What else?
5. Have you considered the potential barriers?
6. Tell me how you plan to overcome these obstacles….
7. Who will you ask to help you along the way? What else will you need?
8. How committed do you feel to this particular opportunity, out of 10?
9. What are some ways you can get to 10?
10. How are you going to know that you’ve succeeded?

WHAT IS INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING?

Instructional coaching is content-based approach to development that is intended to develop teachers. Content-based means that instructional coaching may cover specific topics such as literacy or math; its goal is to positively impact student outcomes through the professional development of educators.

WORKPLACE COACHING:

One on one sessions with an employee.

COACHING FOR HEALTH:

Empowerment is the focus here. Helping a patient with self-motivation, encouragement and creating more positive relationships.

Questions:

1. What is your focus today?
2. What is it you’d like to get from our conversations?
3. What matters the most to you regarding this?
4. What do you imagine it would look like if you accomplished this?
5. Describe the existing situation….
6. What do you think you will need to do?
7. Have you successfully handles a similar situation?
8. What is your next step after today?
9. How will you keep yourself on track?

JOB COACHING:

Offer help to foster self-awareness in the coachee – accountability with co-workers, and will involve:

1. Setting objectives and determining priorities
2. Developing a positive mindset
3. Challenging unhelpful thought patterns
4. Helping to change unproductive behaviors
5. Strength-spotting
6. Fostering motivation

NARRATIVE COACHING:

With this coaching, a client is invited to become more attuned to the stories they tell themselves and let go of those which are unhelpful. By doing so, they are encouraged to create more useful narratives.

6 Key Principles in Narrative Coaching:

1. Everything a coach needs is right in front of them
2. That they should try to be fully present to reality without judgment
3. Speaking is only valuable when it offers something better than silence
4. The emphasis is on encouraging experiences rather than explanations
5. The client should remain actively connected and engaged
6. Whatever they have externalized – work with it

In all sessions, encourage accountability, commitment and motivating actions.

THIRD PHASE OF NARRATIVE COACHING IS CALLED THE “SHIFT”:

Here a client readies themselves to leave the old story behind and replace with new stories they want to create.

Examples:

1. What do you feel is in the way of you making the change?
2. What will you need in place to get started?
3. What past experiences can you draw from to help you pivot?
4. What can you do instead of what you have done before?

Narrative coaching should try to integrate the changes the client has experimented with – creating a new narrative in which they can tell themselves the next time a similar situation arises. Sustain phase questions are about making plans and identifying ways to deal with challenges that may occur. They include:

1. What obstacles do you feel could come your way?
2. How could you work with these challenges and experience your new narrative?
3. How will this story support you to change?

***TOOL BOX 1: Are You Highly Sensitive?***

**A Self-Test** Elaine N. Aron, 1996

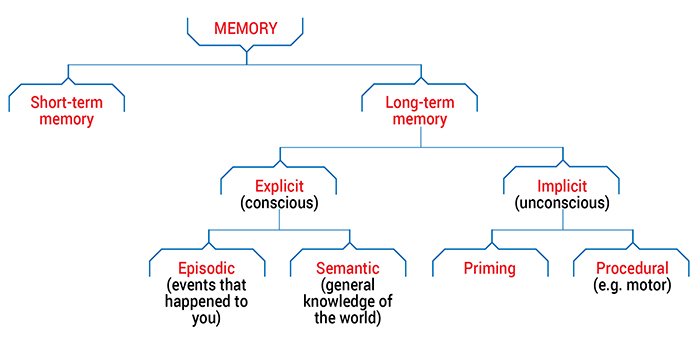
*Instructions:* Answer each question according to the way you personally feel. Check the box if it is at least somewhat true for you; leave unchecked if it is not very true or not at all true for you.

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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | I am easily overwhelmed by strong sensory input. |
|  | I seem to be aware of subtleties in my environment. |
|  | Other people's moods affect me. |
|  | I tend to be very sensitive to pain. |
|  | I find myself needing to withdraw during busy days,into bed or into a darkened room or any place where I can have some privacy and relief from stimulation. |
|  | I am particularly sensitive to the effects of caffeine. |
|  | I am easily overwhelmed by things like bright lights, strong smells, coarse fabrics or sirens close by. |
|  | I have a rich, complex inner life. |

**TOOL BOX 2: TYPES OF MEMORY**

**Here are the 7 types of memory.**

*Image credit: Queensland Brain Institute*

**1. Short-Term Memory**

Short-term memory only lasts 20 to 30 seconds. It stores information temporarily and then either dismisses it or transfers it to long-term memory.

It is also sometimes called working memory, although working memory is more specific to information that we receive, **use quickly, then discard**. For example, a phone number, a person’s name, or what you’re going to buy from the market are stored in your short-term working memory for just as long as it takes you to use it.

**2. Long-Term Memory**

Our long-term memories are a bit more complex than our short-term memories. Anything that happened **more than a few minutes ago** would be stored in long-term memory. Depending on how often we recall or use a certain piece of information, the strength of the memory varies.

Long-term memory is **divided into explicit and implicit** memories.

**3. Explicit Memory**

Explicit memories are a type of long-term memory which you remember after consciously thinking about it. For example, **the name of your childhood dog** or your best friend’s house phone number!

There are two types of explicit memory--**episodic and semantic**.

**4. Episodic Memory**

Episodic memories are **a type of explicit memory** that relate to our own personal lives. For example, a particularly exciting Christmas morning, the day you got married, or even what you had for dinner last night.

Studies have shown that autobiographical, or "episodic", memories aren’t necessarily accurate because **we reconstruct them over time** and they change and adapt to the new context in which we recall them.

Our ability to retain episodic memories depends on how emotionally powerful the experiences were.

For example, many people remember where they were and what they were doing when 9/11 happened.  Not only would this involve a very powerful emotional reaction, you would probably also have been very focused as it occurred.

**When our**[**brains are extremely focused**](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/5-best-practices-for-handling-outside-normal-range-alertmeter-scores)**, it becomes easier to process and store sensory input which in turn makes it easier to later recall the experience.**

**5. Semantic Memory**

Semantic memory accounts for our **general knowledge of the world**.

For example, the fact that the sky is blue, giraffes have long necks, and puppies are cute.

Unlike episodic memory, we are able to maintain the strength and accuracy of our semantic memory over time. As we age, it begins to decline slowly.

**6. Implicit Memory**

Implicit memory is the second major type of long-term memory. It comprises memories that you don’t have to consciously recall.

For example, **riding a bike** or speaking a language. Even though it may require a lot of conscious thought while learning, at some point it became implicit and you did it **automatically.**

In the 1990 movie Total Recall, Arnold Schwarzenegger dreamed of becoming a secret agent in Mars without consciously knowing that he actually was a secret agent in Mars before his memory was wiped and rewritten.

This **subconscious** attraction to espionage and other planets might have been a type of implicit memory for Arnold.

**7. Procedural Memory**

Procedural memory is a **type of implicit memory** allows us to **do certain tasks** **without thinking** about them.

Besides riding a bike, it also includes tying a shoe, brushing our teeth, or driving a car.

It is likely that procedural memory is stored in a different part of the brain than episodic memory because people who experience traumatic brain injuries often either forget autobiographical information or forget how to perform simple tasks like walking or feeding themselves.

Now that you know about each of the types of memory, here are some ways to keep each one in tip-top shape.

**Methods to Sharpen Your Memory**

**1. Testing**

Several studies have found that being tested for information helps create stronger memories.

For example, students who were repeatedly tested on a list of vocabulary words in a foreign language performed better on the final test than students who were given extra time to study.

This concept is known as test-enhanced learning and is based on the theory that **repeated retrieval of information has a greater impact on the memory than longer study periods**. This effect can be further enhanced by immediate feedback after each retrieval.

So, the next time you’re giving a presentation or teaching something, instead of lecturing your audience, ask them questions. Get their neurons to fire up and form new connections by making them continually retrieve the new information. Cement the new long-term memory by giving them **immediate feedback**.

You don’t need to be a child to enjoy feedback. Anyone can get a release of dopamine when they receive positive feedback.

**2. Sleep**

I know we haven't shut up about sleep recently; however, as sleep expert and neuroscientist Dr. Matthew Walker said:

**“Sleep is the greatest legal performance enhancing drug that most people are probably neglecting.”**

While we sleep, our brains process and store long-term memories.

During Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep, the brain replays memory sequences that we learned while awake, except 20 times faster. Through this process, memories are consolidated and stored for long-term use.

In addition to **strengthening our memories**, sleep also helps us **learn new information**.

Researchers found that students who were deprived of sleep after learning a new skill had a significantly weaker memory of that skill than students who received adequate sleep.

Not only will getting at least 8 hours a night help you learn and remember new information, it can also **lessen the risk of developing Alzheimer’s** as you age (according to Dr. Walker, see below).

**3. Sensory Input**

In addition to exercising your brain by frequently retrieving information, engaging all your senses with the experience also makes a big impact on how well you’ll remember it later on.

If you**involve all 5 senses** in the experience--if you can hear, see, smell, taste, and smell it--then you will be able to recall it better in the future.

Smells seem to be especially powerful in evoking strong, emotional memories. For me, the smell of petunias and jasmine flowers immediately transport me to my childhood summers while living in Turkey.

For some, the smell of fresh-baked cookies may carry them back into their grandma’s kitchen.

So, when improving memory, we must **try to engage each sense as powerfully as possible**. We remember experiences that smell amazing, look beautiful, taste delicious, or sound lovely.

We also remember horrible experiences--nearly freezing to death on a camping trip, getting food poisoning from eating something disgusting, or even seeing a really gruesome scary movie.

I accidentally saw when I was young and will never be able to get the memory out of my head. If you don’t have the resources to make an experience powerfully pleasant, then you may remember it just as well by making it powerfully unpleasant.

**4. Drink some coffee.**

If you’re one of those people who need coffee in the morning before you do anything or talk to anyone, you’re probably a firm believer in the strong [cognitive boost](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/what-are-fatigue-countermeasures) it offers.

Caffeine is one of the most popular cognitive enhancers in the world, and besides preventing drowsiness, [**it can enhance cognitive functions**](https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/caffeine-healthy-diet-may-boost-memory-thinking-skills-alcohols-effect-uncertain-201406187219)**such as memory, motivation, or creativity.**(*Health.Harvard.edu)*

Overuse and misuse of caffeine and other cognitive enhancement drugs can be dangerous and disruptive of your natural sleep cycle.

So, have your cup or two of coffee in the morning but limit caffeine 4-5 hours before bedtime.

A [good night’s sleep](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/6-ways-sleeplessness-affects-your-day-a-glimpse-inside-your-fatigued-brain) will always be the safest and most effective cognitive enhancer.

**5. Minimize Stress**

Although we are more likely to remember a particularly stressful experience for a long time, **attempting to learn or form new memories *while*under stress is rarely successful**.

Stress alters the way our brains process information and how the memory is stored.

**6. Minimize Distractions**

It may be obvious, but few people actually make the commitment to reduce distractions while attempting to learn new information or create new memories.

Instead of getting up for another cup of coffee or *looking*for new distractions to “clear our minds” or “switch it up”, **our brains could function much more efficiently just by reducing noise, disabling digital notifications, and clearing clutter from our work/study areas.**

Multitasking also counts as distraction. Although many people believe themselves to be quite adept at it, scientific [studies](https://link.springer.com/article/10.3758/s13423-015-0907-3) have repeatedly proven that the brain actually rapidly switches between tasks rather than doing both simultaneously, thereby reducing the quality and efficiency of our performance in each task. [Studies](https://link.springer.com/article/10.3758/s13423-015-0907-3)have also shown that **multitasking impairs both long-term and short-term memory.**

**7. Smell rosemary**

[In a 2003 study](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12690999), a group of volunteers were given a series of long-term memory, short-term memory, and attention and reaction tests.

Some of the participants took the test in a room infused with lavender oil, some took it in a room infused with rosemary oil, and others took the test scent-free.

Those who took the test in the **rosemary scented room reported feeling more alert and performed significantly better** on the memory tests than those in the unscented room.

Those in the lavender scented room performed the worst and reported feeling less alert.

Although more studies are required to confirm the alertness-inducing effects of rosemary, it wouldn’t hurt to test it out yourself in the meantime and deck your workplace out with a few new plants.

**8. Eat well**

Scientists recommend **eating foods high in antioxidants** to keep the brain young and maintain memory function as we age.

This is because antioxidants kill “free radicals” that enter our bloodstream before they can kill our brain cells.

These include **blueberries, apples, bananas, dark green vegetables, garlic and carrots**. Chocolate also has antioxidants called flavanols. However, eating too much of it can backfire and give you a sugar rush and crash instead.

In addition to antioxidants, the brain benefits extremely from healthy fats like Omega-3 fatty acids which are found in **fish and nuts**. So, try to be understanding when your coworkers come in smelling like tuna or peanut butter.

**9. Chew gum**

Similar to the rosemary theory, the gum chewing theory is one that does not guarantee results but wouldn’t hurt to try.

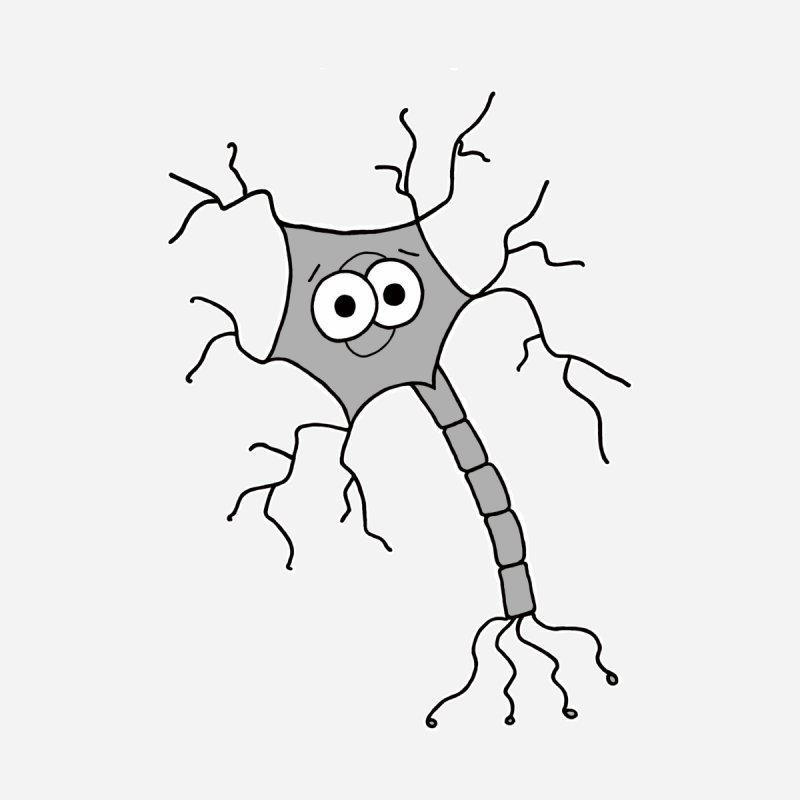
[In a 2002 study](https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/the-quirky-brain-chewing-gum-and-memory), gum-chewers performed significantly better on tests of both long-term and short-term memory than non-gum-chewers.

Many studies since then have also identified a **small but significant effect of gum chewing on memory and cognition**.

**10. Play brain games**

**The more you use your brain, the better it will run.** So, exercise it just like you would your body (and if you don't exercise your body, get that done too while you're at it). There are many brain exercise programs on the internet that are quickly gaining popularity.

[Lumosity](https://www.lumosity.com/en/landing_pages/landing?gclid=CjwKCAjwqJ_1BRBZEiwAv73uwOeNNgYfz-xGsJE9dnYPyix8j20fswfZQbu8TBZ0GfXXNARND6l9rhoC_IoQAvD_BwE), for example, was designed by neuroscientists to help aging people improve their memory, concentration, alertness, and even mood. You don’t have to be old to use it.If you’re not into that, there’s always sudoku and crossword puzzles to **keep your neurons on their toes.**

A neuron on its toes. (clipart.email.com)

**11. Exercise**

Even if you fill up your office with rosemary and chew more gum than Violet Beauregarde, you will be brain-dead without adequate sleep, a proper diet, and frequent exercise.

Scientists believe that **increased blood flow to the brain, as well as the mild stress of exercising, may result in the production of growth factors in the brain leading to**[**improved cognitive performance**](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/5-best-practices-for-handling-outside-normal-range-alertmeter-scores)**.**

[Recent research](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3041121/) has shown that **adults who walk regularly gain hippocampus volume**(memory center of brain) as opposed to losing it as they age.  So, just by walking, the participants reversed the impacts of aging on a major part of their brain.

**Conclusion**

Now that you know about the 7 different types of memory and how to keep your brain in tip-top shape, begin measuring how your daily choices may actually be affecting your cognitive functions.

**TOOL BOX 3: ACTIVE LISTENING**

**Active Listening**

Active listening is not the same as simply hearing and replying. In active listening, instead of passively absorbing the person’s words, the listener tries to comprehend, reflect, and respond to the speaker’s words and feelings.

Active listening builds trust and rapport with the person and offers ongoing feedback to let them know that they are understood. Active listening means that we acknowledge our own ignorance with regard to a person’s feelings and thoughts, and listen deeply in order to understand. A listener must be alert and aware not only of what is said but of what isn’t being said as well. When one thinks they know what is not being said, then one can clarify by it up and asking if that was what was being thought about as well.

Active listening is a most important tool. It is both an art and a skill that involves a constant process of clarification and reflection. There is a constant trying to understand more accurately what the speaker means in his/her various forms of communication.

Active listening is a learned skill requiring energy, concentration, and practice of specific techniques. Information and feelings is gathered using all your senses to understand. The process of active listening requires respect for self and others.

**Active Listening Includes:**

1. **Responding with empathy, respect, and genuineness**
2. **Comprehending and communicating the difference between feelings and thoughts**
3. **Accurately perceiving the others feelings and acknowledging and verbalizing back to them**
4. **Helping him/her to identify their feelings**
5. **Communicating, when appropriate, your own feelings**
6. **Refusing to take responsibility for their feelings, decisions, choices, as it is their responsibility and not ours**
7. **Giving ongoing feedback**
8. **Ability to help identify options and alternatives**
9. **Ability to be resourceful**

**TOOL BOX 4: ANGER HOKEY P0KEY!!**

You put your right word in and you pull your right word out. You shake it all about and that’s the anger hokey pokey…..well, you get the idea I hope!!!

Angry words are thrown out and then we try to pull them back in, once they are out there is not pulling them back in so we shake things up by doing hokey pokey behaviors and actions. Now lest you think I am on something when I write this, I am not, but want you to see how silly and hurtful we can be when we don’t think before we use anger inappropriately. Anger is an emotion that we were to use as part of our “fright and flight” response but was turned into “aggressive” responses instead of its intended safety response.

Anger is one of the most misunderstood and overused of human emotions. First, anger is a reaction to an inner emotion and not always a planned action. Second, anger is easier to show: everyone has anger issues. Third, the feelings underlying the anger reaction make us feel vulnerable and weak; your anger makes you feel, at least momentarily, strong and in control. Fourth, angry behaviors are learned over the life-span and therefore can be unlearned and replaced with healthier patterns of coping. Fifth, anger can be an immediate reaction to an isolated event or it can be a response after numerous events. Sixth, anger is part of our “entitlement” response and we hold on to it to “justify” our negative behaviors which fulfill our entitlement thoughts.

So should we repress anger? No. Hankins and Hankins, 1988, stated “to repress anger is unhealthy…..and to express it impulsively, as we often do, may give momentary relief but inevitably carry negative consequences.”

We learn how to handle our anger from our parents. If we see them get angry and resolve the issue without negative behaviors, we are more likely to use the same approach. So anger can be an emotion that we learn how to manage if we chose to do so. If we are tired, we are prone to react angry faster than if we aren’t tired. If we hold feelings inside, rather than talk them out with “mutuality” as part of our talking process, then we are more likely to build up our anger in the “pressure cooker of rumination” and explode in an angry outburst.

**Constance McKenzie, M.Ed (995) stated that we have Anger “Styles” and created an anger checklist:**

**Styles Of Anger**

Each of us develops their own special style of anger:

* The "Mad Hatter" Driver: This person yells, curses, and offers gestures to other drivers when s/he is in a hurry and frustrated.
* The Sulker: This person shuts down in a chair and stops speaking and looking at others.
* Safe Haven Abuser: This person takes her/his frustration out only on the ones s/he loves.
* The Distractor: This person disregards the object of his annoyance by reading the paper, forgetting to run an errand, or playing the radio too loudly. When s/he is confronted, the response is: I didn't know; I forgot; I'm tired.
* The Blamer: This person blames everybody for everything and rarely accepts responsibility for his own short comings.
* The Avenger: This person believes s/he has been given the right to seek vengeance in any way for anything by using the excuse: they deserved it.

**Anger Issues Check List -- How Is Your Anger?**

* People tell you that you need to calm down.
* You feel tense much of the time.
* At work, you find yourself not saying what is on your mind.
* When you are upset, you try to block the world out by watching TV, reading a book or magazine, or going to sleep.
* You are drinking or smoking marijuana almost daily to help you calm down.
* You have trouble going to sleep.
* You feel misunderstood or not listened too much of the time.
* People ask you not to yell or curse so much.
* Your loved ones keep saying that you are hurting them.
* Friends do not seek you out as much.

**Scoring:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **0 - 2** | **MANAGEABLE** | you could benefit from relaxation training |
| **3 - 5** | **MODERATE** | you need to learn more about what stresses you, and learn stress management techniques |
| **6 +** | **OUT OF CONTROL** | you have an anger problem that could benefit from learning anger management techniques |

**Conclusion**

Anger reactions have been likened to a train running out of control and about to derail. A little anger can motivate us to take action in positive ways. A lot of anger will make us "red with rage." The price for your anger is that you are out of control, you drive away those whom you love the most, and endanger your employment. Our old familiar ways of managing anger are not working for us and we need to learn to replace the old with new, more positive and beneficial techniques.

**TOOL BOX 5: AFFIRMATIONS**

What is an affirmation?

Affirmations are **positive statements that can help you to challenge and overcome self-sabotaging and negative** thoughts. When you repeat them often, and believe in them, you can start to make positive changes.

Why is an affirmation the most important tool in behavior and attitude change? The brain does exactly what we tell it to do. It's that simple.

**BRAIN AND RESEARCH ON HOW LONG IT TAKES THE BRAIN TO CHANGE WHEN LEARNING**:

Phillippa Lally is a health psychology researcher at University College London. In [a study](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.674/abstract) published in the European Journal of Social Psychology, Lally and her research team decided to figure out just how long it actually takes to form a habit.

**On average, it takes more than 2 months before a new behavior becomes automatic — 66 days to be exact.** And how long it takes a new habit to form can vary widely depending on the behavior, the person, and the circumstances**.**

Hadley Bergstrom is a neuroscientist at the National Institutes of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in Rockville, Md. His research states that it’s important to spread out learning over many days. That means learning a little bit at a time. Doing so allows links between neurons to steadily strengthen.

1-3 months for the brain to believe a change; 3-6 months for brain to solidify new change; 6-9 months for the brain to cement and have a new belief or behavior or change.

Studies show that another way to add to behavior/attitude change is to add meditation. Researchers say that meditating for 20 minutes a day grow better connection **in 8 weeks**. The cognitive abilities improved are linked to well-being (focus, calmness, ability to observe emotions and thoughts for just what they are, resilience).

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS FOR GROUP TO START OUT WITH:

1. I am an honorable man/woman

2. I am a respectful man/woman. I respect others/spouse's name

3. I am a loving man/woman

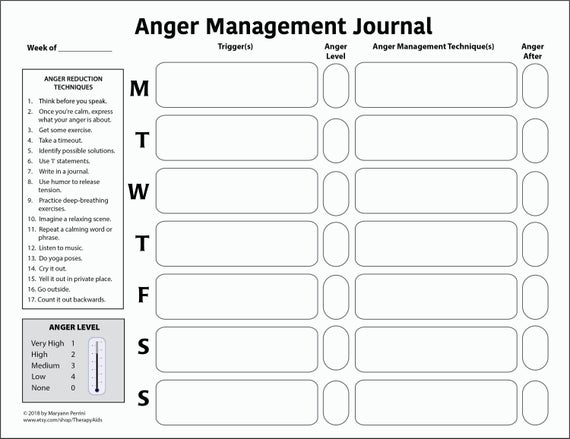
4. I honor my family

5. Every day I am kind and empathetic

6. Etc.

7. Have them come up with their own affirmations that are things they need to add to their own lives and have them share those with you to ensure they are in present/positive formats/sentences.

**TOOL BOX 6: ANGER LOG FOR MANAGEMENT OF ANGER**



**TOOL BOX 7: MOTIVATION**

**Raise your Energy Level**

Before you start your day, always do something that brings your energy level up and puts you in a good mood. For some people this can be inspiring music. For me I always have what I call my motivational music on when I am driving to any type of presentation.

I listen to songs that pump me up. Songs that say things like you are a winner, and go for the gold and you can do anything. By the time, I get out of the car I know I am winner and I for sure can do anything.

It is a known fact that music produces serotonin in your brain, which is the feel good endorphin. If music is not your thing then listen to motivational tapes. You can find some that make you feel like you are sitting on top of the world.

**\*Choose one or all these**[**motivation techniques**](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Words_of_Encouragement.html)**to get you going:**

**1. Listen to visualization Mp3's that guide you to opening your mind and creating your ideal life.** Any type of [mp3 that takes you through the process of seeing what you want to happen in your life.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Free_Life_Coaching_Products.html)

**2. Read about how someone else** is successfully doing what you are having difficulty with.  Read one page every morning to get motivated and to remind yourself it is *possible*. That is a surefire motivator that is easy to do.

**3. Help someone else get motivated.** Use your skills to show them how good life really is, motivating them with a pep talk. This way you hear exactly what you need to get motivated while helping another.

**4. Join a Mastermind Group or Support Group** when you are involved in a group where succeeding is the main goal you will get motivated every meeting. It's important you have other people who share the same goals. You will end up staying motivated longer knowing you have support.

**5. Expect to be motivated and believe you will.** Let people know that you feel really motivated about your career or life and that you cannot wait to start your next project or adventure.

Whatever you tell yourself all day long is what you will experience so carefully select the words you are repeating to yourself. If you are hard, on yourself that will de-motivate you and it is difficult to come back from that.

 The way to deal with this is do not even go down that road at all. Learn to talk to yourself with love and respect and that goes hand in hand with loving yourself.

[](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/images/orangestar.gif)

**Motivation Techniques for Finding Your Career Purpose**

One of the first things I do when I motivate other people is I get inspired first. This is easy if I am inspiring you on a subject that gets me fired up.

I want to point out that is one of the main motivational techniques. If you love what you are doing and you love what you're talking about your motivation around that will naturally soar.

As opposed to, trying something only because certain people think that is what you should be doing.  That will never result in fulfillment for you and therefore motivation would be out of the question. Choose a career that gives you natural inspiration.

If you feel connected and excited about what you do for a living, you will be able to get other people to feel the same way. It does not matter if you do not know anyone who ever succeed at your passion it is your passion and if you’re into it... **YOU WILL SUCCEED!** That I know from experience.

**\*Follow these five motivation techniques for a happy and successful career:**

**1.** Choose a profession that is your[passion in life.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Life-Purpose.html)

**2.** Be true to yourself when choosing a career.

**3.** If you're unhappy with your current career that is a sign that something is wrong. You want to take a look at the reasons why you are unhappy. Ask yourself if you would be happy in another profession or is your attitude the problem. You may need a [shift in your perception](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Creating.html)and everything may end up working out once you do that.

**4.** Re-evaluate if this is the career or business for you. Write out a pros and cons list and if the cons far outweigh the pros then it's time to move on.

**5.** Take a[career evaluation test](http://www.assessment.com/) to determine what career would be best suited for you. After you have that down, the momentum will flow.

**Motivation Techniques for Boosting Your Business**

One of my secret [motivation skills](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Increase_Energy.html) is getting back the passion you once had for you career.

Write an appreciation list of all the reasons you chose this career to begin with. You want to re-energize yourself by remembering what stood out in the first place about your product or service.

**TOOL BOX 7: EMOTIONS**

**WHAT ARE EMOTIONS FOR?**

It is said that our emotions guide us in facing predicaments and tasks too important to leave to intellect alone – danger, painful loss, persisting toward a goal despite frustrations, bonding with a mate, building a family. Each emotion offers a distinctive readiness to act, each points us in a direction that has worked well to handle the recurring challenges of human life (The Emotional Brain).

“All emotions are, in essence, impulses to act, the instant plans for handling life that has been instilled in us. The very root of the word “emotion” is Motere, the Latin very “to move,” plus the prefix “e” to connote, “move away,” suggesting that a tendency to act is implicit in every emotion. That emotions lead to actions is most obvious in watching animals or children; it is only in “civilized” adults we so often find the great anomaly in the animal kingdom, emotions – root impulses to act – divorced from obvious reactions.” (The Emotional Brain).

Each emotion plays a role in our lives and helps us to “to move” to something or away from something. Emotions also have biological identifiers as well. For instance with “anger” there is a surge of blood which flows to through our body to our hands, heart, increasing our hormones (adrenaline) and energy. With fear, the blood goes to the large skeletal muscles, like our legs, making it better for us to flee and away from our face, making us look drained or “white with fear” and also triggers circuits in the brain’s emotional center that flood hormones that put the body on notice for “fright and flight” responses.

Research use to think there were six basic emotions; happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear and disgust. But we know now that there are more including awe, appall, confusion, anxiety, etc. and when you mix and match these, you have got a palette capable of painting the whole entire human experience. These are our universal languages where we recognize and reflect each other's experience whether we speak the same language culturally or not.

The mind/body or “head and heart” (emotional and rational) – these two minds operate in tight harmony for the most part in our bodies. They help us balance between emotional and rational thoughts, with emotion feeding into and informing the operational mind, and the rational mind refining and sometimes vetoing the independent faculties, of the emotions. They are meant to work together for maximum effect.

The amygdale acts as the storehouse of emotional memory. More than affection is tied to it – all passion depends on it.

LeDoux stated that life’s earliest years lay down a set of emotional lessons based on the interactions between infant and caretaker, creating wordless blueprints for emotional life as they grow (Science, How Scary Things Get That Way, 1992).

The emotional brain controls rage and compassion. Neuroscientists use the facts essential for completing a given task or problem, whether it be the ideal features one seeks in a house while touring several prospects, or the elements of a reason problem on a test. The prefrontal cortex is the brain region responsible for working memory. But circuits from the limbic brain to the prefrontal lobes mean that the signals of strong emotion – anxiety, anger, and so on can create neural static, sabotaging the ability of the emotional lobe to maintain working memory. That is why when we are emotional upset we can we “just can’t think straight” – and why continual emotional distress can create deficits in a child’s intellectual abilities, crippling their capacity to learn.

These deficits are not always tapped by IQ testing and can show up through more targeted neuropsychological measures, as well as in a child’s continual agitation and impulsivity. In one study, primary school boys who had above average IQ scores were not doing well in school and found via neuropsychological testing to have impaired frontal cortex functioning. (Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 1999). They were impulsive and anxious¸ often disruptive and in trouble – suggesting faulty prefrontal control over their limbic urges. Despite their intellectual potential, these are the children at highest risk for problems like academic failure, alcoholism, and criminology – not because their intellect is deficient, but because their control over emotional life is impaired. The emotional brain controls rage and compassion and our emotional circuits are sculpted by experience through childhood – and the parents love and compassion for their children helps determine that experience.

CAN EMOTIONS BE INTELLIGENT?

Salovey, with his colleague John Mayer, offers an elaborated definition of emotional intelligence, expanding into five main domains:

* Knowing one’s emotions: Self awareness – recognizing a feeling as it happens – is the keystone of emotional intelligence.
* Managing emotions: Handling feelings so they are appropriate in an ability that builds on self-awareness.
* Motivating oneself: Marshalling emotions in the service of a goal is essential for paying attention, for self motivation and mastery, and for creativity. Emotional self control – delaying gratification and stifling impulsiveness – underlies accomplishment of every sort and our performance.
* Recognizing emotion in others: Empathy, another ability that builds on emotional self-awareness, is the fundamental “people skill.” People who are empathetic are more attuned to the subtle social signals that indicate what others need or want.
* Handling Relationships: The art of relationships is, in large part, skill in managing emotions in others. Social competency and incompetency are specifically involved. These are abilities that undergird popularity, leadership, and interpersonal effectiveness.

Men who are high in emotional intelligence are socially poised, outgoing and cheerful, not prone to fearfulness or worried rumination. They have a notable capacity for commitment to people or causes, for responsibility, and for having an ethical outlook; they are sympathetic and caring in their relationships. Their emotional life is rich, but appropriate; they are comfortable with themselves, others, and the social universe they live in.

Women who are high in emotional intelligence tend to be assertive and express themselves directly, and feel positive about self; life holds meaning for them. Like the men, they are outgoing, and gregarious, and express their feelings appropriately (rather than, say, in outbursts they later regret); they adapt well to stress. Their social poise lets them easily reach out to new people; they are comfortable enough with themselves to be playful, spontaneous, and open to sensual experience. They rarely feel anxious or guilty or sink into rumination. (Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman).

WHERE WE LEARN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

In moments of family where each person is participating in struggles, arguments, and interactions where emotions rise due to anger, pain, misunderstanding or other reasons, each person in the family is schooled in emotional learning. We learn how to feel about ourselves and how to feel about others reactions to our feelings, how to think about these feelings and what choices we have in reacting.

There are lots of studies that show that the way parents treat their children has deep and lasting consequences for the child’s emotional life. Only recently have there been hard data showing that having emotional intelligent parents is itself of enormous benefit to a child (Carol Hooven and John Gottman, University of Washington). They found that parents who were more emotionally competent in their marriages were also more effective in helping their children with their emotional ups and downs.

THE THREE MOST COMMON INEPT PARENTING STYLES

1. Ignoring feelings altogether. These parents treat their child’s emotional upsets as trivial or a bother. They fail to use emotional moments as a chance to get closer to a child or to help the child learn lessons in emotional competence.
2. Being to “laissez-faire.” These parents notice how a child feels but holds the views that however a child handles the emotional storm is fine, even when hitting or calling names at another. These parents rarely step in to try to show their child an alternative emotional response. They try to soothe all upsets using bargaining and bribes to get their children to stop being sad or angry.
3. Being contemptuous, showing no respect for how the child feels. Again these parents are typically disapproving, harsh in both feedback, their criticisms, and punishments. They are punitive at the least sign of irritability. They yell at their children while the children are trying to tell their side of the story and say things like “Don’t you talk back to me” or

“Because I said so,” etc.

There are parents who grab the opportunities when a child is upset to act as a emotional coach and mentor. They take their child’s feelings seriously and try to understand exactly what is happening in their child’s life to make the child react the way the child does to a given situation.

Our basic emotional lessons should include how to distinguish feelings, to understand the differences between grieving over a loss, feeling sad in a sad movie, and sadness that comes from something bad happening to someone else.

As children grow, the specific emotional lessons shift. The children who have good emotional lessons learned are better at handling their own emotions, are more effective at soothing themselves when upset and get upset less often. The children are more relaxed biologically, with lower levels of stress hormones and other physiological indicators of emotional arousal (a pattern that, if sustained throughout life, might well create better physical health, give them advantages socially and help them to be more popular with their peers.

The impact of parenting on emotional well-being starts in the cradle (Brazelton).

7 CRUCIAL INGREDIENTS RELATED TO GOOD EMOTIONAL HEALTH

1. Confidence: a sense of control and mastery of one’s body, behavior and world. A sense that he/she is more likely than not to succeed and that adults will be helpful.
2. Intentionality: the wish and capacity to have an impact and to act upon that with persistence. This is related to a sense of competence, of being effective.
3. Self-control: the ability to modulate and control ones own actions, age appropriate ways, a sense of inner control.
4. Relatedness: the ability to engage with others based on the sense of being understood by and understanding others.
5. Curiosity: a sense that finding out about things is positive and leads to pleasure.
6. Capacity to communicate: a wish and ability to verbally exchange ideas, feelings, and concepts with others. This is related to a sense of trust in others and of pleasure in engaging with others, including adults.
7. Cooperativeness: ability to balance one’s own needs with those of others in a group activity.

Whether or not a child arrives at with these capabilities depends greatly on how much the parents have given in the kind of care that is “Heart Start” or equivalent to the Head Start programs. Emotional learning begins in life’s earliest moments and continues throughout childhood.

**Understanding The Addictive Cycle**

**First - The Emotional Addiction**

The person feels the need for emotional or social comfort or excitement, and uses something unhealthily to gain these needs.  The person feels better for a time as this act has filled the need, but when the person gets in an uncomfortable situation or wants stimulation, s/he unthinkingly connects relief with the act.

**Second – The Mental Addiction**

Over a relatively short time, the act is equated with fulfillment of the need and the person becomes mentally hooked.  S/He needs to commit this act to cope with his/her emotions.  Even the smallest visual, emotional, or olfactory cues associated with the act unconsciously reminds the person of comfort or the needed excitement and s/he becomes uncomfortable because s/he is not getting that comfort or excitement.

In many addictions the person is hooked again, because s/he has collected people around him/her as friends who also like to participate in this act.  Often, to fit in socially, s/he needs to commit the act, as it is what they do when they get together.

**Third – The Physical Addiction**

The act becomes a physical or mental necessity as the body or mind becomes addicted to the act.  Overtime the body gains a tolerance to the act and need more stimulation. In such addiction where the act was originally used as a comfort or a coping tool to alleviate emotional or social discomfort, like in the addiction of drugs, alcohol, work or food, tolerance is overcome by performing the act more often.

To overcome tolerance in an addiction where excitement is the stimulus, such as in pornography, acts of vandalism, pyromania, or dare-devil stunts the person needs usually choose to perform a similar act that will provide a greater adrenaline rush.

Tolerance happens because the body or mind becomes used to the smaller dosages or occurrences of the act and needs more to get the same relief or high.

The addict feels emotional pain and guilt because of the performance of the act because s/he cannot control the continual need to do the act.  Plus, depending on the addiction, there is the physical and/or emotional pain that results from withdrawal symptoms, because of the lack of the act..

The whole process begins again because the person seeks relief from the pain and guilt by committing the act

**TOOL BOX 8 : DEALING WITH HOSTILE PEOPLE**

Research shows that supportive relationships are good for our mental and physical health. However, dealing with difficult people and maintaining ongoing negative relationships is actually detrimental to our health. It’s a good idea to diminish or eliminate relationships that are filled with conflict. But what do you do if the person in question is a family member, co-worker, or someone you otherwise can’t easily eliminate from your life?

The following are tips for dealing with difficult people who are in your life, for better or for worse:

**Difficulty:** Average

**Time Required:** Ongoing

**Here's How:**

1. **Keep Conversations Neutral** Avoid discussing divisive and personal issues, like religion and politics, or other issues that tend to cause conflict. If the other person tries to engage you in a discussion that will probably become an argument, change the subject or leave the room.
2. **Accept The Reality of Who They Are** In dealing with difficult people, don’t try to change the other person; you will only get into a power struggle, cause defensiveness, invite criticism, or otherwise make things worse. It also makes *you* a more difficult person to deal with.
3. **Know What's Under Your Control** Change your response to the other person; this is all you have the power to change. For example, don’t feel you need to accept abusive behavior. You can use assertive communication to draw boundaries when the other person chooses to treat you in an unacceptable way.
4. **Create Healthier Patterns** Remember that most relationship difficulties are due to a *dynamic* between two people rather than one person being unilaterally "bad." Chances are good that you're repeating the same patterns of interaction over and over; changing your response could get you out of this rut, and responding in a healthy way can improve your chances of a healthier pattern forming. Here’s a list of things to avoid in dealing with conflict. Do you do any of them?
5. **See The Best In People** Try to look for the positive aspects of others, especially when dealing with family, and focus on them. The other person will feel more appreciated, and you will likely enjoy your time together more.
6. **Remember Who You're Dealing With: s**eeing the best in someone is important; however, don’t pretend the other person’s negative traits don’t exist. Don’t tell your secrets to a gossip, rely on a flake, or look for affection from someone who isn’t able to give it. This is part of accepting them for who they are.
7. **Get Support Where You Can Find It** Get your needs met from others who are able to meet your needs. Tell your secrets to a trustworthy friend a good listener, or process your feelings through journaling for example. Rely on people who have proven themselves to be trustworthy and supportive, or find a good therapist if you need one. This will help you *and* the other person by taking pressure off the relationship and removing a source of conflict.
8. **Let Go Or Get Space If You Need It** Know when it’s time to distance yourself, and do so. If the other person can’t be around you without antagonizing you, minimizing contact may be key. If they’re continually abusive, it's best to cut ties and let them know why. Explain what needs to happen if there ever is to be a relationship, and let it go. (If the offending party is a boss or co-worker, you may consider switching jobs.)

**Tips:**

1. Try not to place blame on yourself or the other person for the negative interactions. It may just be a case of your two personalities fitting poorly.
2. Remember that you don't have to be close with everyone; just being polite goes a long way toward getting along and appropriately dealing with difficult people.
3. Work to maintain a sense of humor - difficulties will roll off your back much more easily. Shows like “The Office” and books like David Sedaris' Naked can help you see the humor in dealing with difficult people.
4. Be sure to cultivate other more positive relationships in your life to offset the negativity of dealing with difficult people.

These are ten productive ways to deal with your difficult individual. Let's start with the first five.

* **Start out by examining yourself.** Are you sure that the other person is really the problem and that you're not overreacting? Have you always experienced difficulty with the same type of person or actions? Does a pattern exist for you in your interaction with coworkers? Do you recognize that you have hot buttons that are easily pushed? (We all do, you know.) Always start with self-examination to determine that the object of your attention really is a difficult person’s actions.
* **Explore what you are experiencing with a trusted friend or colleague or mental health professional.** Brainstorm ways to address the situation. When you are the object of an attack, or your boss appears to support the dysfunctional actions of a coworker, it is often difficult to objectively assess your options. Anger, pain, humiliation, fear and concern about making the situation worse are legitimate emotions.  
    
  Pay attention to the unspoken agreement you create when you solicit another’s assistance. You are committing to act unless you agree actions will only hurt the situation. Otherwise, you risk becoming a whiner or complainer in the eyes of your colleague.
* **Approach the person with whom you are having the problem for a private discussion.** Talk to them about what you are experiencing in “I” messages. (Using “I” messages is a communication approach that focuses on your experience of the situation rather than on attacking or accusing the other person.) You can also explain to your coworker the impact of their actions on you.  
    
  Be pleasant and agreeable as you talk with the other person. They may not be aware of the impact of their words or actions on you. They may be learning about their impact on you for the first time. Or, they may have to consider and confront a pattern in their own interaction with people. Worst case? They may know their impact on you and deny it or try to explain it away. Unfortunately, some difficult people just don’t care. During the discussion, attempt to reach agreement about positive and supportive actions going forward.
* **Follow up after the initial discussion.** Has the behavior changed? Gotten better? Or worse? Determine whether a follow-up discussion is needed. Determine whether a follow-up discussion will have any impact. Decide if you want to continue to confront the difficult person by yourself. Become a peacemaker. (Decide how badly you want to make peace with the other person and how much you want your current job. Determine whether you have experienced a pattern of support from your boss.) If you answer, “yes,” to these questions, hold another discussion. If not, escalate and move to the next idea.
* **You can confront your difficult coworker’s (significant other behaviors) publicly.** Deal with the person with gentle humor or slight sarcasm. Or, make an exaggerated physical gesture – no, not that one – such as a salute or place your hand over your heart to indicate a serious wounding.  
    
  You can also tell the difficult person that you’d like them to consider important history in their decision making or similar words expressed positively, depending on the subject. Direct confrontation does work well for some people in some situations. I don’t think it works to ask the person to stop doing what they’re doing, publicly, but you can employ more positive confrontational tactics. Their success for you will depend on your ability to pull them off. Each of us is not spur-of-the-moment funny, but if you are, you can use the humor well with difficult coworkers.

**TOOL BOX 9: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Discuss using “active listening” techniques, passive listening techniques, “I” statements,

Mirroring techniques, etc.

**Communication Importance**

The importance of communication can be summed up in only a few words :

* Happiness
* Success
* Harmonious relationships with the people

**Benefits of effective communication**

* Rewarding and happy relationships with others
* Easily build rapport with spouse, significant other, friends, new acquaintances
* Getting what you want in a respectful and mutually beneficial way
* More time for yourself and others
* Satisfaction and success in life

**Failing to communicate effectively**

* Professional setbacks
* Personal disappointment
* Breakdown of important relationships
* Wasting energy and time on frustration and dramas
* Not reaching our full potential

**TOOL BOX 10: HAPPINESS AND YOU**

Don’t you love being around people who laugh, tell jokes, and find the “fun” in life? I know I do. Have you ever been someplace and people were laughing so hard, and you wanted to know what the laughter was all about? Again, I know I have. Laughter is contagious, it builds relationships, lowers blood pressure and creates social networks. Laughter and happiness have also been shown by scientists to create longevity of life.

Happiness or success: Which comes first for you? (Happiness Advantage)

You probably don’t realize it, but you answer that question every time your brain says, "I'll be happy when I pay off my mortgage" or "when I fall in love again" or "when I can retire." The formula is clear: Work harder, then you'll be successful, then you'll be happier.

We learned this formula from watching movies and TV commercials, which are heavily invested in having us believe a certain product or lifestyle will make us happy. The whole rags-to-riches American dream is based on the belief that once you finally "make it," you'll be content. But we've had ample evidence that those celebrities and millionaires aren't so happy off-camera.

**Why the Success-Then-Happiness Formula Doesn't Work**

Actually, there are two reasons. First, every time we hit a success, our brain moves the goalpost of where success is. Second, your brain actually works in the opposite order. The happier your brain, the more successful you feel (and start to act) — not the other way around. Thus our society's fundamental formula for success and happiness is inherently flawed.

January 2012 cover story for the Harvard Business Review Magazine, made a research case for why happiness leads to success, if you reverse the formula by pursuing happiness first, you wind up with greater happiness *and* greater success.

12 years at Harvard researching happiness, researchers discovered several ways in which happiness actually boosts success. Dopamine, for example, is a chemical released in the brain when you are happy. This drug not only makes you seek more happiness, it turns on every learning center in the brain, raising your mental focus and making you three times as creative, which, in turn, tends to lead to more and greater success.

If you adopt happiness as a work ethic and you train your brain to be positive just like you exercise to strengthen your body – you will find success. This may sound simple, but how easy is it to go to the gym? Happiness is not something that happens to you. Happiness is created.

**TOOL BOX 11: HOW TO DEAL WITH A DIFFICULT SITUATION**

At some point in your life you will find yourself involved in awkward moments or difficult situations. These moments can range from feeling embarrassment to divorce or dealing with the death of a loved one. Your difficult situation may be related to your finances, your marriage, your children or your [job](http://www.ehow.com/careers/). However, there are steps and actions you can take to handle any difficult situation that life may bring.

* Realize that your difficult situation is all in how you perceive it. What may seem difficult now will not seem difficult later. What may seem difficult to you may not be difficult to others.
* Realize you have a choice in how you handle your difficult situations. You can choose to be positive or you can choose to be negative. Try to find the find the positive in every situation that life may bring.
* Be resourceful. Never give up or give in when faced with a challenge. Find out as much information as you can about your situation whether that means talking to someone who has been through it or looking it up in the yellow pages or on the internet to find resources to help you get through the situation.
* Deal with your emotions. In any and every situation that you encounter you will have emotional responses. Sometimes you may feel hurt, sad, disappointment, anger, frustration, shame or loneliness. You need to let yourself feel the emotions. Cry when you need to cry. Punch a pillow, yell, scream, roll around on the floor and have a temper tantrum. Let the emotions pass through you like a current and move on.
* Don't let the situation change you as person unless the change is positive. We all will find that difficult situations help us to grow as individuals. Don't let the situation make you blame other people and harbor resentment or damage your self-esteem.
* Have a sense of humor and learn to laugh at your situation or mistakes no matter how bad they are. Laughter is like medicine and sometimes it can be contagious. Write a journal and record your feelings. Find a peaceful outlet such as a long walk, taking deep breaths, listening to your favorite music or watching a good movie. Use time out method or stop light method.
* Always keep a good support system. The support system can consist of friends or [family](http://www.ehow.com/relationships-and-family/) or simply a group of people that are going through the same difficult situation. Remember to surround yourself with love and love yourself no matter what situation occurs.

**TOOL BOX 12: REFRAMING FOR CLARITY**

We will be discussing frames and how a frame provides a context or focus for your thoughts and actions. Just as a picture frame puts borders or boundaries on what you can see in a picture, the frames of reference that you choose as a result of your beliefs about yourself and others, your perceived role in life, your perceived limitations in skills/abilities, etc. can limit what you see as possible or can open up all sorts of possibilities. You (and if you allow them, others) are continually setting timeframes, boundaries, limits, etc. on what you can and can’t do - often without any real thought about the consequences or if the limitations are true.

Changing the frame of an experience can have a major influence on how you perceive, interpret and react to that experience. Being told that you have one hour to complete a task will most likely result in a different emotional state, approach and quality of work than if you are told that you have one week to accomplish the same task. This illustrates how a change in frame (in this case a timeframe) can have a significant impact on the choices you make. Changing the frame of reference is called reframing. The purpose of reframing is to help a person experience their actions, the impact of their beliefs, etc. from a different perspective (frame) and potentially be more resourceful or have more choice in how they react.

Reframing going on all around us:

Politicians are masters at reframing. It seems no matter what happens, they can put a positive spin on it for themselves or a negative spin for their opponents.

You may be frustrated at your wife for inviting the elderly gentleman next door for supper. Until she points out that if you were in his shoes, then you may find this simple act to be the highlight of your week.

Consider that old wooden table in the basement that you use as a temporary workbench for sawing wood, nailing things together, etc. Instantly, it is seen differently if some tells you that it is a valuable antique.

Jokes are reframes - you are guided to think in one frame and then the frame (meaning or context) changes. How many psychologists does it take to change a light bulb? Answer: Only one, and the light bulb must want to change!

Fairy tales often use reframes to help children see different perspectives or consequences - ‘crying wolf’.

An excuse is a reframe that attributes a different meaning or context to your behaviors.

Some more notable reframes are:

During the 1984 campaign, there was considerable concern about Ronald Reagan’s age. Speaking during the presidential debate with Walter Mondale, Reagan said “I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience.” Reagan’s age was not an issue for the remainder of the campaign!

There is a story about Thomas Watson Sr., the first President of IBM. A young worker had made a mistake that lost IBM $1 M in business. She was called in to the President’s office and as she walked in said, “Well, I guess you have called me here to fire me.” “Fire you?” Mr. Watson replied, “I just spent $1 M on your education!”

A father brought his head-strong daughter to see Milton Erickson - the famous hypnotherapist. He said to Erickson, “My daughter doesn’t listen to me or her mother. She is always expressing her own opinion.” After the father finished describing his daughter’s problem, Erickson replied, “Now isn’t it good that she will be able to stand on her own two feet when she is ready to leave home?” The father sat in stunned silence. That was the extent of the therapy -- the father now saw his daughter’s behavior as a useful resource later in her life.

Content and Context Reframes:

Content Reframe:

The content or meaning of a situation is determined by what you choose to focus on. An electrical power failure can be viewed as disruptive, a major disaster given all you have to get done. Or it can be viewed as an opportunity to spend some intimate time with your spouse or to have fun with your children finding innovative ways to manage the situation.

A content reframe is useful for statements such as: ‘I get annoyed when my boss stands behind me while I am working.’ Notice how the person has taken the situation and given it a specific meaning -- which may or may not be true - and in so doing limits her resourcefulness and possible courses of action. To reframe this situation, remember the NLP presupposition ‘Every behavior has a positive intention’ and ask questions such as:

What other meaning could the boss’ behavior have? Or for what purpose does he do it? A possible reframe might be: ‘Is it possible he wants to help and does not know how to offer his assistance in any other way?’

What is the positive value in this behavior? The positive value could be related to the boss’ behavior (as above) or it could be related to the speaker’s behavior. A possible reframe might be: ‘Isn’t it great that you know your boundaries and are not prepared to allow someone to violate them?’

If you are experiencing a physical problem (including phobias and allergies), you may ask yourself, ‘Is this problem useful to me in some way?’ For example, it may give you permission to say ‘no’. If this is the case, you could ask yourself, ‘Is there some other way that I can get this same result without having to have the physical problem?’ And just maybe the physical problem will disappear.

Context Reframe:

Almost all behaviors are useful or appropriate in some context. Interrupting a speaker by standing up and offering your view in the middle of her lecture may be judged as inappropriate. To do this same behavior at the end of the presentation in order to provide a different perspective may be welcomed by all present.

A context reframe is useful for statements such as: ‘I am too pushy.’ or ‘I wish I did not focus on what could go wrong.’ In this type of situation, your client has assumed that this type of behavior has no value. You job is to discover when it is of value by asking yourself the question ‘When or where would this behavior be useful or viewed as a resource?’ A possible reframe might be: ‘Isn’t that a great skill to have when you need to get things done or to avoid potential problems?’ Once you have your client more resourceful, you can then assist him to discover behaviors that may be more appropriate in other situations.

Children and Parenting

Children exhibit all sorts of behaviors - some appropriate and some not so appropriate. Focusing mainly on a child’s inappropriate behaviors, may result in the child feeling overly criticized or attacked; resulting in an increase in problem behavior or the child becoming overly defensive. As an alternative, a parent may choose two courses of action:

Assuming every behavior has a positive intention, the parent may choose to discover the positive intention. Then the parent can discuss with the child other behaviors that would meet both the parent’s and child’s needs.

The parent may point out where or in what context that type of behavior is acceptable; thus validating to the child that his behaviors are useful in certain contexts.

You may believe your reframe is the best ever and yet it may not work for the other person -- simply because they have a different model of the world than you do. Remember - There is no failure, only feedback - and explore other possible reframes.

If you present the reframe in the form of a question or a metaphor (story), it will most likely be more fully considered than if you present it as a statement of fact.

***LIFE SKILLS TOOL BOX FOR COACH’S***

QUESTIONS YOU ASK AS A COACH:

To be effective, a life skills coach needs to understand their client’s envisioned future and their existing situation. Understand their mindset and what makes them happy, sad, angry, and what brings positive emotions.

Establish Direction: What is your client’s hopes to achieve from their sessions with you: clarity helps you tailor your process to their time frame, whether it is longer or a shorter time frame.

What do you hope to have accomplished by the end of our sessions together?

How will you specifically know what success looks like for you?

What would be the most significant success you could hope for from our meeting?

TAPPING INTO VALUES:

Often, clients will be look to solve a problem as well as achieve a goal. For instance, a client may feel he is not living up to the values he/she believe in by being an interactive father/mother. If you think this is appropriate, you might dig just a bit deeper into these to tease out a compelling why – helping you later to gain commitment and motivation.

With a little tie, it can also help to use a structured values assessment to pin down what your client considers important.

1. What other aspects of your life do you feel will be improved by accomplishing this?
2. How will you achieve this goal?
3. Why is it important to accomplish this goal?

ENCOURAGE SELF-INQUIRY:

Coaching is not about spoon feeding answers: it’s about inviting the coachee to take a good look inside at their perspectives. Self-inquiry is vital in helping clients motivate, plan for barriers, and develop a persuasive rationale for action.

1. How do you feel you could best motivate yourself?
2. What are the best ways for you to support yourself at this point?
3. If you had no restrictions at all, who would you be?

When asking about or discussing a client’s goals, it helps to make it relevant. These questions are phrased generically, but should ideally be customized to the coachee. “How will achieving this goal enrich your life?” would thus become “how would becoming a professional builder enrich your life?”

Many life skills coaches choose to use some form of framework to structure their sessions.

QUENZA is an online coaching application that allows you to assign customized questionnaires to your client. (Quenza website).

The “GROW MODEL” Coaching Questions:

The Grow Model is a four step framework for coaches to help structure coaching sequences.

G – Goal: Establish a client’s overall objectives

R – Reality: Understanding their current situation or “reality” before taking action

O – Options/Opportunities: Looking possible options they might pursue

W – Way Forward/What’s next/Will: Deciding on the actions they will take going forward

California Cognitive Behavioral Institutes Model: AWARENESS + ACTION = CHANGE

Given that each stage has a distinct aim, a coach will be required to ask different relevant questions as the process unfolds.

Goal:

The core question of this first stage is “What is your long term goal?” This stage aims to tap into the personal values that underpin your client’s desires and create some clarity around what they want to achieve.

Example:

1. What matters to you the most concerning this value/life domain?
2. What are you keen to accomplish through this personal coaching session?
3. What would you like to see happen?
4. What is it specifically that you want to achieve?
5. Describe your ideal outcome from this coaching…..
6. Tell me more about this perfect result?
7. Why do you want to achieve this goal?
8. What is the deeper meaning or personal significance that this goal has for you?
9. What positive things do you feel will happen if you accomplish what you’re trying to achieve?
10. Tell me how you will know if you’ve attained your desired outcome?

Current Reality:

This primary question here is “What is your context or situation right now?”

In this phase, your primary goal as a coach is to help your client with more awareness of their existing situation. “Current Reality” questions also help you understand a little more about where you’re starting from together so that you can help them as you progress.

Questions in this stage are designed to facilitate self-evaluation, helping your client discover what may have been standing in their way of achieving their goal. Active listening plays a vital role during this stage – as you probe deeper into a client’s responses, it’s not unusual to uncover thought patterns or schema that are worth challenging.

Questions:

1. At this point, what’s happening now to you? What impact or influence is this having?
2. Tell me more about this……with whom? Where? When?
3. Have you tried doing anything thus far to achieve your goal?
4. I’m curious about what you did …..How did it go for you? Share some examples with me….
5. Where do you feel you are now concerning your life goal? Would you be able to rank this out of 10?
6. So far, what has helped you progress? What has held you back? Tell me about the last time this happened……
7. What do you feel you need to achieve your goal?
8. If you asked for this resource, what would happen?
9. What could you do differently this time around?
10. Has anybody you know achieve the same goal? How did they manage?

OPTIONS:

The main underpinning question here is “What are your options or opportunities for action?

This stage focuses on a client investigating different possible pathways, solutions, or routes to accomplishing their goal. Brainstorming with a coach may be beneficial to them.

Questions:

1. What do you see as the first step to accomplishing your goal?
2. What might you do to take you closer after that?
3. Can you think of some alternatives? Is there another way?
4. Who might you ask for help? Who else?
5. In the past what has worked for you? What did you learn from that?
6. Tell me what you think would happen if you tried doing that?
7. What are the pros and cons of this option?
8. Which possible pathway do you feel prepared to go down?
9. What would you do if time/money/resources weren’t an issue?
10. How will you measure your progress using this option?

WILL/WHAT’S NEXT/WAY FORWARD

The key questions of this stage are “What will you do next? What’s the way forward?”

Having generated multiple pathways for your client to pursue, it’s time to narrow it down to a single realistic option and garner commitment to it. Asking the right questions in this stage will help your client solidify an action plan and feel motivated to start following it.

Questions:

1. Which opportunity are you going to pursue?
2. What specific actions will you take to achieve your goal? What is your time frame?
3. What are the steps you’re going to take? What is the very first thing you will do?
4. What are the next 3 steps? What else?
5. Have you considered the potential barriers?
6. Tell me how you plan to overcome these obstacles….
7. Who will you ask to help you along the way? What else will you need?
8. How committed do you feel to this particular opportunity, out of 10?
9. What are some ways you can get to 10?
10. How are you going to know that you’ve succeeded?

WHAT IS INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING?

Instructional coaching is content-based approach to development that is intended to develop teachers. Content-based means that instructional coaching may cover specific topics such as literacy or math; its goal is to positively impact student outcomes through the professional development of educators.

WORKPLACE COACHING:

One on one sessions with an employee.

COACHING FOR HEALTH:

Empowerment is the focus here. Helping a patient with self-motivation, encouragement and creating more positive relationships.

Questions:

1. What is your focus today?
2. What is it you’d like to get from our conversations?
3. What matters the most to you regarding this?
4. What do you imagine it would look like if you accomplished this?
5. Describe the existing situation….
6. What do you think you will need to do?
7. Have you successfully handles a similar situation?
8. What is your next step after today?
9. How will you keep yourself on track?

JOB COACHING:

Offer help to foster self-awareness in the coachee – accountability with co-workers, and will involve:

1. Setting objectives and determining priorities
2. Developing a positive mindset
3. Challenging unhelpful thought patterns
4. Helping to change unproductive behaviors
5. Strength-spotting
6. Fostering motivation

NARRATIVE COACHING:

With this coaching, a client is invited to become more attuned to the stories they tell themselves and let go of those which are unhelpful. By doing so, they are encouraged to create more useful narratives.

6 Key Principles in Narrative Coaching:

1. Everything a coach needs is right in front of them
2. That they should try to be fully present to reality without judgment
3. Speaking is only valuable when it offers something better than silence
4. The emphasis is on encouraging experiences rather than explanations
5. The client should remain actively connected and engaged
6. Whatever they have externalized – work with it

In all sessions, encourage accountability, commitment and motivating actions.

THIRD PHASE OF NARRATIVE COACHING IS CALLED THE “SHIFT”:

Here a client readies themselves to leave the old story behind and replace with new stories they want to create.

Examples:

1. What do you feel is in the way of you making the change?
2. What will you need in place to get started?
3. What past experiences can you draw from to help you pivot?
4. What can you do instead of what you have done before?

Narrative coaching should try to integrate the changes the client has experimented with – creating a new narrative in which they can tell themselves the next time a similar situation arises. Sustain phase questions are about making plans and identifying ways to deal with challenges that may occur. They include:

1. What obstacles do you feel could come your way?
2. How could you work with these challenges and experience your new narrative?
3. How will this story support you to change?

***TOOL BOX: Are You Highly Sensitive?***

**A Self-Test** Elaine N. Aron, 1996

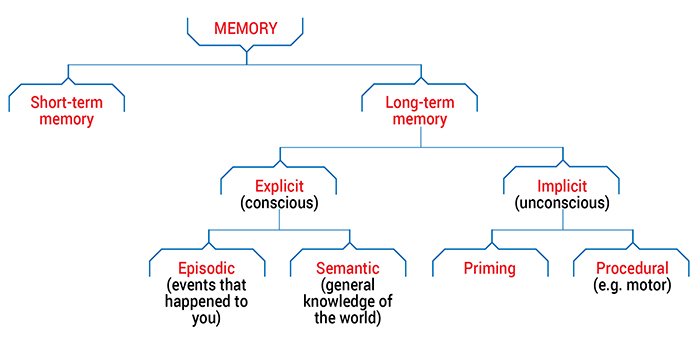
*Instructions:* Answer each question according to the way you personally feel. Check the box if it is at least somewhat true for you; leave unchecked if it is not very true or not at all true for you.

Top of Form

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | I am easily overwhelmed by strong sensory input. |
|  | I seem to be aware of subtleties in my environment. |
|  | Other people's moods affect me. |
|  | I tend to be very sensitive to pain. |
|  | I find myself needing to withdraw during busy days,into bed or into a darkened room or any place where I can have some privacy and relief from stimulation. |
|  | I am particularly sensitive to the effects of caffeine. |
|  | I am easily overwhelmed by things like bright lights, strong smells, coarse fabrics or sirens close by. |
|  | I have a rich, complex inner life. |

**TOOL BOX 2: TYPES OF MEMORY**

**Here are the 7 types of memory.**

*Image credit: Queensland Brain Institute*

**1. Short-Term Memory**

Short-term memory only lasts 20 to 30 seconds. It stores information temporarily and then either dismisses it or transfers it to long-term memory.

It is also sometimes called working memory, although working memory is more specific to information that we receive, **use quickly, then discard**. For example, a phone number, a person’s name, or what you’re going to buy from the market are stored in your short-term working memory for just as long as it takes you to use it.

**2. Long-Term Memory**

Our long-term memories are a bit more complex than our short-term memories. Anything that happened **more than a few minutes ago** would be stored in long-term memory. Depending on how often we recall or use a certain piece of information, the strength of the memory varies.

Long-term memory is **divided into explicit and implicit** memories.

**3. Explicit Memory**

Explicit memories are a type of long-term memory which you remember after consciously thinking about it. For example, **the name of your childhood dog** or your best friend’s house phone number!

There are two types of explicit memory--**episodic and semantic**.

**4. Episodic Memory**

Episodic memories are **a type of explicit memory** that relate to our own personal lives. For example, a particularly exciting Christmas morning, the day you got married, or even what you had for dinner last night.

Studies have shown that autobiographical, or "episodic", memories aren’t necessarily accurate because **we reconstruct them over time** and they change and adapt to the new context in which we recall them.

Our ability to retain episodic memories depends on how emotionally powerful the experiences were.

For example, many people remember where they were and what they were doing when 9/11 happened.  Not only would this involve a very powerful emotional reaction, you would probably also have been very focused as it occurred.

**When our**[**brains are extremely focused**](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/5-best-practices-for-handling-outside-normal-range-alertmeter-scores)**, it becomes easier to process and store sensory input which in turn makes it easier to later recall the experience.**

**5. Semantic Memory**

Semantic memory accounts for our **general knowledge of the world**.

For example, the fact that the sky is blue, giraffes have long necks, and puppies are cute.

Unlike episodic memory, we are able to maintain the strength and accuracy of our semantic memory over time. As we age, it begins to decline slowly.

**6. Implicit Memory**

Implicit memory is the second major type of long-term memory. It comprises memories that you don’t have to consciously recall.

For example, **riding a bike** or speaking a language. Even though it may require a lot of conscious thought while learning, at some point it became implicit and you did it **automatically.**

In the 1990 movie Total Recall, Arnold Schwarzenegger dreamed of becoming a secret agent in Mars without consciously knowing that he actually was a secret agent in Mars before his memory was wiped and rewritten.

This **subconscious** attraction to espionage and other planets might have been a type of implicit memory for Arnold.

**7. Procedural Memory**

Procedural memory is a **type of implicit memory** allows us to **do certain tasks** **without thinking** about them.

Besides riding a bike, it also includes tying a shoe, brushing our teeth, or driving a car.

It is likely that procedural memory is stored in a different part of the brain than episodic memory because people who experience traumatic brain injuries often either forget autobiographical information or forget how to perform simple tasks like walking or feeding themselves.

Now that you know about each of the types of memory, here are some ways to keep each one in tip-top shape.

**Methods to Sharpen Your Memory**

**1. Testing**

Several studies have found that being tested for information helps create stronger memories.

For example, students who were repeatedly tested on a list of vocabulary words in a foreign language performed better on the final test than students who were given extra time to study.

This concept is known as test-enhanced learning and is based on the theory that **repeated retrieval of information has a greater impact on the memory than longer study periods**. This effect can be further enhanced by immediate feedback after each retrieval.

So, the next time you’re giving a presentation or teaching something, instead of lecturing your audience, ask them questions. Get their neurons to fire up and form new connections by making them continually retrieve the new information. Cement the new long-term memory by giving them **immediate feedback**.

You don’t need to be a child to enjoy feedback. Anyone can get a release of dopamine when they receive positive feedback.

**2. Sleep**

I know we haven't shut up about sleep recently; however, as sleep expert and neuroscientist Dr. Matthew Walker said:

**“Sleep is the greatest legal performance enhancing drug that most people are probably neglecting.”**

While we sleep, our brains process and store long-term memories.

During Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep, the brain replays memory sequences that we learned while awake, except 20 times faster. Through this process, memories are consolidated and stored for long-term use.

In addition to **strengthening our memories**, sleep also helps us **learn new information**.

Researchers found that students who were deprived of sleep after learning a new skill had a significantly weaker memory of that skill than students who received adequate sleep.

Not only will getting at least 8 hours a night help you learn and remember new information, it can also **lessen the risk of developing Alzheimer’s** as you age (according to Dr. Walker, see below).

**3. Sensory Input**

In addition to exercising your brain by frequently retrieving information, engaging all your senses with the experience also makes a big impact on how well you’ll remember it later on.

If you**involve all 5 senses** in the experience--if you can hear, see, smell, taste, and smell it--then you will be able to recall it better in the future.

Smells seem to be especially powerful in evoking strong, emotional memories. For me, the smell of petunias and jasmine flowers immediately transport me to my childhood summers while living in Turkey.

For some, the smell of fresh-baked cookies may carry them back into their grandma’s kitchen.

So, when improving memory, we must **try to engage each sense as powerfully as possible**. We remember experiences that smell amazing, look beautiful, taste delicious, or sound lovely.

We also remember horrible experiences--nearly freezing to death on a camping trip, getting food poisoning from eating something disgusting, or even seeing a really gruesome scary movie.

I accidentally saw when I was young and will never be able to get the memory out of my head. If you don’t have the resources to make an experience powerfully pleasant, then you may remember it just as well by making it powerfully unpleasant.

**4. Drink some coffee.**

If you’re one of those people who need coffee in the morning before you do anything or talk to anyone, you’re probably a firm believer in the strong [cognitive boost](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/what-are-fatigue-countermeasures) it offers.

Caffeine is one of the most popular cognitive enhancers in the world, and besides preventing drowsiness, [**it can enhance cognitive functions**](https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/caffeine-healthy-diet-may-boost-memory-thinking-skills-alcohols-effect-uncertain-201406187219)**such as memory, motivation, or creativity.**(*Health.Harvard.edu)*

Overuse and misuse of caffeine and other cognitive enhancement drugs can be dangerous and disruptive of your natural sleep cycle.

So, have your cup or two of coffee in the morning but limit caffeine 4-5 hours before bedtime.

A [good night’s sleep](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/6-ways-sleeplessness-affects-your-day-a-glimpse-inside-your-fatigued-brain) will always be the safest and most effective cognitive enhancer.

**5. Minimize Stress**

Although we are more likely to remember a particularly stressful experience for a long time, **attempting to learn or form new memories *while*under stress is rarely successful**.

Stress alters the way our brains process information and how the memory is stored.

**6. Minimize Distractions**

It may be obvious, but few people actually make the commitment to reduce distractions while attempting to learn new information or create new memories.

Instead of getting up for another cup of coffee or *looking*for new distractions to “clear our minds” or “switch it up”, **our brains could function much more efficiently just by reducing noise, disabling digital notifications, and clearing clutter from our work/study areas.**

Multitasking also counts as distraction. Although many people believe themselves to be quite adept at it, scientific [studies](https://link.springer.com/article/10.3758/s13423-015-0907-3) have repeatedly proven that the brain actually rapidly switches between tasks rather than doing both simultaneously, thereby reducing the quality and efficiency of our performance in each task. [Studies](https://link.springer.com/article/10.3758/s13423-015-0907-3)have also shown that **multitasking impairs both long-term and short-term memory.**

**7. Smell rosemary**

[In a 2003 study](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12690999), a group of volunteers were given a series of long-term memory, short-term memory, and attention and reaction tests.

Some of the participants took the test in a room infused with lavender oil, some took it in a room infused with rosemary oil, and others took the test scent-free.

Those who took the test in the **rosemary scented room reported feeling more alert and performed significantly better** on the memory tests than those in the unscented room.

Those in the lavender scented room performed the worst and reported feeling less alert.

Although more studies are required to confirm the alertness-inducing effects of rosemary, it wouldn’t hurt to test it out yourself in the meantime and deck your workplace out with a few new plants.

**8. Eat well**

Scientists recommend **eating foods high in antioxidants** to keep the brain young and maintain memory function as we age.

This is because antioxidants kill “free radicals” that enter our bloodstream before they can kill our brain cells.

These include **blueberries, apples, bananas, dark green vegetables, garlic and carrots**. Chocolate also has antioxidants called flavanols. However, eating too much of it can backfire and give you a sugar rush and crash instead.

In addition to antioxidants, the brain benefits extremely from healthy fats like Omega-3 fatty acids which are found in **fish and nuts**. So, try to be understanding when your coworkers come in smelling like tuna or peanut butter.

**9. Chew gum**

Similar to the rosemary theory, the gum chewing theory is one that does not guarantee results but wouldn’t hurt to try.

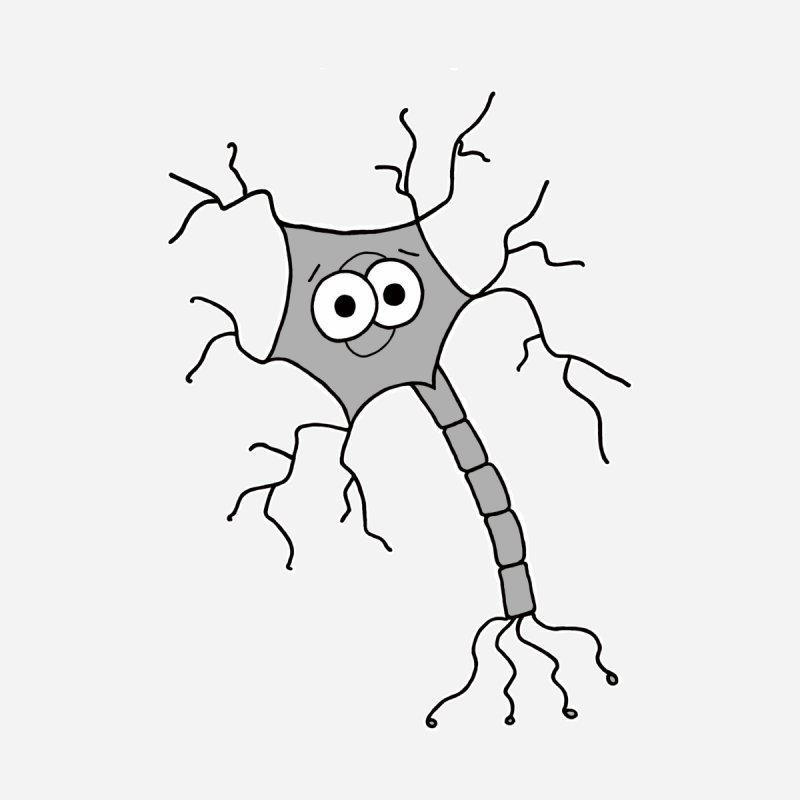
[In a 2002 study](https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/the-quirky-brain-chewing-gum-and-memory), gum-chewers performed significantly better on tests of both long-term and short-term memory than non-gum-chewers.

Many studies since then have also identified a **small but significant effect of gum chewing on memory and cognition**.

**10. Play brain games**

**The more you use your brain, the better it will run.** So, exercise it just like you would your body (and if you don't exercise your body, get that done too while you're at it). There are many brain exercise programs on the internet that are quickly gaining popularity.

[Lumosity](https://www.lumosity.com/en/landing_pages/landing?gclid=CjwKCAjwqJ_1BRBZEiwAv73uwOeNNgYfz-xGsJE9dnYPyix8j20fswfZQbu8TBZ0GfXXNARND6l9rhoC_IoQAvD_BwE), for example, was designed by neuroscientists to help aging people improve their memory, concentration, alertness, and even mood. You don’t have to be old to use it.If you’re not into that, there’s always sudoku and crossword puzzles to **keep your neurons on their toes.**

A neuron on its toes. (clipart.email.com)

**11. Exercise**

Even if you fill up your office with rosemary and chew more gum than Violet Beauregarde, you will be brain-dead without adequate sleep, a proper diet, and frequent exercise.

Scientists believe that **increased blood flow to the brain, as well as the mild stress of exercising, may result in the production of growth factors in the brain leading to**[**improved cognitive performance**](https://www.predictivesafety.com/blog/5-best-practices-for-handling-outside-normal-range-alertmeter-scores)**.**

[Recent research](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3041121/) has shown that **adults who walk regularly gain hippocampus volume**(memory center of brain) as opposed to losing it as they age.  So, just by walking, the participants reversed the impacts of aging on a major part of their brain.

**Conclusion**

Now that you know about the 7 different types of memory and how to keep your brain in tip-top shape, begin measuring how your daily choices may actually be affecting your cognitive functions.

**TOOL BOX 3: ACTIVE LISTENING**

**Active Listening**

Active listening is not the same as simply hearing and replying. In active listening, instead of passively absorbing the person’s words, the listener tries to comprehend, reflect, and respond to the speaker’s words and feelings.

Active listening builds trust and rapport with the person and offers ongoing feedback to let them know that they are understood. Active listening means that we acknowledge our own ignorance with regard to a person’s feelings and thoughts, and listen deeply in order to understand. A listener must be alert and aware not only of what is said but of what isn’t being said as well. When one thinks they know what is not being said, then one can clarify by it up and asking if that was what was being thought about as well.

Active listening is a most important tool. It is both an art and a skill that involves a constant process of clarification and reflection. There is a constant trying to understand more accurately what the speaker means in his/her various forms of communication.

Active listening is a learned skill requiring energy, concentration, and practice of specific techniques. Information and feelings is gathered using all your senses to understand. The process of active listening requires respect for self and others.

**Active Listening Includes:**

1. **Responding with empathy, respect, and genuineness**
2. **Comprehending and communicating the difference between feelings and thoughts**
3. **Accurately perceiving the others feelings and acknowledging and verbalizing back to them**
4. **Helping him/her to identify their feelings**
5. **Communicating, when appropriate, your own feelings**
6. **Refusing to take responsibility for their feelings, decisions, choices, as it is their responsibility and not ours**
7. **Giving ongoing feedback**
8. **Ability to help identify options and alternatives**
9. **Ability to be resourceful**

**TOOL BOX 4: ANGER HOKEY P0KEY!!**

You put your right word in and you pull your right word out. You shake it all about and that’s the anger hokey pokey…..well, you get the idea I hope!!!

Angry words are thrown out and then we try to pull them back in, once they are out there is not pulling them back in so we shake things up by doing hokey pokey behaviors and actions. Now lest you think I am on something when I write this, I am not, but want you to see how silly and hurtful we can be when we don’t think before we use anger inappropriately. Anger is an emotion that we were to use as part of our “fright and flight” response but was turned into “aggressive” responses instead of its intended safety response.

Anger is one of the most misunderstood and overused of human emotions. First, anger is a reaction to an inner emotion and not always a planned action. Second, anger is easier to show: everyone has anger issues. Third, the feelings underlying the anger reaction make us feel vulnerable and weak; your anger makes you feel, at least momentarily, strong and in control. Fourth, angry behaviors are learned over the life-span and therefore can be unlearned and replaced with healthier patterns of coping. Fifth, anger can be an immediate reaction to an isolated event or it can be a response after numerous events. Sixth, anger is part of our “entitlement” response and we hold on to it to “justify” our negative behaviors which fulfill our entitlement thoughts.

So should we repress anger? No. Hankins and Hankins, 1988, stated “to repress anger is unhealthy…..and to express it impulsively, as we often do, may give momentary relief but inevitably carry negative consequences.”

We learn how to handle our anger from our parents. If we see them get angry and resolve the issue without negative behaviors, we are more likely to use the same approach. So anger can be an emotion that we learn how to manage if we chose to do so. If we are tired, we are prone to react angry faster than if we aren’t tired. If we hold feelings inside, rather than talk them out with “mutuality” as part of our talking process, then we are more likely to build up our anger in the “pressure cooker of rumination” and explode in an angry outburst.

**Constance McKenzie, M.Ed (995) stated that we have Anger “Styles” and created an anger checklist:**

**Styles Of Anger**

Each of us develops their own special style of anger:

* The "Mad Hatter" Driver: This person yells, curses, and offers gestures to other drivers when s/he is in a hurry and frustrated.
* The Sulker: This person shuts down in a chair and stops speaking and looking at others.
* Safe Haven Abuser: This person takes her/his frustration out only on the ones s/he loves.
* The Distractor: This person disregards the object of his annoyance by reading the paper, forgetting to run an errand, or playing the radio too loudly. When s/he is confronted, the response is: I didn't know; I forgot; I'm tired.
* The Blamer: This person blames everybody for everything and rarely accepts responsibility for his own short comings.
* The Avenger: This person believes s/he has been given the right to seek vengeance in any way for anything by using the excuse: they deserved it.

**Anger Issues Check List -- How Is Your Anger?**

* People tell you that you need to calm down.
* You feel tense much of the time.
* At work, you find yourself not saying what is on your mind.
* When you are upset, you try to block the world out by watching TV, reading a book or magazine, or going to sleep.
* You are drinking or smoking marijuana almost daily to help you calm down.
* You have trouble going to sleep.
* You feel misunderstood or not listened too much of the time.
* People ask you not to yell or curse so much.
* Your loved ones keep saying that you are hurting them.
* Friends do not seek you out as much.

**Scoring:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **0 - 2** | **MANAGEABLE** | you could benefit from relaxation training |
| **3 - 5** | **MODERATE** | you need to learn more about what stresses you, and learn stress management techniques |
| **6 +** | **OUT OF CONTROL** | you have an anger problem that could benefit from learning anger management techniques |

**Conclusion**

Anger reactions have been likened to a train running out of control and about to derail. A little anger can motivate us to take action in positive ways. A lot of anger will make us "red with rage." The price for your anger is that you are out of control, you drive away those whom you love the most, and endanger your employment. Our old familiar ways of managing anger are not working for us and we need to learn to replace the old with new, more positive and beneficial techniques.

**TOOL BOX 5: AFFIRMATIONS**

What is an affirmation?

Affirmations are **positive statements that can help you to challenge and overcome self-sabotaging and negative** thoughts. When you repeat them often, and believe in them, you can start to make positive changes.

Why is an affirmation the most important tool in behavior and attitude change? The brain does exactly what we tell it to do. It's that simple.

**BRAIN AND RESEARCH ON HOW LONG IT TAKES THE BRAIN TO CHANGE WHEN LEARNING**:

Phillippa Lally is a health psychology researcher at University College London. In [a study](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ejsp.674/abstract) published in the European Journal of Social Psychology, Lally and her research team decided to figure out just how long it actually takes to form a habit.

**On average, it takes more than 2 months before a new behavior becomes automatic — 66 days to be exact.** And how long it takes a new habit to form can vary widely depending on the behavior, the person, and the circumstances**.**

Hadley Bergstrom is a neuroscientist at the National Institutes of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in Rockville, Md. His research states that it’s important to spread out learning over many days. That means learning a little bit at a time. Doing so allows links between neurons to steadily strengthen.

1-3 months for the brain to believe a change; 3-6 months for brain to solidify new change; 6-9 months for the brain to cement and have a new belief or behavior or change.

Studies show that another way to add to behavior/attitude change is to add meditation. Researchers say that meditating for 20 minutes a day grow better connection **in 8 weeks**. The cognitive abilities improved are linked to well-being (focus, calmness, ability to observe emotions and thoughts for just what they are, resilience).

POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS FOR GROUP TO START OUT WITH:

1. I am an honorable man/woman

2. I am a respectful man/woman. I respect others/spouse's name

3. I am a loving man/woman

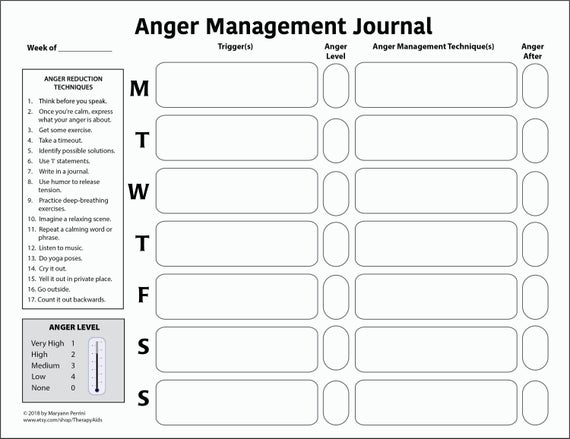
4. I honor my family

5. Everyday I am kind and empathetic

6. Etc.

7. Have them come up with their own affirmations that are things they need to add to their own lives and have them share those with you to ensure they are in present/positive formats/sentences.

**TOOL BOX 7: ANGER LOG FOR MANAGEMENT OF ANGER**



**TOOL BOX 6: MOTIVATION**

**Raise your Energy Level**

Before you start your day, always do something that brings your energy level up and puts you in a good mood. For some people this can be inspiring music. For me I always have what I call my motivational music on when I am driving to any type of presentation.

I listen to songs that pump me up. Songs that say things like you are a winner, and go for the gold and you can do anything. By the time, I get out of the car I know I am winner and I for sure can do anything.

It is a known fact that music produces serotonin in your brain, which is the feel good endorphin. If music is not your thing then listen to motivational tapes. You can find some that make you feel like you are sitting on top of the world.

**\*Choose one or all these**[**motivation techniques**](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Words_of_Encouragement.html)**to get you going:**

**1. Listen to visualization Mp3's that guide you to opening your mind and creating your ideal life.** Any type of [mp3 that takes you through the process of seeing what you want to happen in your life.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Free_Life_Coaching_Products.html)

**2. Read about how someone else** is successfully doing what you are having difficulty with.  Read one page every morning to get motivated and to remind yourself it is *possible*. That is a surefire motivator that is easy to do.

**3. Help someone else get motivated.** Use your skills to show them how good life really is, motivating them with a pep talk. This way you hear exactly what you need to get motivated while helping another.

**4. Join a Mastermind Group or Support Group** when you are involved in a group where succeeding is the main goal you will get motivated every meeting. It's important you have other people who share the same goals. You will end up staying motivated longer knowing you have support.

**5. Expect to be motivated and believe you will.** Let people know that you feel really motivated about your career or life and that you cannot wait to start your next project or adventure.

Whatever you tell yourself all day long is what you will experience so carefully select the words you are repeating to yourself. If you are hard, on yourself that will de-motivate you and it is difficult to come back from that.

 The way to deal with this is do not even go down that road at all. Learn to talk to yourself with love and respect and that goes hand in hand with loving yourself.

[](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/images/orangestar.gif)

**Motivation Techniques for Finding Your Career Purpose**

One of the first things I do when I motivate other people is I get inspired first. This is easy if I am inspiring you on a subject that gets me fired up.

I want to point out that is one of the main motivational techniques. If you love what you are doing and you love what you're talking about your motivation around that will naturally soar.

As opposed to, trying something only because certain people think that is what you should be doing.  That will never result in fulfillment for you and therefore motivation would be out of the question. Choose a career that gives you natural inspiration.

If you feel connected and excited about what you do for a living, you will be able to get other people to feel the same way. It does not matter if you do not know anyone who ever succeed at your passion it is your passion and if you’re into it... **YOU WILL SUCCEED!** That I know from experience.

**\*Follow these five motivation techniques for a happy and successful career:**

**1.** Choose a profession that is your[passion in life.](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Life-Purpose.html)

**2.** Be true to yourself when choosing a career.

**3.** If you're unhappy with your current career, that is a sign that something is wrong. You want to take a look at the reasons why you are unhappy. Ask yourself if you would be happy in another profession or is your attitude the problem. You may need a [shift in your perception](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Creating.html)and everything may end up working out once you do that.

**4.** Re-evaluate if this is the career or business for you. Write out a pros and cons list and if the cons far outweigh the pros then it's time to move on.

**5.** Take a[career evaluation test](http://www.assessment.com/) to determine what career would be best suited for you. After you have that down, the momentum will flow.

**Motivation Techniques for Boosting Your Business**

One of my secret [motivation skills](http://www.qualified-lifecoach.com/Increase_Energy.html) is getting back the passion you once had for you career.

Write an appreciation list of all the reasons you chose this career to begin with. You want to re-energize yourself by remembering what stood out in the first place about your product or service.

**TOOL BOX 7: EMOTIONS**

**WHAT ARE EMOTIONS FOR?**

It is said that our emotions guide us in facing predicaments and tasks too important to leave to intellect alone – danger, painful loss, persisting toward a goal despite frustrations, bonding with a mate, building a family. Each emotion offers a distinctive readiness to act, each points us in a direction that has worked well to handle the recurring challenges of human life (The Emotional Brain).

“All emotions are, in essence, impulses to act, the instant plans for handling life that has been instilled in us. The very root of the word “emotion” is Motere, the Latin very “to move,” plus the prefix “e” to connote, “move away,” suggesting that a tendency to act is implicit in every emotion. That emotions lead to actions is most obvious in watching animals or children; it is only in “civilized” adults we so often find the great anomaly in the animal kingdom, emotions – root impulses to act – divorced from obvious reactions.” (The Emotional Brain).

Each emotion plays a role in our lives and helps us to “to move” to something or away from something. Emotions also have biological identifiers as well. For instance with “anger” there is a surge of blood which flows to through our body to our hands, heart, increasing our hormones (adrenaline) and energy. With fear, the blood goes to the large skeletal muscles, like our legs, making it better for us to flee and away from our face, making us look drained or “white with fear” and also triggers circuits in the brain’s emotional center that flood hormones that put the body on notice for “fright and flight” responses.

Research use to think there were six basic emotions; happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear and disgust. But we know now that there are more including awe, appall, confusion, anxiety, etc. and when you mix and match these, you have got a palette capable of painting the whole entire human experience. These are our universal languages where we recognize and reflect each other's experience whether we speak the same language culturally or not.

The mind/body or “head and heart” (emotional and rational) – these two minds operate in tight harmony for the most part in our bodies. They help us balance between emotional and rational thoughts, with emotion feeding into and informing the operational mind, and the rational mind refining and sometimes vetoing the independent faculties, of the emotions. They are meant to work together for maximum effect.

The amygdale acts as the storehouse of emotional memory. More than affection is tied to it – all passion depends on it.

LeDoux stated that life’s earliest years lay down a set of emotional lessons based on the interactions between infant and caretaker, creating wordless blueprints for emotional life as they grow (Science, How Scary Things Get That Way, 1992).

The emotional brain controls rage and compassion. Neuroscientists use the facts essential for completing a given task or problem, whether it be the ideal features one seeks in a house while touring several prospects, or the elements of a reason problem on a test. The prefrontal cortex is the brain region responsible for working memory. But circuits from the limbic brain to the prefrontal lobes mean that the signals of strong emotion – anxiety, anger, and so on can create neural static, sabotaging the ability of the emotional lobe to maintain working memory. That is why when we are emotional upset we can we “just can’t think straight” – and why continual emotional distress can create deficits in a child’s intellectual abilities, crippling their capacity to learn.

These deficits are not always tapped by IQ testing and can show up through more targeted neuropsychological measures, as well as in a child’s continual agitation and impulsivity. In one study, primary school boys who had above average IQ scores were not doing well in school and found via neuropsychological testing to have impaired frontal cortex functioning. (Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 1999). They were impulsive and anxious¸ often disruptive and in trouble – suggesting faulty prefrontal control over their limbic urges. Despite their intellectual potential, these are the children at highest risk for problems like academic failure, alcoholism, and criminology – not because their intellect is deficient, but because their control over emotional life is impaired. The emotional brain controls rage and compassion and our emotional circuits are sculpted by experience through childhood – and the parents love and compassion for their children helps determine that experience.

CAN EMOTIONS BE INTELLIGENT?

Salovey, with his colleague John Mayer, offers an elaborated definition of emotional intelligence, expanding into five main domains:

* Knowing one’s emotions: Self awareness – recognizing a feeling as it happens – is the keystone of emotional intelligence.
* Managing emotions: Handling feelings so they are appropriate in an ability that builds on self-awareness.
* Motivating oneself: Marshalling emotions in the service of a goal is essential for paying attention, for self motivation and mastery, and for creativity. Emotional self control – delaying gratification and stifling impulsiveness – underlies accomplishment of every sort and our performance.
* Recognizing emotion in others: Empathy, another ability that builds on emotional self-awareness, is the fundamental “people skill.” People who are empathetic are more attuned to the subtle social signals that indicate what others need or want.
* Handling Relationships: The art of relationships is, in large part, skill in managing emotions in others. Social competency and incompetency are specifically involved. These are abilities that undergird popularity, leadership, and interpersonal effectiveness.

Men who are high in emotional intelligence are socially poised, outgoing and cheerful, not prone to fearfulness or worried rumination. They have a notable capacity for commitment to people or causes, for responsibility, and for having an ethical outlook; they are sympathetic and caring in their relationships. Their emotional life is rich, but appropriate; they are comfortable with themselves, others, and the social universe they live in.

Women who are high in emotional intelligence tend to be assertive and express themselves directly, and feel positive about self; life holds meaning for them. Like the men, they are outgoing, and gregarious, and express their feelings appropriately (rather than, say, in outbursts they later regret); they adapt well to stress. Their social poise lets them easily reach out to new people; they are comfortable enough with themselves to be playful, spontaneous, and open to sensual experience. They rarely feel anxious or guilty or sink into rumination. (Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman).

WHERE WE LEARN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

In moments of family where each person is participating in struggles, arguments, and interactions where emotions rise due to anger, pain, misunderstanding or other reasons, each person in the family is schooled in emotional learning. We learn how to feel about ourselves and how to feel about others reactions to our feelings, how to think about these feelings and what choices we have in reacting.

There are lots of studies that show that the way parents treat their children has deep and lasting consequences for the child’s emotional life. Only recently have there been hard data showing that having emotional intelligent parents is itself of enormous benefit to a child (Carol Hooven and John Gottman, University of Washington). They found that parents who were more emotionally competent in their marriages were also more effective in helping their children with their emotional ups and downs.

THE THREE MOST COMMON INEPT PARENTING STYLES

1. Ignoring feelings altogether. These parents treat their child’s emotional upsets as trivial or a bother. They fail to use emotional moments as a chance to get closer to a child or to help the child learn lessons in emotional competence.
2. Being to “laissez-faire.” These parents notice how a child feels but holds the views that however a child handles the emotional storm is fine, even when hitting or calling names at another. These parents rarely step in to try to show their child an alternative emotional response. They try to soothe all upsets using bargaining and bribes to get their children to stop being sad or angry.
3. Being contemptuous, showing no respect for how the child feels. Again these parents are typically disapproving, harsh in both feedback, their criticisms, and punishments. They are punitive at the least sign of irritability. They yell at their children while the children are trying to tell their side of the story and say things like “Don’t you talk back to me” or

“Because I said so,” etc.

There are parents who grab the opportunities when a child is upset to act as a emotional coach and mentor. They take their child’s feelings seriously and try to understand exactly what is happening in their child’s life to make the child react the way the child does to a given situation.

Our basic emotional lessons should include how to distinguish feelings, to understand the differences between grieving over a loss, feeling sad in a sad movie, and sadness that comes from something bad happening to someone else.

As children grow, the specific emotional lessons shift. The children who have good emotional lessons learned are better at handling their own emotions, are more effective at soothing themselves when upset and get upset less often. The children are more relaxed biologically, with lower levels of stress hormones and other physiological indicators of emotional arousal (a pattern that, if sustained throughout life, might well create better physical health, give them advantages socially and help them to be more popular with their peers.

The impact of parenting on emotional well-being starts in the cradle (Brazelton).

7 CRUCIAL INGREDIENTS RELATED TO GOOD EMOTIONAL HEALTH

1. Confidence: a sense of control and mastery of one’s body, behavior and world. A sense that he/she is more likely than not to succeed and that adults will be helpful.
2. Intentionality: the wish and capacity to have an impact and to act upon that with persistence. This is related to a sense of competence, of being effective.
3. Self-control: the ability to modulate and control ones own actions, age appropriate ways, a sense of inner control.
4. Relatedness: the ability to engage with others based on the sense of being understood by and understanding others.
5. Curiosity: a sense that finding out about things is positive and leads to pleasure.
6. Capacity to communicate: a wish and ability to verbally exchange ideas, feelings, and concepts with others. This is related to a sense of trust in others and of pleasure in engaging with others, including adults.
7. Cooperativeness: ability to balance one’s own needs with those of others in a group activity.

Whether or not a child arrives at with these capabilities depends greatly on how much the parents have given in the kind of care that is “Heart Start” or equivalent to the Head Start programs. Emotional learning begins in life’s earliest moments and continues throughout childhood.

**Understanding The Addictive Cycle**

**First - The Emotional Addiction**

The person feels the need for emotional or social comfort or excitement, and uses something unhealthily to gain these needs.  The person feels better for a time as this act has filled the need, but when the person gets in an uncomfortable situation or wants stimulation, s/he unthinkingly connects relief with the act.

**Second – The Mental Addiction**

Over a relatively short time, the act is equated with fulfillment of the need and the person becomes mentally hooked.  S/He needs to commit this act to cope with his/her emotions.  Even the smallest visual, emotional, or olfactory cues associated with the act unconsciously reminds the person of comfort or the needed excitement and s/he becomes uncomfortable because s/he is not getting that comfort or excitement.

In many addictions the person is hooked again, because s/he has collected people around him/her as friends who also like to participate in this act.  Often, to fit in socially, s/he needs to commit the act, as it is what they do when they get together.

**Third – The Physical Addiction**

The act becomes a physical or mental necessity as the body or mind becomes addicted to the act.  Overtime the body gains a tolerance to the act and need more stimulation. In such addiction where the act was originally used as a comfort or a coping tool to alleviate emotional or social discomfort, like in the addiction of drugs, alcohol, work or food, tolerance is overcome by performing the act more often.

To overcome tolerance in an addiction where excitement is the stimulus, such as in pornography, acts of vandalism, pyromania, or dare-devil stunts the person needs usually choose to perform a similar act that will provide a greater adrenaline rush.

Tolerance happens because the body or mind becomes used to the smaller dosages or occurrences of the act and needs more to get the same relief or high.

The addict feels emotional pain and guilt because of the performance of the act because s/he cannot control the continual need to do the act.  Plus, depending on the addiction, there is the physical and/or emotional pain that results from withdrawal symptoms, because of the lack of the act..

The whole process begins again because the person seeks relief from the pain and guilt by committing the act

**TOOL BOX 8 : DEALING WITH HOSTILE PEOPLE**

Research shows that supportive relationships are good for our mental and physical health. However, dealing with difficult people and maintaining ongoing negative relationships is actually detrimental to our health. It’s a good idea to diminish or eliminate relationships that are filled with conflict. But what do you do if the person in question is a family member, co-worker, or someone you otherwise can’t easily eliminate from your life?

The following are tips for dealing with difficult people who are in your life, for better or for worse:

**Difficulty:** Average

**Time Required:** Ongoing

**Here's How:**

1. **Keep Conversations Neutral** Avoid discussing divisive and personal issues, like religion and politics, or other issues that tend to cause conflict. If the other person tries to engage you in a discussion that will probably become an argument, change the subject or leave the room.
2. **Accept The Reality of Who They Are** In dealing with difficult people, don’t try to change the other person; you will only get into a power struggle, cause defensiveness, invite criticism, or otherwise make things worse. It also makes *you* a more difficult person to deal with.
3. **Know What's Under Your Control** Change your response to the other person; this is all you have the power to change. For example, don’t feel you need to accept abusive behavior. You can use assertive communication to draw boundaries when the other person chooses to treat you in an unacceptable way.
4. **Create Healthier Patterns** Remember that most relationship difficulties are due to a *dynamic* between two people rather than one person being unilaterally "bad." Chances are good that you're repeating the same patterns of interaction over and over; changing your response could get you out of this rut, and responding in a healthy way can improve your chances of a healthier pattern forming. Here’s a list of things to avoid in dealing with conflict. Do you do any of them?
5. **See The Best In People** Try to look for the positive aspects of others, especially when dealing with family, and focus on them. The other person will feel more appreciated, and you will likely enjoy your time together more.
6. **Remember Who You're Dealing With** Seeing the best in someone is important; however, don’t pretend the other person’s negative traits don’t exist. Don’t tell your secrets to a gossip, rely on a flake, or look for affection from someone who isn’t able to give it. This is part of accepting them for who they are.
7. **Get Support Where You Can Find It** Get your needs met from others who are able to meet your needs. Tell your secrets to a trustworthy friend a good listener, or process your feelings through journaling for example. Rely on people who have proven themselves to be trustworthy and supportive, or find a good therapist if you need one. This will help you *and* the other person by taking pressure off the relationship and removing a source of conflict.
8. **Let Go Or Get Space If You Need It** Know when it’s time to distance yourself, and do so. If the other person can’t be around you without antagonizing you, minimizing contact may be key. If they’re continually abusive, it's best to cut ties and let them know why. Explain what needs to happen if there ever is to be a relationship, and let it go. (If the offending party is a boss or co-worker, you may consider switching jobs.)

**Tips:**

1. Try not to place blame on yourself or the other person for the negative interactions. It may just be a case of your two personalities fitting poorly.
2. Remember that you don't have to be close with everyone; just being polite goes a long way toward getting along and appropriately dealing with difficult people.
3. Work to maintain a sense of humor - difficulties will roll off your back much more easily. Shows like “The Office” and books like David Sedaris' Naked can help you see the humor in dealing with difficult people.
4. Be sure to cultivate other more positive relationships in your life to offset the negativity of dealing with difficult people.

These are ten productive ways to deal with your difficult individual. Let's start with the first five.

* **Start out by examining yourself.** Are you sure that the other person is really the problem and that you're not overreacting? Have you always experienced difficulty with the same type of person or actions? Does a pattern exist for you in your interaction with coworkers? Do you recognize that you have hot buttons that are easily pushed? (We all do, you know.) Always start with self-examination to determine that the object of your attention really is a difficult person’s actions.
* **Explore what you are experiencing with a trusted friend or colleague or mental health professional.** Brainstorm ways to address the situation. When you are the object of an attack, or your boss appears to support the dysfunctional actions of a coworker, it is often difficult to objectively assess your options. Anger, pain, humiliation, fear and concern about making the situation worse are legitimate emotions.  
    
  Pay attention to the unspoken agreement you create when you solicit another’s assistance. You are committing to act unless you agree actions will only hurt the situation. Otherwise, you risk becoming a whiner or complainer in the eyes of your colleague.
* **Approach the person with whom you are having the problem for a private discussion.** Talk to them about what you are experiencing in “I” messages. (Using “I” messages is a communication approach that focuses on your experience of the situation rather than on attacking or accusing the other person.) You can also explain to your coworker the impact of their actions on you.  
    
  Be pleasant and agreeable as you talk with the other person. They may not be aware of the impact of their words or actions on you. They may be learning about their impact on you for the first time. Or, they may have to consider and confront a pattern in their own interaction with people. Worst case? They may know their impact on you and deny it or try to explain it away. Unfortunately, some difficult people just don’t care. During the discussion, attempt to reach agreement about positive and supportive actions going forward.
* **Follow up after the initial discussion.** Has the behavior changed? Gotten better? Or worse? Determine whether a follow-up discussion is needed. Determine whether a follow-up discussion will have any impact. Decide if you want to continue to confront the difficult person by yourself. Become a peacemaker. (Decide how badly you want to make peace with the other person and how much you want your current job. Determine whether you have experienced a pattern of support from your boss.) If you answer, “yes,” to these questions, hold another discussion. If not, escalate and move to the next idea.
* **You can confront your difficult coworker’s (significant other behaviors) publicly.** Deal with the person with gentle humor or slight sarcasm. Or, make an exaggerated physical gesture – no, not that one – such as a salute or place your hand over your heart to indicate a serious wounding.  
    
  You can also tell the difficult person that you’d like them to consider important history in their decision making or similar words expressed positively, depending on the subject. Direct confrontation does work well for some people in some situations. I don’t think it works to ask the person to stop doing what they’re doing, publicly, but you can employ more positive confrontational tactics. Their success for you will depend on your ability to pull them off. Each of us is not spur-of-the-moment funny, but if you are, you can use the humor well with difficult coworkers.

You can find free coaching tools and resources on the internet. Go to free coaching tools company.com.

Some you will want to consider downloading are:

* 1. Wheel of Life
  2. Intake session
  3. Client Action sheet coaching template
  4. Coaching Intake Session checklist template
  5. Blank coaching wheel
  6. Action Brainstorming coaching worksheet

There is a coaching tools and exercise megapack for sale at [www.thecoachingtoolscompany.com](http://www.thecoachingtoolscompany.com) for $295 but you can find most of what you need for free on line.

**TOOL BOX 9: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Discuss using “active listening” techniques, passive listening techniques, “I” statements,

Mirroring techniques, etc.

**Communication Importance**

The importance of communication can be summed up in only a few words :

* Happiness
* Success
* Harmonious relationships with the people

**Benefits of effective communication**

* Rewarding and happy relationships with others
* Easily build rapport with spouse, significant other, friends, new acquaintances
* Getting what you want in a respectful and mutually beneficial way
* More time for yourself and others
* Satisfaction and success in life

**Failing to communicate effectively**

* Professional setbacks
* Personal disappointment
* Breakdown of important relationships
* Wasting energy and time on frustration and dramas
* Not reaching our full potential

**TOOL BOX 10: HAPPINESS AND YOU**

Don’t you love being around people who laugh, tell jokes, and find the “fun” in life? I know I do. Have you ever been someplace and people were laughing so hard, and you wanted to know what the laughter was all about? Again, I know I have. Laughter is contagious, it builds relationships, lowers blood pressure and creates social networks. Laughter and happiness have also been shown by scientists to create longevity of life.

Happiness or success: Which comes first for you? (Happiness Advantage)

You probably don’t realize it, but you answer that question every time your brain says, "I'll be happy when I pay off my mortgage" or "when I fall in love again" or "when I can retire." The formula is clear: Work harder, then you'll be successful, then you'll be happier.

We learned this formula from watching movies and TV commercials, which are heavily invested in having us believe a certain product or lifestyle will make us happy. The whole rags-to-riches American dream is based on the belief that once you finally "make it," you'll be content. But we've had ample evidence that those celebrities and millionaires aren't so happy off-camera.

**Why the Success-Then-Happiness Formula Doesn't Work**

Actually, there are two reasons. First, every time we hit a success, our brain moves the goalpost of where success is. Second, your brain actually works in the opposite order. The happier your brain, the more successful you feel (and start to act) — not the other way around. Thus our society's fundamental formula for success and happiness is inherently flawed.

January 2012 cover story for the Harvard Business Review Magazine, made a research case for why happiness leads to success, if you reverse the formula by pursuing happiness first, you wind up with greater happiness *and* greater success.

12 years at Harvard researching happiness, researchers discovered several ways in which happiness actually boosts success. Dopamine, for example, is a chemical released in the brain when you are happy. This drug not only makes you seek more happiness, it turns on every learning center in the brain, raising your mental focus and making you three times as creative, which, in turn, tends to lead to more and greater success.

If you adopt happiness as a work ethic and you train your brain to be positive just like you exercise to strengthen your body – you will find success. This may sound simple, but how easy is it to go to the gym? Happiness is not something that happens to you. Happiness is created.

**TOOL BOX 11: HOW TO DEAL WITH A DIFFICULT SITUATION**

At some point in your life you will find yourself involved in awkward moments or difficult situations. These moments can range from feeling embarrassment to divorce or dealing with the death of a loved one. Your difficult situation may be related to your finances, your marriage, your children or your [job](http://www.ehow.com/careers/). However, there are steps and actions you can take to handle any difficult situation that life may bring.

* Realize that your difficult situation is all in how you perceive it. What may seem difficult now will not seem difficult later. What may seem difficult to you may not be difficult to others.
* Realize you have a choice in how you handle your difficult situations. You can choose to be positive or you can choose to be negative. Try to find the find the positive in every situation that life may bring.
* Be resourceful. Never give up or give in when faced with a challenge. Find out as much information as you can about your situation whether that means talking to someone who has been through it or looking it up in the yellow pages or on the internet to find resources to help you get through the situation.
* Deal with your emotions. In any and every situation that you encounter you will have emotional responses. Sometimes you may feel hurt, sad, disappointment, anger, frustration, shame or loneliness. You need to let yourself feel the emotions. Cry when you need to cry. Punch a pillow, yell, scream, roll around on the floor and have a temper tantrum. Let the emotions pass through you like a current and move on.
* Don't let the situation change you as person unless the change is positive. We all will find that difficult situations help us to grow as individuals. Don't let the situation make you blame other people and harbor resentment or damage your self-esteem.
* Have a sense of humor and learn to laugh at your situation or mistakes no matter how bad they are. Laughter is like medicine and sometimes it can be contagious. Write a journal and record your feelings. Find a peaceful outlet such as a long walk, taking deep breaths, listening to your favorite music or watching a good movie. Use time out method or stop light method.
* Always keep a good support system. The support system can consist of friends or [family](http://www.ehow.com/relationships-and-family/) or simply a group of people that are going through the same difficult situation. Remember to surround yourself with love and love yourself no matter what situation occurs.

**TOOL BOX 12: REFRAMING FOR CLARITY**

We will be discussing frames and how a frame provides a context or focus for your thoughts and actions. Just as a picture frame puts borders or boundaries on what you can see in a picture, the frames of reference that you choose as a result of your beliefs about yourself and others, your perceived role in life, your perceived limitations in skills/abilities, etc. can limit what you see as possible or can open up all sorts of possibilities. You (and if you allow them, others) are continually setting timeframes, boundaries, limits, etc. on what you can and can’t do - often without any real thought about the consequences or if the limitations are true.

Changing the frame of an experience can have a major influence on how you perceive, interpret and react to that experience. Being told that you have one hour to complete a task will most likely result in a different emotional state, approach and quality of work than if you are told that you have one week to accomplish the same task. This illustrates how a change in frame (in this case a timeframe) can have a significant impact on the choices you make. Changing the frame of reference is called reframing. The purpose of reframing is to help a person experience their actions, the impact of their beliefs, etc. from a different perspective (frame) and potentially be more resourceful or have more choice in how they react.

Reframing going on all around us:

Politicians are masters at reframing. It seems no matter what happens, they can put a positive spin on it for themselves or a negative spin for their opponents.

You may be frustrated at your wife for inviting the elderly gentleman next door for supper. Until she points out that if you were in his shoes, then you may find this simple act to be the highlight of your week.

Consider that old wooden table in the basement that you use as a temporary workbench for sawing wood, nailing things together, etc. Instantly, it is seen differently if some tells you that it is a valuable antique.

Jokes are reframes - you are guided to think in one frame and then the frame (meaning or context) changes. How many psychologists does it take to change a light bulb? Answer: Only one, and the light bulb must want to change!

Fairy tales often use reframes to help children see different perspectives or consequences - ‘crying wolf’.

An excuse is a reframe that attributes a different meaning or context to your behaviors.

During the 1984 campaign, there was considerable concern about Ronald Reagan’s age. Speaking during the presidential debate with Walter Mondale, Reagan said “I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience.” Reagan’s age was not an issue for the remainder of the campaign!

There is a story about Thomas Watson Sr., the first President of IBM. A young worker had made a mistake that lost IBM $1 M in business. She was called in to the President’s office and as she walked in said, “Well, I guess you have called me here to fire me.” “Fire you?” Mr. Watson replied, “I just spent $1 M on your education!”

A father brought his head-strong daughter to see Milton Erickson - the famous hypnotherapist. He said to Erickson, “My daughter doesn’t listen to me or her mother. She is always expressing her own opinion.” After the father finished describing his daughter’s problem, Erickson replied, “Now isn’t it good that she will be able to stand on her own two feet when she is ready to leave home?” The father sat in stunned silence. That was the extent of the therapy -- the father now saw his daughter’s behavior as a useful resource later in her life.

Content and Context Reframes:

Content Reframe:

The content or meaning of a situation is determined by what you choose to focus on. An electrical power failure can be viewed as disruptive, a major disaster given all you have to get done. Or it can be viewed as an opportunity to spend some intimate time with your spouse or to have fun with your children finding innovative ways to manage the situation.

A content reframe is useful for statements such as: ‘I get annoyed when my boss stands behind me while I am working.’ Notice how the person has taken the situation and given it a specific meaning -- which may or may not be true - and in so doing limits her resourcefulness and possible courses of action. To reframe this situation, remember the NLP presupposition ‘Every behavior has a positive intention’ and ask questions such as:

What other meaning could the boss’ behavior have? Or for what purpose does he do it? A possible reframe might be: ‘Is it possible he wants to help and does not know how to offer his assistance in any other way?’

What is the positive value in this behavior? The positive value could be related to the boss’ behavior (as above) or it could be related to the speaker’s behavior. A possible reframe might be: ‘Isn’t it great that you know your boundaries and are not prepared to allow someone to violate them?’

If you are experiencing a physical problem (including phobias and allergies), you may ask yourself, ‘Is this problem useful to me in some way?’ For example, it may give you permission to say ‘no’. If this is the case, you could ask yourself, ‘Is there some other way that I can get this same result without having to have the physical problem?’ And just maybe the physical problem will disappear.

Context Reframe:

Almost all behaviors are useful or appropriate in some context. Interrupting a speaker by standing up and offering your view in the middle of her lecture may be judged as inappropriate. To do this same behavior at the end of the presentation in order to provide a different perspective may be welcomed by all present.

A context reframe is useful for statements such as: ‘I am too pushy.’ or ‘I wish I did not focus on what could go wrong.’ In this type of situation, your client has assumed that this type of behavior has no value. You job is to discover when it is of value by asking yourself the question ‘When or where would this behavior be useful or viewed as a resource?’ A possible reframe might be: ‘Isn’t that a great skill to have when you need to get things done or to avoid potential problems?’ Once you have your client more resourceful, you can then assist him to discover behaviors that may be more appropriate in other situations.

Children and Parenting

Children exhibit all sorts of behaviors - some appropriate and some not so appropriate. Focusing mainly on a child’s inappropriate behaviors, may result in the child feeling overly criticized or attacked; resulting in an increase in problem behavior or the child becoming overly defensive. As an alternative, a parent may choose two courses of action:

Assuming every behavior has a positive intention, the parent may choose to discover the positive intention. Then the parent can discuss with the child other behaviors that would meet both the parent’s and child’s needs.

The parent may point out where or in what context that type of behavior is acceptable; thus validating to the child that his behaviors are useful in certain contexts.

You may believe your reframe is the best ever and yet it may not work for the other person -- simply because they have a different model of the world than you do. Remember - There is no failure, only feedback - and explore other possible reframes.

If you present the reframe in the form of a question or a metaphor (story), it will most likely be more fully considered than if you present it as a statement of fact.

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