

PART II: The Implementation of Success

Chapter Six: EMOTIONAL ENERGY & MOTIVATION

BUILDING UP POSITIVE FEELINGS OF SELF-ESTEEM

Until you make peace with who you are, you'll never be content with what you have.

-- Doris Mortman

With all the science and technology in the world to improve services marketing, why is the face-to-face customer service interface worse now than it was 30 years ago? The reason is simple – the average service provider (leader and follower) and the average customer are more emotionally ill at ease. Anxious. And it's not getting better. The World Health Organisation (WHO) says that depression is the leading cause of disability in the world, and between the age group 15 – 44 is already the 2nd largest cause of an unproductive life (heart disease is number one). By the year 2020, the WHO predicts that depression will reach 2nd place for *all ages*, and both sexes.

http://www.who.int/mental_health/management/depression/definition/en/ Service marketing is quite simple – happy service people generate happy customers – happy customers then re-infect the original service provider with this positive social psychology. At the core of this is an incredibly strong feeling of self-esteem, giving us the ability to manage others and ourselves better. At the end of the day, we see the customer not as they are, but as we *feel*. Citing recent clinical findings how our brain makes up images in our ventro-medial prefrontal cortex, psychiatrist Ian McCallum writes, 'Seeing, on its own, is not the precondition for believing. Feeling is.'¹ Even if we lost both our eyeballs, but believed strongly enough, our brain is structured to still 'see' images appear before our 'eyes'. This is proof that our visual system – what we see – relies on the inner workings of our emotional apparatus. Thus the service provider sees the customer through glasses tinted and tainted by their own feelings.

Our feelings spawn neurotransmitters and hormones, motivating us to take the difficult but necessary giant leaps forward.

Feelings have a say on how the rest of the brain and cognition go about their business. Their influence is immense.

-- Dr. Antonio Damasio, Professor of Neuroscience at the University of Southern California

Leadership can be described as social psychology. Professor of psychology, Jennifer George describes leadership as an emotion-laden process intertwined with social influences.² *Great* leaders, assisted by their mirror neurons, have an *emotional contagion* mechanism – an empathetic mechanism to catch and feel the emotional climate around them.^{3,4} As mentioned in chapter 2, our mirror neurons, working closely with our amygdalae and brainstem, allows us to simulate the other persons body state, which in turn triggers our neural state, enabling us to experience what they are experiencing. Using this biological connectedness, we empathise. Due to this mood transference, the collective facial expression of one firm can look radically different from another organisation. In this way, if we like it or not, this emotional and facial mimicry – this *group affective tone* of an organisation or country – drives it. If you want to influence “bosses, peers and subordinates” we need to influence their “heads and hearts”.⁵ South African author of *Lose the Business Plan*, Allon Raiz has specialised in studying why just 4 percent of entrepreneurs succeed. He believes that it's more the psychological makeup of the entrepreneur, and says, “For, it is the heart and mind of the entrepreneurs that will, ultimately, determine their success.”⁶ When we factor in how the emotional tone of the entrepreneur

spreads their staff and customers, it's no surprise Raiz feels this way. Leaders must realize that their moods are contagious.^{7,8} And as leaders, we should never forget Dale Carnegie's words (1937): "When dealing with people, let us remember we are not dealing with creatures of logic. We are dealing with creatures of emotion." This is critical: your team will not just become what they think, but what they *think, feel and do*.

The "old" South Africa is a place that very few South Africans want back, not only because of the racial tension and the wars we were fighting, but also because of the emotional distance and tension that spilt over into our private lives. One such stress was the apprehension of receiving a break-up "Dear John letter" whilst complying with compulsory national military service. For a star rugby player in my platoon, rejection by the woman with whom he was romantically involved was more feared than contact with the enemy. When that "Dear Johnny" did actually arrive, he was so broken he couldn't get out of his sleeping bag for a week. This shows the power of our thoughts. And it is when negative *feelings* like loss, insecurity, hurt, disgust, jealousy, anger, fear and resentment are linked to our thoughts that mere ink and paper of a Dear Johnny is so soul destroying. The lesson? A healthy body in the grip of negative, unhealthy limbic system is like a ship sailing without wind, like a man unable to get himself out of bed. Or to put differently, a thought without positive feelings is like a fire hose without pressure – we are lucky if the spray reaches the first floor. Feelings of passion and desire *fuels* action. Your school grades or good looks will never help you as much as your desire to win – winning is about *wanting* to win!

All human actions have one or more of these seven causes: chance, nature, compulsions, habit, reason, passion, desire. -- Aristotle

Thoughts and emotions are very real. Humans are not made up of static atoms; we are made up of dynamic emotions. We can even observe and measure these emotions as electrical and chemical actions and reactions (synapses). Observable on a brain scanner, the emotion of disgust or a putrid smell, for instance, sets our anterior insula aglow. At a neurobiological level the emotion of trust (opposite of disgust) between people produces the neuroactive hormone oxytocin. Oxytocin reduces morbidity, mortality and stress.⁹

Powerful emotions, then, are more important than powerful thoughts. And self-esteem is not a mere thought; it results from a deeply ingrained *feeling*, seated in our limbic system, which is never switched off. Belief dwarfs thought, and belief in our self is our most important feeling. We thus need to be "heart smart" and not just "head strong". Changing our belief of self-worth has a knock-on effect on all our other beliefs. We see and feel the world differently, which in turn modifies our attitudes, energy levels, and behavioural intentions.

Being comfortable in our own skin allows us to effectively use our enlarged prefrontal cortex. In a relaxed state, the limbic system is also naturally caregiving -- so typical of mammals.

A Success Formula: Electrical power is measured in watts (power = voltage x current). The more watts, the more work can be done. If we had to measure our attitude or behavioural intentions in watts, it would be the *size of our thoughts* multiplied by our *feelings* (but don't forget, the depth of our belief governs our thoughts and feelings. Belief is the sum of our values, culture, and sense of worth). Because "Attitude drives behaviour."¹⁰, the more watts of attitude, the more work can be done. Thus the most successful goals or company missions are those that evoke the most favourable attitudes from people. They must be emotionally engaging. Attitude determines action. Action determines results. *So all things equal, attitude usually becomes the determinant of success.* But as a leader, remember, don't think of behaviour as a random event, think about it being deliberately caused. Leaders need to consciously influence their group's context – their thoughts, feelings and belief in them.

With an understanding of how the human mind works, we can now write a Formula for Success.

Thoughts (focus) X **Emotions** (energy) = **Attitude** (behavioural intentions)

Success = **Attitude** (Thoughts x Emotions) + **Ability** (skill + talent) + **Action**



Figure 6.1: Attitude is an Intention to Act

Napoleon Hill has said, “Whatever the mind can conceive [thought] and believe [emotions], it can achieve [action].” For example, Sue wants to quit smoking (thought) because a medical diagnosis gave her the fright of her life (feeling), and because she believes that her body is the temple of her soul (belief and value in the importance of health). Thus her attitude, or behavioural intention, towards quitting is driven by her *thoughts* + *feelings*, which is all heavily governed by her *belief system* (ref. figure 6.1 above).

Whether high or low, whether empowering or disempowering, self-esteem is the governing emotion that resonates at the centre of our soul. Soul is who you feel you really are – authentic me or fake me – soulful or soulless. And in a relationship, *when both parties’ self-esteem is in a healthy state, you will resonate*. Self-esteem is our central source of energy and connectedness to the bi-vironment. Self-esteem is the unconscious amalgamation of millions of previous and current self-feelings and self-images. These feelings and images are sensed in the brain and felt in the mind and body, which in turn affect all our future thoughts, self-confidence, moods, and behaviour. Thus, if this source (self-esteem) were anxiously dispersed, we would not only feel spiritually depleted (soulless), but would have less emotional and physical energy for tackling all other life areas too.

Emotions thus either enslave or free our body and mind. Imagine if you always felt tense and anxious. Would that affect your thoughts and actions? Would that affect your self-confidence? Would that affect your decisiveness as a leader? While it is apparent that we will always harbour conflicting thoughts inside our head, without the accompanying strong will of healthy self-esteem, we would feel disempowered and be stranded by indecision. The relaxed leader does not have sweaty palms, but calmly soaks in the bi-vironment.

An intense emotion can be fleeting, but the resultant stored feelings can persist for years. Our body feels the mind's emotions, which is a physiological reaction to cope with our environment. The body then influences the mind that triggered the feeling in the first place; this domino effect – this body-mind cycle – is how *emotional and feeling 'runaway'* happens. As mentioned in previous chapters, one way to stop this 'emotional runaway' is to use self-talk – think, feel and act consciously – to reframe our bi-vironment. Behavioural neurologist Dr. Damasio says, "The brain is the body's captive audience."¹¹ This means that our body performs for the brain, and as our feelings are felt in our body, feelings in turn affect our mind. Damasio describes emotions and feelings as follows:

In conclusion, emotions is the combination of a *mental evaluative process*, simple or complex, with *dispositional responses to that process*, mostly towards the body proper, resulting in an emotional body state, but also *towards the brain itself* (neurotransmitter nuclei in brain stem), resulting in additional mental changes. As you will soon discover, I reserve the term *feeling* for the experience of those changes.¹²

Have you ever listened to Italian opera or any song that moved you to tears, even while your prefrontal cortex had no idea what the song was about? Well, that is the power of evoked feelings (moods and emotions) versus mere thought (Italian words). The mood of music is known to affect plants and even to dramatically affect crime rates. Playing classical music in selected UK Tube stations reduced robberies by 33 percent within 18 months.¹³ In the same vein, straightforward thoughts are not enough to move our limbic system and programme our subconscious powerhouse. Thoughts need to be emotionally aligned with what we really want in life and business (realistic and relevant) or you will never truely feel complete.

In other words, setting goals to achieve a company's mission is not a destination, it is a process accompanied by feelings of wonderlust. Or put differently, the power of positive thinking *without* the power of positive feelings results in a lack of action. Without deep accompanying feelings, your thoughts and attempts to achieve your goals will likely be short-lived. You will just be sleepwalking. But when you know that your *thoughts* are aligned with what you truly want, then mere thoughts, hopes, and wishes become fuelled *feelings of desire*. Persistence is the ability to execute a goal, long after the initial emotional hype in which you initially wrote that goal, has passed. For this persitant action to occur, there *must* be a powerful congruence and resonance between what you think and feel.

Goal Setting: When goal setting in all life areas (spiritual, career, financial, social, family, health, and hobbies), always remember the 6R Goal Model (ref. Chap 5. Researched, realistic, relevant, rolled-out, reassess, and reloaded.)

Although some people may think that they have both feet in the starting blocks, when the gun goes off, they may not know which lane they are in or where the finish line is. Your race, therefore, must thus be well *researched*. *Realistic* goals get us fired-up emotionally because with every specific and measurable step we take, we can see the finish line draw closer. In their Harvard Business Review article, *What Really Motivates Workers*, (2010), Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer showed that "When workers sense they're making headway, their drive to succeed is at its peak." After "progress," the other significant motivators were recognition and support. But the part of the 6R Goal Model that I want to single out in this chapter is *Relevance*. Too many of us are attempting to achieve goals which are not congruent with what we *really* want. Goals *must* be relevant if they are to evoke an emotional response in us. Creator of the blockbuster "Star Wars" series, George Lucas, puts it like this: "You have to find something that you love enough to be able to take risks, jump over the hurdles and break through the brick walls that are always going to be placed

in front of you." At age 59, billionaire philanthropist Sir Richard Branson said, "What really drives me is that I absolutely love what I do".¹⁴ But to discover and attain this congruence requires quiet-time and knowledge about our core purpose, values we hold dear, and our life-long vision, all of which should resonate deep within our heart. Finding this congruence builds self-esteem.

We need to have the relevant and conscious "whys" in our goal setting or our efforts will soon fade. When Gary Chapman wrote, "Love is a verb," what he meant was that love should result in action. A manager cannot, for instance, initiate change with a rational memo, however snappy it may be. To initiate change, like in great advertising, managers *must* evoke a strong emotional response by combining *thoughts x emotions*.

Emotions (Latin 'to move'): In 1972, professor of psychology Paul Ekman discovered six universal primal emotions: *anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness and surprise* (highlighted in bold below). These six emotions and their accompanying facial expressions can be universally detected by a baby readings the bodylanguage of the caregiver. In the 1990s Ekman, extended the basic list to also include another eleven emotions: *amusement, contempt, contentment, embarrassment, excitement, guilt, pride in achievement, relief, satisfaction, sensory pleasure and shame* (highlighted below in italics). Look at the following list, and if you could *choose* to feel an emotion right now, what would it be? It's probably the emotions your followers would like to feel too.

Acceptance, Agitation, Alarm, *Amusement*, **Anger** (triggered by an obstacle), Angst, Annoyance, Anticipation (opposite of surprise), Apprehension, Apathy, Arrogance, Awe, Anxiety, Bitterness, Boredom, Calmness, Cautiousness, Comfort, *Contempt, Contentment*, Confidence, Courage, Depression, Determination, Disappointment, Discontentment, **Disgust** (triggered by toxic 'substances'), Desire, Delight, *Embarrassment*, Envy, Ecstasy, Euphoria, *Excitement*, **Fear** (triggered by danger), Friendship, Frustration, Glee, Gladness, Gratitude, Grief, *Guilt*, Hate, Happiness, Homesickness, Honor, Hope, Horror, Humility, Impatience, Inadequacy, Irritability, Inspiration, **Joy** (triggered by success), Jealousy, Kindness, Loneliness, Love, Lust, Limerence, Melancholy, Modesty, Nervousness, Negativity, Nostalgia, Pain, Paranoia, Patience, Peace, Phobia, Pity, *Pride* (authentic), Rage, Regret, *Relief*, Remorse, Resentment, **Sadness** (triggered by loss), *Satisfaction, Sensory pleasure*, Schadenfreude (pleasure from observing the hurt in others), Self-pity, *Shame*, Shyness, Sorrow, Shock, Suffering, **Surprise** (triggered by the unexpected), Suspense, Thrill, Timid, Torment, Trust (opposite of disgust), Unhappiness, Vulnerability, Worry, Yearning and Zest

MOTIVATION

Good and bad -- both are motivating. Learn from nature: Day and night, our brain's activity reveals that it is designed to maximise gain and minimise pain. All organisms evolve from avoiding danger (driven by fear, norepinephrine) and maximising reward (driven by anticipation and joy, dopamine), and it is *both* these emotional forces that interact psychologically and physiologically to form a potent push-pull motivational force. In the 1700s mathematician Daniel Bernoulli realised that our actions are driven by the *size* of the value to be gained, and the *odds* of gaining that value. His formula is as follows:

$$\text{Expected Value} = \text{Value of Gain} \times \text{Odds}$$

Developed by a Yale School of Management professor, *Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964)* deals with motivation too. His theory is a potent tool for teaching companies and individuals how goals should be attained. Vroom notes that our behaviour is the result of our conscious and unconscious choice to minimize

pain and maximize pleasure. In his book *Intergrative neuroscience (2000)*, Evian Gordon also agrees that our brain is designed to minimise threat and maximise reward.¹⁵ Vroom calls these positive forces *valences*, and discerned two distinct types: extrinsic (i.e. possessions) and intrinsic (i.e. satisfaction). He also observed that both negative and positive emotions motivate us to act. In other words, we are basically driven by two forces — fear (adrenaline, norepinephrine) and anticipated reward/value — hope (dopamine) — and if we can cleverly combine both, we will have the required *emotion* to give us the essential stamina to achieve what we want. Today, with the help of neuroscience, we know that we need both dopamine and adrenaline (norepinephrine) to really become aroused – energized – to focus and tackle our goals. Vroom could not explain this neurologically then, but we now know that he was correct. Neuroleadership expert, David Rock, confirms this:

Fear brings an immediate alertness. Norepinephrine also turns out to be important for binding circuits together in the prefrontal cortex. If your alertness is too low, you can generate adrenaline by imagining something going wrong in the future, literally visualising a scary event. A professional boxer once explained to me the secret of his success. He used to imagine that going into the ring could kill him, which would make him train like a maniac. I use a similar trick when writing. If I can't focus, I imagine handing in a piece of work and other people finding mistakes in it. That wakes me right up.¹⁶

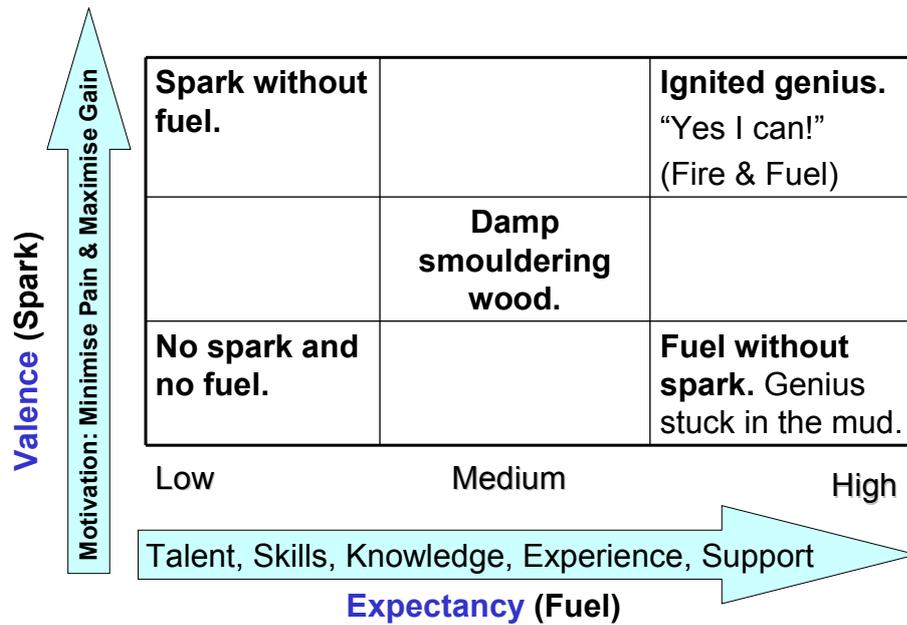
Think of fear (adrenaline) as a push from behind and hope (dopamine) as a suction or pull from the front – both emotional forces simultaneously push-pulling and directing you towards your goals. The benefit (gain) alone of achieving a goal may not be attractive enough to stimulate the necessary feelings of desire, but by acknowledging both the benefit (satisfaction) *and* the negative consequence (pain), we could more readily be catapulted into starting and completing a project. For instance, you may not be that motivated to attend university, but if you were also aware that you only had a 3 percent chance of finding employment without a degree, that awareness of “pain” (unemployment) together with the concentration on the “gain” (dream career) will keep you much more motivated than only focussing on the gain.

With a previously disadvantaged black upbringing, Dr. Vuyane Mhlomi, who came third in his class of 178 medical students (2011), admitted he was mostly motivated by fear:

I come from a community or township where the most successful person is either the guy that owns the spaza shop or the guy who is a taxi driver. It was not just the bright future that was ahead... that to me didn't move me. It was the thought of dry bread... that pushed me! Dr. Vuyane Mhlomi, Medical Intern, 2012 (Carte Blanche interview, 2012)

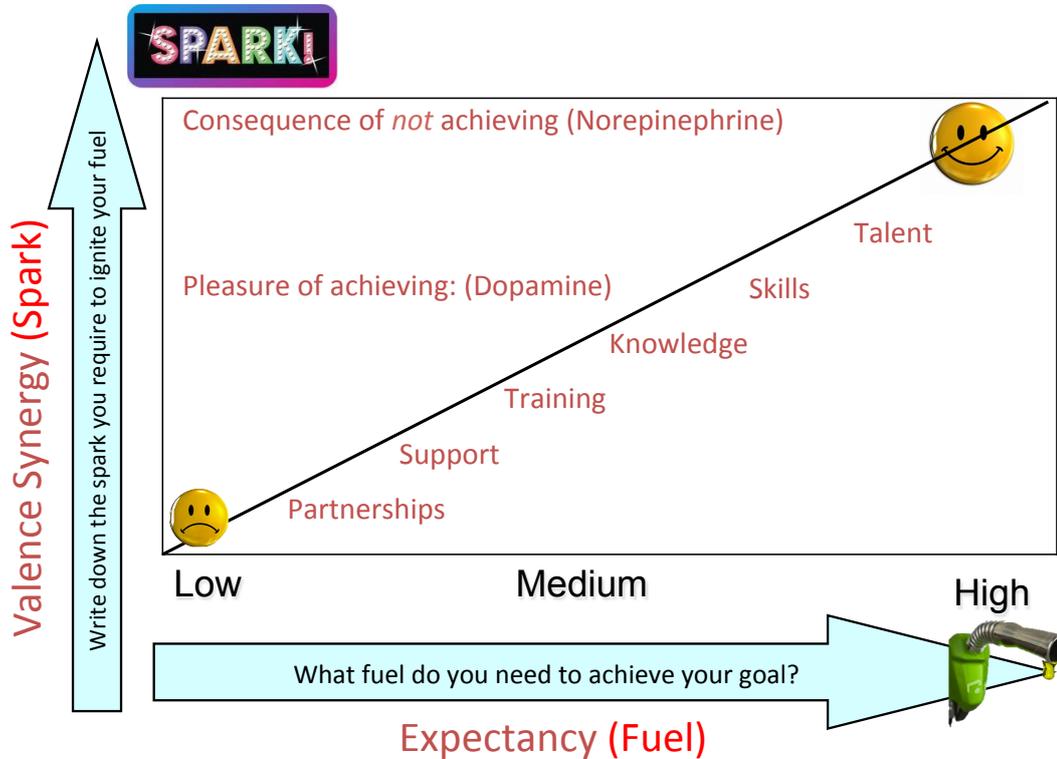
This need for self-protection (avoidance of pain) is what triggers our search for satisfaction and joy too. Which is why some leading psychologists say “bad is stronger than good.”¹⁷ The more emotional reasons we have — the more “whys”, the more hormones and neurotransmitters created — the bigger the spark will be to *ignite* and *fuel* action. So, from a neuropsychological perspective, using the synergy of both pain and gain is solid advice. However in contrast to leading self, when *leading others* Harvard psychology professor Daniel Gilbert says, “Psychologists have studied reward and punishment for a century, and the bottom line is perfectly clear: Reward works better.”¹⁸

Victor Vroom also explains that motivated individuals must also feel like they are *capable* of achieving. With their skills, knowledge, and experience, they must have an “expectancy,” or realistic hope, that goals are achievable. Thus Vroom came up with an elegant formula for motivation. The vivid *expectancy* (what I call *fuel*) of achieving our envisioned *image* (what I call *spark*) is easy to understand and apply.



Source: Based on professor Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory on Motivation

Figure 6.2: Motivation = Valence (emotional rewards) **x Expectancy** (talent, skills, knowledge, experience, and resources like social capital/partnerships that make goals more achievable).



Source: Based on professor Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory on Motivation

Figure 6.3: Exercise: Select a desirable goal and insert your 'fuel' and 'spark' into the above matrix.

FEELINGS ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN THOUGHT

Dubbed the “Father of Modern Philosophy,” Rene Descartes, who stated in 1637, “I think, therefore I am,” has erroneously, though perhaps unintentionally, led many people to believe that our thoughts operate without the *body’s emotional feedback*, and thus thoughts alone are the fundamental ingredients for rational “cognitive” behaviour. But Dr. Damasio, in his book *Descartes’ Error*, has convincingly challenged this conventional thinking with his recent somatic marker hypothesis. A typical example of our body talking to our mind is evident when a newborn baby *feels* the discomfort of its naked skin weathering the elements. The skin (body) immediately ‘communicates’ to the brain that there is a problem. And so in the absence of a developed mind, our first actions in life, whether hunger or pain, are driven mainly by emotional triggers from the body and mind’s collective unconscious. Dr. Damasio makes it clear that we should not assemble our thoughts on the quicksand of bad emotions (like a low self-image or self-concept), because a negative self-image is felt as a negative feeling in the body (due to an over-aroused limbic system), which in turn can negatively impact our thoughts and actions.

No one can make you feel inferior without your consent. -- Eleanor Roosevelt

Just by simple observation, we know that deeply embedded feelings are more important than thoughts. It is easily observed that the person with determined *feelings* to succeed is far more compelled than the person with mere *thoughts* of success. Or put another way, shallow thoughts will have little bearing when lost in the abyss of a negative self-worth; and even positive thoughts will quickly lose their stamina and eventually be completely negated by negative feelings. Do not set yourself up for failure by thinking something that you are not. That is a sugar-coated thought on a disturbed emotional core: it looks good on the surface but wait until you bite into it. For instance, we can think happy thoughts all day but feel emotionally depressed to the core! A nail biter can think “I’m not going to bite my nails today,” but until feelings are addressed, they will catch themselves biting their nails again. Habit reversal training (HRT) is not as simple as just thinking differently. We need to become aware of what triggers the emotional urge to do what our followers and we do. Or if we do stop biting our nails (but without the original emotional trigger quenched), another irritating habit may emerge.

Positive thinking is an excellent start, but our emotional substrate, deeply seated in our limbic system, is much more important. Imagine firing peas at a charging rhino; well, that is like firing thoughts at a raging low self-esteem. But now imagine firing happy thoughts at an already healthy inner source; instead of being tainted and deflated by your negative feelings, thoughts will be enveloped and protected in a deep autoclave of self-worth. Someone who has an extreme fear of heights does not quickly overcome it by thinking happy thoughts whilst taking the lift to the top floor. It takes much longer than that to develop new somatic markers. Over the long-term, take the highroad and build thoughts on a solid emotional foundation. Having positive emotions like love and self-esteem is thus not a luxury, but a necessary underpinning of a great leader.

This is why it is more accurate to say: “We do not become what we think; we become what we think, feel, and do.” (ref. Figure 6.5 below). Thinking, feeling, and doing things *differently* unwind bad habits. This is primarily why skilled psychologists can be so appreciated; they are trained to offer valuable insights into our past experiences, and through this examination, transform our current emotional state. By finding and releasing emotional baggage, our energy is not only conserved, but our behaviour too, is modified to serve us better.

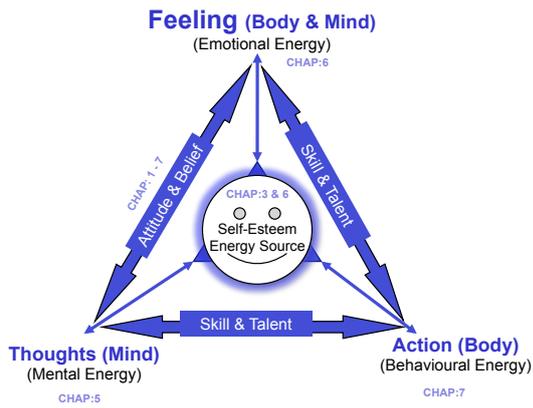


Figure 6.5: The Golden Triangle of Systemic Energy

So here is the danger of a life coach: too often they only focus on our thoughts and actions. The consequence is that we may achieve our ambitious goals, but *without* a deep sense of calm or inner peace, our ‘success’ will be superficial and short-lived. However, once we are relatively “baggage free”, a life coach is a great catalyst to help achieve future goals and life purpose. Rabindranath Tagore has rightly said, "We live in this world when we love it." So before we examine our thinking, we need to understand how important it is to raise up our emotional self-worth energy levels.

Self-Worth Energy: To elevate yourself to the altitude you desire, your hot air balloon must be *large enough*. Balloon size increases from genuine inner self-esteem, your soul, filled with positive, secure, and unruffled feelings. At the crux of a peaceful life is a healthy and purposeful soul, not an irrational id-ego. Note that an egotistic or narcissistic overestimation of oneself is not a healthy self-esteem: that is just the sugar-coating on an unstable foundation. Self-worth must be grounded in reality, not just wishful illusory thinking or screaming out “yes, yes, yes” to pump yourself up. An egotistical self does not conserve energy but anxiously disperses it in all directions. But a person driven by healthy self-worth deliberately focuses energy on more meaningful things.

A sign of a healthy self-esteem is marked by the natural relaxation of the self-centred id-ego, enabling a purposeful soul and spirit to emerge. John Carroll, professor of sociology at La Trobe University in Melbourne, says it so well:

Yet there is also soul, and it is because the ego has lived, not been denied, or cringed in bashful insecurity, that the great man is no longer driven by its ambitions and anxieties. He can stand back from his glory and reflect ... on the sense of it all.¹⁹

In this way we can progressively be freed from the grip of the self-association of ‘me’ and venture into a much broader identification as we explore the bi-vironment’s larger landscape. The high-powered businessman like Warren Buffet, with his anxious id-ego noticed and nourished, has allowed the soul to calmly emerge. Or this can result from other spiritual awakenings, which we considered in Chapter 2, where the id-ego wanes, allowing the soul to peacefully connect our inner environment with the outer universe. This is the beauty of self-esteem; it consciously connects us to the bi-vironment (inner and outer environments). As leaders we become aware of our followers (outer environment). We can stand back and reflect (inner environment). The road is different for each of us, but should eventually lead to the same place: an inner calm of peace and bliss; a source hosting positive energy, kindness and love; a

connectedness with self; and the eco-therapy of wanting to immerse ourselves in the universal consciousness of nature.

Emotional Energy: We use our conscious, unconscious and subconscious minds for making decisions. This ‘whole brain’ is responsible for everything, from healthy relationships to how we act. Feelings — like the deeply rooted ‘gut’ feel of self-worth, resentment, the fear of flying or heights, contentment and gratitude — are more important than conscious thoughts. Why? Because healthy feelings are loaded with potent energy for deliberate action; but unhealthy feelings, like the unfounded fear of flying, lead us off course, deplete our energy levels, and result in inaction or scattered action. Instead of flying, for instance, we irrationally and unconsciously prime ourselves to rather tediously drive to a far destination.

These deeply embedded feelings from all our past experiences control us every second of the day. When we feel insecure, accepting faith in silly superstitions control our lives to the point that we may really believe we have powers to ward off a would-be hijacker or an economic recession, giving us a false sense of security of a divine intervention in an uncertain world. This is what psychologist Julian Rotter called an external locus of control (ELOC), where a self-doubting individual believes whole-heartedly that his destiny is guided by pure luck, fate, and external factors. In other words, when rationality fails, we’re tempted to fall for irrational solutions. This is how underlying feelings, beliefs, attitudes, and neuroses further inhibit and control our thoughts. In a real world, we should not fool ourselves. The subconscious does not know the difference between fantasy and reality, so we may feel safe because that is what we have told ourselves, but in reality we may be living in a fool’s paradise.

Observable on a brain scanner, our deep emotions and feelings can literally override reason. Like a light switch, they can turn us on or off, or comfort us whilst we do something nerve-wracking like deliver a keynote talk. Feelings of low self-esteem, combined with hateful revenge, can overwhelm a shy woman to irrationally commit a violent crime of passion. Whilst she is just contemplating revenge, we can observe her reward-seeking spot, the nucleus accubus in the prefrontal cortex, light up on an fMRI brain scanner. Conversely, passionate loving feelings can, again in an unthinking hardwired or unconscious manner, commit her to irrational acts of love. Even in the face of adversity, the more energised the feeling, the more likely we are to be primed with persistent action. Passion is energy.

Every second of the day our irrational and emotionally-driven primitive subconscious mind is consulting and conferring with our conscious mind, sometimes forcing us to make illogical choices at the expense of long-term plans. In other words, we are not as rational as we would like to think we are. Depending on our positive or negative self-esteem or self-talk, we either inflate the balloon with very *hot* or *cold* air. However, the balloon has a flaw; there are thousands of perforated holes in the nylon, and for the balloon to lift-off, these holes must be plugged by emotionally charged thoughts. Positive thoughts do not escape through these holes. This must happen frequently or these air-plugs dissolve, allowing hot air to siphon out of the balloon. The secret is to be conscious of self (“know thyself”), and become aware of the yo-yo effect between mood swings (emotions), thoughts and actions.

We need to be calmly conscious of our thought source. What thought triggered your mood, which then triggered your action? What mood were you already in when a colleague walked into your office or when the taxi driver cut you off in the traffic? What was the context or root cause of your gut feeling that triggered your irrational response to the telesales caller? Is it baggage from being stung in the past that makes you turn down a great sales offer?

Being aware of our gut feelings makes us understand and listen to our intuition — that ‘voice’ in our head, that ‘hunch’ — telling us it is Jesse on the line when the phone rings. This is not magic; it is the marvel of the synergistic interaction of our reptilian, mammalian, and human brain. The exciting thing is, with every new brain scan study, it becomes increasingly clear how our subconscious guides our intuition and actions. Of course, when we are aware of how our brain system works, we begin to understand how miraculous moments jump out at us all the time. It is marvellous to be alive when we start witnessing this new consciousness unfold.

UNDERSTANDING THE ADULT CHILD’S SELF-ESTEEM

Be true to your own needs. If you are not fulfilled and happy, you can't be a good parent to your child.

Barbara Streisand (Harvard Business Review, Oct 2012), Emmy, Grammy and Oscar winner by age 26

I would like to cover this crucial building block of success, understanding the adult child’s self-esteem, for two reasons. Firstly, parents should be aware of their responsibility to nurture young innocent children, who need both roots (a secure soul) and wings (talent identified and nurtured so fire their spirit). Leaders should also understand that their own needs should be met, before they can dedicate their time and effort to others. Secondly, manager-leaders should understand the path travelled in their own youth and make the connection with how adult lives, their own as well as those people they manage, likely hinge on the inner-child. This will also give managers insights into how members of their team view their world.

A child with a low self-image can be disastrous. In their book *Raising an Optimistic Child*, the authors observed that, “Lack of true self-esteem and a sense of competence are underlying causes of depression,”²⁰ whereas the prevailing advantages for a child who likes himself are respect for self and for others. This child is not only a happy soul, but because he has a positive attitude towards himself, he naturally respects others too.

In his book, *Building Your Child’s Self-Image*, Dr. David Hawkins writes from a parent’s perspective and states, “In fact, to treat others with dignity and respect is one of the hallmarks of a healthy self-image”.²¹ Hawkins recommends that parents should give honest praise to their kids, teaching a child to hear and accept constructive criticism. Hawkins also singles out that when a child learns a new competency, this successful achievement is more self-image enhancing than praise. When a child knows in his heart that he did it himself, that is undeniably emotionally empowering.

At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child’s success is the positive involvement of the parents. -- Jane D. Hull, Teacher and Governor of Arizona

So, it is a parent’s responsibility to introduce children to an assortment of interests, keep encouraging and praise them when they progress, give them feedback when they flounder, and let them enjoy the credit when they are competent. Do not push children too hard either, or when they are successful they will feel like they succeeded for you and not for themselves. Rather lead by example and they will more than likely follow. Expose them to a myriad of activities and they will intuitively know what their calling or vocation is (Latin “vocare” means “to call”). Your job then is to pour on the fuel of encouragement, praise and support.

Venturing through life brings insights and exposes a child's talents. Although we have an entire life to figure ourselves out, life in a competitive world has a very short window of opportunity in which to discover our talents, and it is those children who have been introduced to a myriad of interests who serendipitously stumble upon a more meaningful life. Besides by accident, how else would a child realise a talent if a new activity was not introduced to him? Kids normally enjoy what they are good at, and when this synchronises with their belief and value system, that enjoyment seldom changes as an adult. But do not force your kids into competency, as they will rarely get satisfaction out of that. Rather expose them to many sports, hobbies, and life areas, then let them find their niche. Be an example.

Imagine if we had no talent as an architect, but we slogged through a tough degree because that is where we *thought* our talents lay. Or perhaps we liked the title 'architect' or were following someone else's dream? We may graduate with distinction, but our career will never feel like we are in 'the zone'. Work will feel like hard work rather than being a natural extension of self; or put differently, we will not be working out of our strength zone. When Dr. Wayne Dyer said, "Don't die with your music still in you,"²² he meant that our labour must come from the heart — our inner voice — and we will then be inspired. Once inspired, or in-spirit, we forget that we are labouring and we enter a different realm where the physical world seems less important. So typical of successful people who love what they do and do what they love, author Bryce Courtenay is so in 'the zone' or 'flow' that he writes for twelve hours at a sitting without a single break.

The more you lose yourself in something bigger than yourself, the more energy you will have. -- Norman Vincent Peale (1898 – 1993)

In their book *Cradles of Eminence*, Victor and Mildred Goertzel share their insights of 400 famous individuals from the last century, discovering that ninety percent came from families who had a voracious love of learning and reading. Because their parents read, almost all these individuals were early readers of good books, clear evidence of the new millennium saying, "leaders are readers." Interestingly, the majority of these successful people, as children, held views that were contrary to general opinion. Very often, like their parents, they were individualistic thinkers.

Surprisingly, some of these unique children were branded "retarded" by their teachers; others were hyperactive and unruly. But their parents persisted in nurturing them. These children were much more likely to rebel against their teachers than their own parents.

Wilbur and Orville Wright, for example, never went to university, but came from a loving and strongly opinionated family who respected their sons' right to investigate their dream of flying. George Bernard Shaw had an alcoholic father but was *never* ill-treated, only neglected, which made him self-sufficient. Albert Einstein was considered dull by his teachers. At age five, it was Charlie Chaplin's alcoholic father who pushed him onto the stage to initiate his career, and his mother who taught him to become a body language and mimic expert. Pablo Picasso's father failed as an artist but saw talent in his son. Hopeful relatives funded Pablo's art education, but he fast realised that the teachers had nothing to impart on him, so his empathetic father funded his first exhibition. Vincent Van Gogh only sold one painting during his entire lifetime, but the support of his brother motivated him to complete over eight hundred paintings. Famous inventor, Thomas Edison, was at the bottom of his class, so his mother assumed the responsibility of home schooling him. Charles Darwin was inspired by his grandfather's poem on evolution. In general the Goertzels observed of these individuals that the "work to which they were individually committed became their chief pleasure and continued to be so in their adulthood"²³ and critical to their success was a supportive family environment; especially support from mothers.

It is, then, the family value system which seems to have the strongest impact on the child with ability. The love for learning is seen as a lifetime trait. It continues despite illness and frustrations, and even after reasonable and satisfying success. It is not particularly associated with a desire for material gain. Along with the drive for knowledge and achievement there is often a physical vitality in both the parent and the child. These intellectually striving, physically driving parents and children are likely to enhance, if not advance, the status quo. Only one person in the family may become eminent, but the entire family is likely to be competent and useful. Over ninety percent of these Four Hundred families show a love for learning and achievement²⁴ When a girl did become eminent, she most often did so out of a deep personal concern for the ills of mankind, or out of a need to use a talent.²⁵

Malcolm Gladwell finds the same connection in the Terman study²⁶ of successful and unsuccessful geniuses, and correlates it with Annette Lareau's book, *Unequal Childhoods*.²⁷ Those who came from poor families did not have the influential and supportive role models; consequently even with their genius IQs, very few went on to get degrees. However, kids growing up in middle-class families were groomed for success by their more influential parents who passed on essential "practical intelligence." Gladwell cites, "In the end, only one thing mattered: family background."²⁸ Again this is evidence that our education so often takes place in the home, and is "caught, not taught."

The lesson: whether we like it or not, our mirror neurons reflect our parents' EQ. Secondly, context (family background) is key.

However, all is not lost if we did benefit from a supportive and encouraging family environment. It is common to find kids, who, despite traumatic childhoods, have also risen to the 'top'. Equally fascinating is how some of the gifted kids at school have become uninspired adults, and some of the unsuccessful scholars have gone on to be inspirational entrepreneurs, managers, and leaders. Perhaps it results from the struggle of always having to work hard to pass exams that gives the less talented scholars the EQ required to tackle life's real challenges? It seems that we need "entry level" intelligence and talent, but after that, common sense, social skills, emotional capital (self-esteem), context and persistence overshadow our IQ.

The message? Yes, we are more likely to succeed if we have come from a nurturing environment. But after that, it is up to us to persistently follow our heart's desire. However, is a nurturing home an absolute requirement for success? No. So, the Goertzel's, in their book, *Cradles of Eminence*, warn us that before we make a stereotypical psychoanalysis of someone, we should consider these three case studies:

Case 1: "Girl, age sixteen, orphaned, willed to custody by grandmother by mother, who was separated from alcoholic husband, now deceased. Mother rejected the homely child, who has proven to lie and to steal sweets. Swallowed penny to attract attention at five. Father was fond of child. Child lived in fantasy as the mistress of father's household for years. Four young uncles and aunts in household cannot be managed by their grandmother, who is widowed. Young uncle drinks; has left home without telling the grandmother his destination. Aunt, emotional over love affair, locks self in room. Grandmother resolves to be more strict with granddaughter since she fears she has failed with own children. Dresses granddaughter oddly. Refused to let her have playmates, puts her in braces to keep straight. Did not send her to grade school. Aunt on paternal side of family crippled; uncle asthmatic."

Case 2: "Boy, senior year secondary school, has obtained certificate from physician stating that nervous breakdown makes it necessary for him to leave school for six months. Boy not a good all-round student; has

no friends – teachers find him a problem – spoke late – father ashamed of son’s lack of athletic ability – poor adjustment to school. Boy has odd mannerisms, makes up own religion, chants hymns to himself – parents regard him as ‘different.’”

Case 3: “Boy, aged six; head large at birth. Thought to have had brain fever. Three siblings died before his birth. Mother does not agree with relatives and neighbours that child is probably abnormal. Child sent to school – diagnosed as mentally ill by teacher. Mother is angry – withdraws child from school, says she will teach him herself.”

The first case was the childhood of one of the most successful First Ladies the world ever saw, *Eleanor Roosevelt*. Following that was *Albert Einstein*, who did not speak until he was four. And the third case was the inventor of the light bulb, *Thomas Edison*. Besides showing how resilient a human can be, what this teaches us is to not make judgement without all the evidence. Out of a struggle is borne an array of qualities sometimes only dreamt of from a relatively ‘normal’ childhood. Tough childhood experiences can bear fruit.

Furthermore, we need to understand the different sources of energy that drive us: both security and insecurity are drivers. But all angles considered, I would choose the more predictable secure childhood. As with a low self-esteem sliding on a knife-edge, success borne out of insecurity can be like flipping a coin; at best, we only have a 50/50 prediction of *balanced* success later on in life (look at every dictator’s childhood!). Too many people focus on fairytale rags to riches stories as the norm — they are not. These stories are often just cherry-picked sketches to make the authors point. However, in reality, only a fraction of balanced and successful adults were originally born out of insecure upbringings. As slavery abolitionist, Frederick Douglass said, “It’s easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”

By and large, happy people are more creative and more productive. Has there ever been a human being whose misery was the source of his creativity? Of course. But that person is the exception, not the rule. Daniel Gilbert, Professor of Psychology, Harvard (2012)²⁹

Was it not Hitler’s insecure childhood that created such an evil and controlling man (he was savagely beaten by his insecure father, Alois Hitler; both his parents died whilst in his teens; he did poorly in high school; and he was rejected by art schools to follow his passion)? Or was it the insecurity of missing a left testicle that bent his craving for power and fame? (Google Hitler and notice that in 95% of photos he guards his crotch with both or just his left hand.) He achieved so much evil, but his life had no balance or integrity. At every summit, he unconsciously realised it was merely a false-summit; every self-improvement effort did not make up for his lack of self-acceptance. He found fame, but his idiotic id-ego razed his whole being to ground zero.

I say it again: until our life is driven by a secure source and healthy self-image, success will be short-lived and unbalanced. We need to find the flaws, the holes inside us, and acknowledge and explore these holes, until they become the opening of tunnels that connect us to a better inner milieu, which in turn connects us to our authentic self. Self-acceptance creates self-respect, and without self-respect we cannot love ourselves. So we need to consciously surrender ourselves to ourselves, before we build up ourselves to lead others.

HOW TO RAISE OUR WELLBEING AND SELF-ESTEEM

No amount of self improvement can make up for a lack of self acceptance.

-- Robert Holden, PhD, author of *Shift Happens! Powerful Ways to Transform Your Life*.

We can choose to cultivate our reality — paradise *or* hell on earth. Like a conflict between two tribes, not liking ourselves creates an internal conflict; however, if we are conscious of this duality — this conflict, this darkness — we can choose to begin to see the light. Awareness of insecurity that makes us yearn for security. It is this necessity, spawned by distress, which is the mother of our invention. And by committing to this change, we can grow 200 times faster than merely existing. Professors of psychology Kateri McRae and Iris Mauss at the University of Denver remind us how fortunate we are, as humans, to possess the "positive reappraisal ability" (PRA). They say, "We offer that humans have the remarkable ability to generate positive emotions such as happiness, hope, gratitude, and love, even in the face of adversity. We argue that it is precisely this ability — the ability to generate positive emotions in negative situations — that allows people not only to recover, but even to grow under adversity."³⁰ This means that adversity and positive psychology work well together. This highlights the fact that true happiness can be borne out of relative unhappiness. So if we have had some rough times, we should be thankful, as we will always use these somatic markers as benchmarks against which to rate future good times. We enjoy *this warm* day because we have waded through the previous cold nights. We need to see our self-esteem as an organic skill that requires constant nurturing, and like any skill, requires life-long care and commitment. But one thing is for certain: when you are okay with yourself, and feel gratitude, the universe is your playground. Self-esteem is the corridor between the rooms of unconsciousness and the room of consciousness. It is the connector — the clever conscious conductor — of an attractive bi-vironment.

Fourteen major tips to raise and maintain your self-esteem:

Falling in love with a balanced life is all about a life-long commitment to raising the *feeling* at your core — your self-worth. This is how you do it:

Pioneer of self-esteem Dr. Nathaniel Branden suggests that building self-esteem requires "ongoing commitment to self-examination". Branden has cited "Six Pillars of Self-Esteem": *Living consciously* (looking closely at needs and goals), *Self-acceptance*, *Self-responsibility*, *Self-assertiveness* (recognising our values and speaking from deep conviction), *Living purposefully* (purposeful goals) and *Integrity* (acting in congruence with our core values and beliefs).³¹

Based on Dr. Branden's 6-pillars of self-esteem, here are my **fourteen tips to build self-esteem**:

1. **Listen to your inner landscape and become conscious:** Being conscious and savouring the moment must be an ongoing goal. Live your life by being exceptionally alert to your inner and outer-environments (bi-vironment). Just for now, make an effort to relax and listen. Reflect. Listen to your breath. Hold your breath and listen to your heartbeat. Soak in and enjoy immediate reality. When Thomas Merton said, "Solitude is a way to defend the spirit against the 'murderous din of our materialism,'" he was suggesting we tune out our greedy id-ego by fine-tuning into a more spiritual source. Use your conscious prefrontal mind and not your id-ego to guide your thoughts, feelings, and actions. Catch and generate positive thoughts and reframe negative thoughts. Have a book or file on your computer called "My Book of Life" and spend ten minutes alone every day (or an hour once a week) tuning into the remaining 13 exercises below.

2. **Realise you are 100 percent responsible:** A Swedish Proverb says, “The best place to find a helping hand is at the end of your own arm,” so make your mind up now to take full responsibility for the rest of your life. From now on, you are responsible for every thought, feeling, and action. Start believing in yourself. Use this premise to start searching for your worthy ideal.

3. **Accept yourself and remove resentment:** E. E. Cummings has said, “To be yourself, in a world that tries, night and day, to make you just like everybody else — is to fight the greatest battle there ever is to fight, and never stop fighting.” This battle can easily be fought by *self-acceptance* and a strong belief in yourself. Carl Jung said, “We cannot change anything until we accept it.” This *self-identity* exercise is a crucial to *self-awareness* and becoming relaxed about who we are. The late American author Joseph Campbell summed it up when he said, “The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are.”

Whilst being conscious of your systemic inner and outer-worlds (bi-vironment), make a list of things about your life that you *resent but can't change*, even if you tried to change them; things like your genes, height, shoe size, speech impediments, past parenting, childhood experiences, subpar education, past relationships, hair colour, skin colour, failure at important events, looks, tone deafness... everything. Resentments are baggage – blockages that cause physical and spiritual dis-ease, skewing our thought process. An excellent exercise is to feel your past resentments, but then reframe them by celebrating the positive outcomes they have produced today.

If I were to choose one sentence to sum up my whole philosophy, I should say: allow no evil in your thoughts. Confucius, (551 BC- 479 BC)

Psychologist Carl Rogers discovered that we can only really change once we have accepted ourselves as we are. We need to first surrender and relax about this self-critical process, and rather see it as being self-compassionate. Then, paradoxically, when we look at those weaknesses that we *cannot change, but accept them, they cease to bother us*. We come to grips with our fears, and through processing them, understand them. The unconscious anxiety disappears as the limbic system relaxes, allowing us to get on with what matters. Or as John Wooden encouraged, "Don't let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do." Don't be circumspect about your warts and weaknesses, *acknowledge them, accept them, or remove them*. Only after we feel our authentic worth (being ourselves, warts and all) can we muster the energy to change. It is in accepting our weaknesses that we can then grow to our full potential. This is one of the fastest ways to satisfy the id-ego and feel instant relief from its bondage. This is how the “shift” happens to do what we want to do. When you do this, you will *feel clam yet energised* to tackle your goals. The school of *positive psychology* recommends that focussing on our natural strengths pay much better dividends anyway.

Enjoy being yourself: Follow Friedrich Nietzsche's advice: “The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened. But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself.” After coming to a point of self-acceptance, you will immediately be able to enjoy being yourself more. You'll feel your mind, body, soul and spirit rise.

The very essence of nature is uniqueness. We are all different, so stop making comparisons. Enjoy your own identity. Our life circumstances and definition of success should all be slightly,

if not radically, different. Comparing yourself to your neighbour is like comparing peaches with pears – crazy, so do not even try!

Benchmark yourself against yourself. Life is about self-mastery not other-mastery; that is fraud. Do you respect yourself? You are a one-off, so stop watching your back and get on with your own life. Focus on special intrinsic gifts that you bring to the world as a leader. Is it your talent, skill, love, creativity, compassion, understanding, wisdom, enthusiasm, sharing of wealth, sharing of knowledge, or even a combination of the above? Start and end your day by acknowledging your strengths. By repeating the following affirmations your subconscious eventually starts to improve your self-worth. Say with emotion: “I’m so lucky to have all my strengths. I love life. I love this organisation.” The trick is to say it and *truly mean it*, or there will be little behavioural difference. The neuroplasticity of your brain requires charged emotions to map out the new neural pathways, required to form new habits.

Don’t take what everyone says personally: Use your own positive self-talk to negate insults and false accusations that you may have received from teachers, significant others, colleague, family, or friends. Decide who you should accept criticism from, but also know when to be thick skinned about criticism and reject it. I once read that for every negative comment we receive, we will need to hear 14 positive comments to negate it. You will never hear that many positive comments (not even from your mother), so where will they all come from if not from yourself? Thus take full responsibility for negating insults, but do accept necessary and constructive feedback.

Happiness is nothing else than good health and a bad memory.

-- Albert Schweitzer (1875 – 1965)

4. **Focus on self-improvement – achieve your worthy ideal:** Having accepted the things *out* of your control (self-acceptance), you will feel a surge of energy to improve areas of your life most appropriate for improved self-worth – work on your strengths and manage your weaknesses. As covered in detail in the previous chapter (Chapter 5), do the exercises on **pages 10-14** to unearth your core purpose and foremost guiding values. As Dr. Maxwell Maltz has said, “We are built to conquer environment, solve problems, achieve goals, and we find no real satisfaction or happiness in life without obstacles to conquer and goals to achieve.” But these goals must be aligned with your core values and purpose. By doing this you will replace that lacklustre expression with a deep golden patina – the stuff that will promptly get you and your followers out of bed. Never stop researching and reading about topics of interest, as worthy-ideals often change during our different life stages or ‘seasons’. Using the goal sheet in this book (Chapter 5), set spiritual, health, intellectual, career, financial, recreational and social goals (balanced wellbeing goals), and get your followers to do the same. Nurture your creative talents. Do not forget to use the 6R approach to goal setting (Chapter 5): Research your goals, be sure they’re Realistic (initially) and Relevant, then Roll them out, Reassess and Reload. As mentioned, to ensure your goals are relevant, complete the “core purpose and value” exercise in Chapter 5.

Like a racehorse on the racetrack, once your id-ego knows it is on track to achieving its goals, it becomes more relaxed and caregiving, allowing you to become more rational and filled with calm energy. Goal setting automatically raises your energy levels, whilst learning a new skill is extremely empowering and fulfilling to your ego. Daily visualise achieving your goals, and during your visualisation, savour the accompanying feelings of success. These frequent affirmations will

get your subconscious and super-conscience AMS working *for* you, and with every passing day you will become more passionate and more like the person you *want* to become. But do not forget to savour the journey and consciously enjoy life along the way.

5. **Plan and then act:** Plan and keep busy on short, medium, and long-term projects that will make you feel fulfilled. It is difficult to worry and act at the same time. This is why it is imperative to have a plan and act upon it. For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he (Proverbs 23:7) – but don't forget to goal set and act.
6. **Self-fulfilling prophecy:** To avoid negative action, take full responsibility and break the habit of negative self-talk (thoughts and feelings). *You already are and will become what you think, feel and do.* Guard your thought pattern by being alert to your inner self-talk. Celebrate past successes and picture your future success using that same energy. Believe that you can and want to transform your future. Deliberately drop positive thoughts into your mind and positive feelings and actions tend to surface. Once you connect with the truth of who you are, you automatically replace negative self-talk with the acknowledgement of your authentic internal worth.
7. **Love your career:** It is quite clear, we need to *play more at work and work more at play.* We spend so much time at work, and because work then seeps into every fibre of our other life areas too, employment can easily contribute to the core of our self-esteem. So if you have a bad attitude towards work, either reframe your attitude or change your career. *As you currently feel, so you are. As you continue to feel, so you will remain.* Interestingly, Sir Michael Marmont has discovered that actors who won an Oscar live four years longer than those who were just nominated. He suggests too, that just having a job is in itself a self-esteem booster.³²

Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful. -- Albert Schweitzer (1875 – 1965);
philosopher, missionary, and physician

8. **Aim for financial freedom:** Being preoccupied with how you are going to pay for mounting debt eats up mental, emotional, and physical energy. Stay out of debt. Buying an appreciating asset like property using borrowed money makes sense, but attempt to pay cash for almost everything else.
9. **Fix your relationships:** The Xhosa of South Africa have a wonderful expression to describe how reliant we are on each other — “ubuntu”, which means, “I am, because of you.” If you want a successful life you must work as a team with others. You must feel an emotional connection. Do not isolate yourself, but integrate yourself into your bi-vironment. If you want a serene and passionate life, you must commit yourself to healthy relationships with family, friends, and work colleagues. You need to feel comfortable in your community. In their book *Gesundheit*, physicians Patch Adams and Maureen Lander stress that healthy relationships are self-esteem building. They highlight health as follows:

The most distressing health problem for most people is the combination of boredom, fear, and loneliness. Our health is damaged most by loneliness and lovelessness. If relationships with our families, friends, and ourselves are not going well, no amount of physical health can

compensate. Huge numbers of physically healthy people lead miserable lives. Conversely, if our relationships to family, friends, and self are strong and sustaining, then even a dying person can enjoy the bliss of community.³³

With first marriage divorce statistics around 40 percent in the USA, and second and third marriages failures over 70 percent, one needs to consider the reasons. Although the common rhetoric blames “poor communication” as the root cause of the divorce, most people I have worked with agree that a *lack of trust or respect* is the root cause. And at the core of this trust issue is when one or both parties has no love of self, no self-trust and self-respect, then through transference that is exactly how they will treat each other.

Respect yourself and others will respect you. -- Confucius (551 BC – 479 BC)

The second major cause of divorce is not agreeing with each other’s goals and roles in the relationship. For example, how many kids are we going to have? And who exactly is the breadwinner? Other major stresses and strains in a marriage are incompatibility in spiritual beliefs, no spiritual convictions, unrealistic lifestyle expectations, financial strain, and infidelity (or even just suspicion thereof).

If you want a peaceful life, never have an enemy or a string of shattered relationships. The feelings of resentment towards people will invade your soul and provoke your id-ego to run your life. Make a list of all the people you resent, and deliberately choose to make peace with them. Forgiveness frees us.

To soften the situation, Richard Carlson recommends picturing people as infants and as one-hundred-year-old adults.³⁴ The Bible recommends that you pray for your enemies, and believe it or not, when you wish your enemies well, you may just feel so much compassion that if you bumped into them, you may accidentally give them a warm smile. Another way of feeling better about an adversary is to bring out the best in them. Make a list of their positive traits and they will take on a new persona, albeit only in your mind. Write them a letter and then tear it up, and if that does not work, try Dr. Susan Forwards’ advice, and actually send it.

If you are in a relationship, write down a list of reasons you appreciate yourself and your partner, and then share these with each other.

Birds of a feather flock together. Watch who you mix with because you will be influenced by their actions, feelings, and thoughts. Mix with positive people and you will become more positive. If you siesta with dogs, you will get up with fleas. Aim to have close friends who stretch your integrity and goals. Stop socialising with negative people, as their low self-esteem and accompanying habits will literally rub off onto your mirror neuron system.

10. **See failure as normal:** Do not knock yourself for failures and lack of talent in certain areas, but rather learn from the experiences — then move on. Forgive yourself. If you have had failures that are still gnawing away at you, reframe them in a positive light. Learn from your failures but focus and anchor on your past successes. Secondly, do not overburden yourself and feel responsible for other people’s failures; give support and guidance, but do not take others’ failures personally.

11. **Make a gratitude list:** *We cannot be passionate about life and ungrateful at the same time.*

Gratitude releases us from the grip of a self-centred id-ego obsession. After the above steps, the next most powerful step is to make a long list of why it is so good to be alive. Think about all six-life-areas (ref. figure 1.1 in the introduction). You *must* write out the list or it will not have the same powerful effect. You can also boost your gratitude weekly by combing through the list again and again. There is *always* a reason to be grateful. On receiving a gift from her aunt, my five-year-old daughter Jesse exclaimed “I’m so lucky to be me.” Regardless of the situation, keep reminding your family, work colleagues, and friends how lucky we *all* are. Start each day by thinking about what you are grateful for in your life. Look out of the window and marvel at the spectacle of nature. Stop for a moment and realise why you are happy to be yourself. Make a list of your strengths, skills, talents, characteristics, good deeds, incidences in your bi-vironment, and successes, which you can enjoy reading during your daily quiet time. Make it a weekly habit to add more points to this list. For quick access, you can keep this list on your PC desktop. Another advantage of keeping a gratitude list is you activate your AMS (ref. chapter 2) to be on the lookout for forthcoming (what would have otherwise been random) moments of gratitude. We develop an *expectancy* of forthcoming gratifying events; thus random events that would have normally gone unnoticed now get logged as great moments.

Because of the growth it brings, it’s important to see ‘bad-luck’ as ‘good-luck’ – and be grateful for life’s lessons. Thus by daily choosing your attitude to “make lemonade from lemons”, gratitude is a form of reframing too.

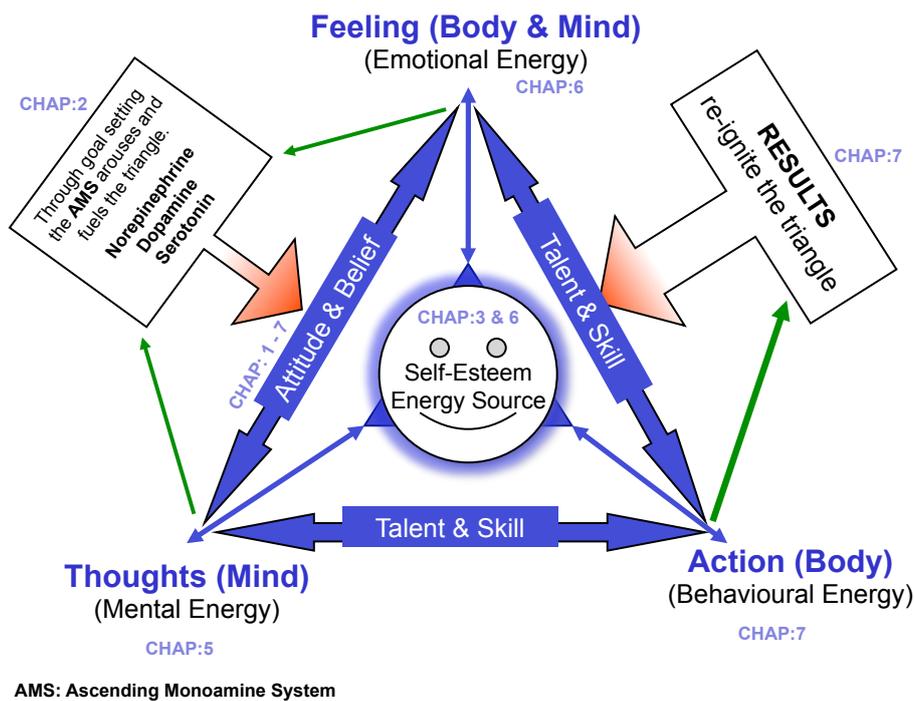
12. **Find your spiritual ballast:** In her book *EQ, Emotional Intelligence for Everyone*, Stephanie Vermeulen has observed that people who have posited too much emphasis on superficial image and status are more vulnerable to being hit hard by spiritual stress and depression at a later stage. You need to find meaning in your career and life in general — know why you exist. Meditate often. Vermeulen says, “The more meaningful your existence, the less likely you are to experience this spiritual crisis. Many people find meaning and solace in either religion or spiritual practice; but if neither is for you, your spirituality need not be ignored. The older you are, the more pronounced this need becomes; and feeling that life is empty is one of the main symptoms of spiritual stress”³⁵

13. **Help your community (be altruistic):** Helping others provides the all-important ingredient of self-esteem, a sense of purpose. When we have a good relationship on the ‘inside’, the relationships on the ‘outside’ take better shape. Charity begins at home, with helping yourself and immediate family. Helping others is also a fast way of achieving self-esteem, which Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs embraces too. Dr. Maslow’s level before self-esteem is the need for love and belonging. Maslow cites, as do all mainstream religions, that self-respect is important. Maslow does not say you cannot love when you do not like who you are, but says you are more naturally able to love another when you have food in your stomach, shelter, and feel secure. Maslow even suggests helping others, making friends, and establishing a healthy family life is essential *before* self-esteem occurs, and once you have self-esteem, you can move on to self-actualisation where you naturally dedicate your life to helping others. When Abraham Lincoln said, “When I do good, I feel good,” he understood the benefits of grounding himself on a higher plane. There is even evidence that people who *give* have a better sense of wellbeing than those who receive. Giving is thus a great way of receiving a healthy spiritual grounding. Novelist Henry James put it this way: “Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. And the third is to be

kind." Or in Mother Teresa's words, "Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier."

Be polite, alert, and relevant (PAR) to others. This is the "Law of Similar Responses," (often referred to as the Law of Attraction), which says others will be PAR in return. Be loving and optimistic and you will 'attract' loving and optimistic people.

14. Physical exercise: Last, but certainly not least, the body is the temple of your soul (emotions), so do not harm your body. Be responsible for your body, mind, and soul. Posturologists, Dr. Pierre-Marie Gagey, has proven that just our body posture affects our emotions (and vice versa of course). Your physical body and mind are intertwined; for instance, your mind and body produces natural feel-good chemicals when exercising. Although the brain is in charge of the body, the body and the feelings that it houses severely affect the brain too – they're strongly interlinked (psycho-somatic, and the reverse, somatic-psycho is also true). An unhealthy body is a toxic body, which pollutes the mind and emotions (soul). Get enough sleep. With exercise, you sleep more soundly and thus need less sleep too. Exercise is a mood stabiliser. You will also be able to work faster and think more clearly about your future goals and tackle them with an improved positive self-concept.



The above diagram illustrates the interconnectedness of our thoughts, feelings and actions (The Framework of Feelings, Thinking, Action, and Results.) Most importantly though, at the centre of our source is how we *feel* about ourselves – our *emotional capital* or *self-esteem* – which in turn affects our thoughts, feelings and actions. Self-esteem is emotional intelligence (EI). Although a leader can attend training workshops on both leadership and emotional intelligence, nothing trumps the 'natural' leadership ingredient of self-esteem.

Nature has always had more power than education. -- Voltaire

Key Takeouts: Emotional energy & motivation

- Your team will not just become what they think, but what they *think, feel and do*.
- A healthy body in the grip of negative, unhealthy emotions is like a ship sailing without wind. Positive feelings *fuel* positive action.
- Powerful emotions, then, are more important than powerful thoughts.
- Self-esteem is not just mere thought; it is a deeply ingrained *feeling* that is never switched off. Building self-esteem is a lifelong process, so never stop using the 14 tips in this chapter.
- We are basically driven by two forces — fear and hope — and if we can cleverly combine both, we will have the required *emotion* to give us the essential stamina to achieve what we want.
- We know that deeply embedded feelings are more important than thoughts. It is easily observed that the person with determined *feelings* to succeed is far more compelled than the person with mere *thoughts* of success.
- Our labour must come from the heart — our inner voice — and we will then be inspired. Once inspired (in-spirit), we forget that we are labouring and we enter a different realm where the physical world seems less important.
- Until our life is driven by a secure source and healthy self-image, success will be short-lived and usually unbalanced.

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