

Personal Growth and Leadership Effectiveness

Self Awareness

A key to effective leadership, and one developed in the Spiritual Exercises, is the ability to be self aware, i.e. aware of strengths, limitations personal motivation, feelings, desires etc. The Spiritual Exercises develop our capacity to listen to the movement of spirits within, to become self aware. Current leadership literature points to the importance of this capacity in the best leaders. To become self aware a number of capacities must get developed in us.

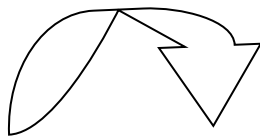
- a. The ability to tell the difference between the specific information that I take in through my 5 senses and the assumptions, judgments, feelings and desires that form in me as a result i.e. “my experience” of the situation.
- b. The ability to recognize (bring to consciousness) the motivations, desires, beliefs etc. that create my “experience” of a situation (or person/group).

Getting to Self Awareness

ELEMENTS OF EXPERIENCE: Our “experience” of an event or person is influenced not only by what we take in through the five senses, but also internal input (below). Together they create the “experience” each of us has. We are conscious of some what we observe, think, feel, and want and unconscious of some.

External Senses

- Sights
- Sounds
- Smells
- Touch



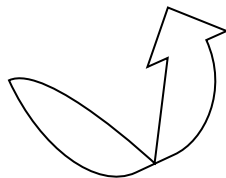
EXPERIENCE

Conscious (observations, thoughts, feelings wants)

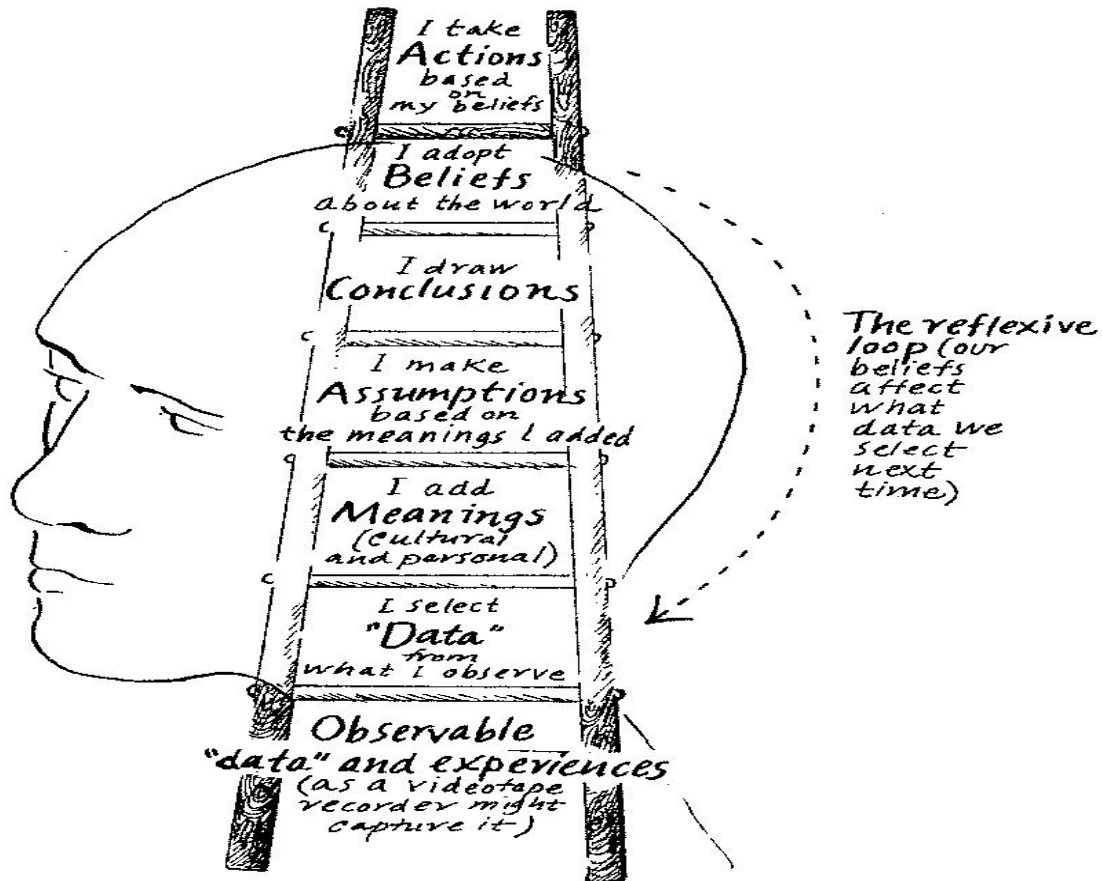
Unconscious (observations, thoughts, feelings, wants)

Internal input:

- memories
- cultural learning
- education
- values
- beliefs



Ladder of Inference



The Ladder of Inference model above presents one way of thinking about how we move from the information we take in to our judgments and beliefs about a situation. The bottom of the ladder represents the information available through the five senses to anyone witnessing an event. The remaining rungs identify what happens in the thought process of each person who is present.

The “reflexive loop” on the right represents the way our previous experience, beliefs and culture affect what we notice the next time we are in a similar situation or with the same person.

The “Ladder of Inference” simply describes what our human minds do everyday in every situation we are in. It is neither good nor bad, but rather a description of how the human mind works with data.

The important thing is our ability to know the difference between what is at the bottom of the ladder (the behavioral data) and what assumptions, judgments, beliefs etc. we draw from the data. We get in trouble when we think that the judgments we make about a person/situation **is reality**. **In fact our judgments are simply the stories we tell ourselves about what something means.**

The Awareness Wheel



There are five key pieces of information in any given moment of human interaction:
 Sensations Thoughts Feelings Wants Actions
 Each is separate but interacts with the others.

Sensations (sensory data): sight, sound, smell, taste, touch

External data:

- The data you gather from other people. Verbal and nonverbal, behaviors: facial expressions, gestures, movement, posture, scent, tones, words

Internal data:

- Intuitive sensations: memories, associations, insights, hunches, dreams, intuitions
- Bodily sensations: goose bumps, a chill, fatigue, stomach tightness, headache

Thoughts: the meanings you make out of the sensory data you receive

- Beliefs, interpretations, expectations, principles, values
- Words that signal thinking processes: assumptions, conclusions, evaluations, guesses, ideas, impressions, judgments, objections, opinions, predictions,

Feelings: your physiological responses to your interpretation (thoughts) of sensory data

- Six basic emotions: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, disgust, surprise

Wants: your desires for yourself and for others, short or long term, general or specific

- Aspirations, dreams, drives, goals, hopes, intentions, longings, objectives
- Inclinations to act, to move towards or away from someone
- Motivate and energize us

Actions: what you say and do - your verbal and non-verbal behaviors

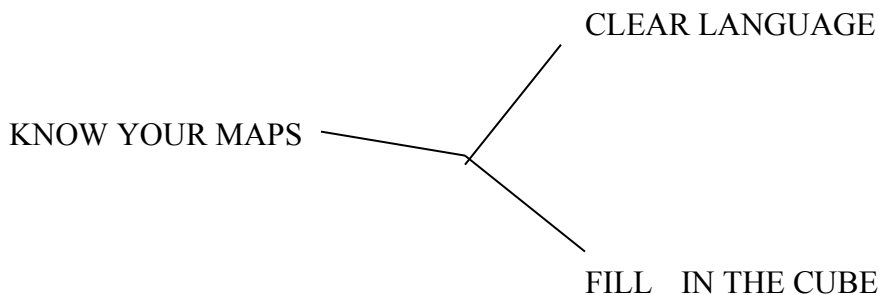
- Actions result from how you process sensory data, thoughts, feelings, and wants

Steps to Clear leadership

To be a clear leader it is first important to know yourself; to be able to listen effectively to one's own experience. This implies being able to tell the difference between what I actually saw, heard etc. and what I then decided it meant. For example: I notice that the person I am speaking with has tears in their eyes (actual external input). Depending on many factors, I may conclude that a. They are sad, b. They feel hurt by what I said, c. They have an allergy or a cold

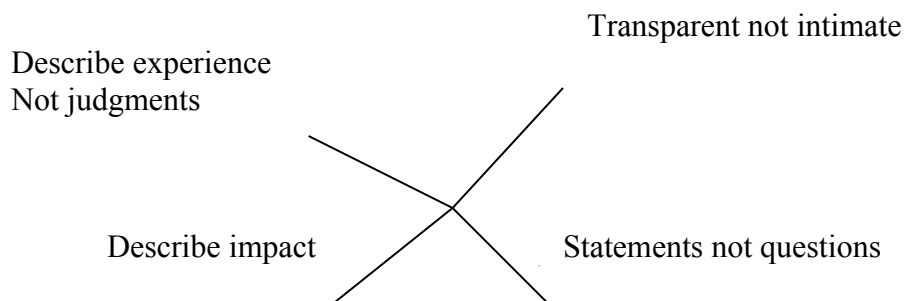
Being an Aware Self

Complete 'in the moment' knowledge of one's experience



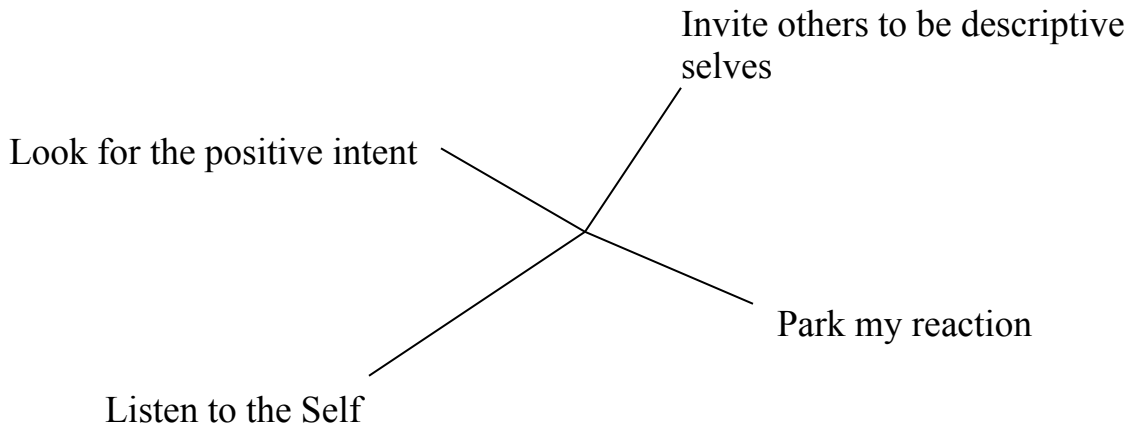
Being a descriptive Self

Making it easy for you to hear my experience



They use different words to describe this self awareness, (Emotional Intelligence, Differentiated Leadership, Authentic Leadership etc.) but the concepts are very similar.

Being a curious self (making it easy for others to be descriptive



FUSION	DIFFERENTIATION	DISCONNECTION
Too connected	Separate and connected	Too Separate
No Boundaries	Choiceful Boundaries	Rigid Boundaries
Reactive to the interaction	Choiceful during the interaction	Reactive to the person
Own experience based on other experience	Wants to know what others are experiencing but stays true to self	Has little or no idea what others are experiencing

Definitions

Boundaries: That which divides one entity from another. In this context; boundaries are the separation between me and the other person. I have clear boundaries when I am clear that my thoughts, feelings and wants belong to me and are not a function of the behavior of the other person.

Fusion: Expecting others to manage my anxiety and assuming that others are responsible for (cause) my feelings and reactions. I am in a fused relationship when my thoughts and feelings are simply a reaction to the other person.

Disconnection: A different kind of reactivity. I am disconnected when I choose extreme individuality without any real thought of the other(s).

Differentiation: Finding a place where I can stay true to myself and still be connected to the other(s). It includes:

- Knowing the difference between the data I have and the assumptions/judgments I am making;
- Knowing that your experience and my experience will always be different;
- Being true to myself and true to the relationship or group;
- Putting equal emphasis on my needs and the needs of the relationship or group

Our CLC Charism provides not only the imperative to lead in our own lives and as we discern with each other, it also provides the skills and tools to do it well. Daniel Goleman (Emotional Intelligence) coined the term emotional intelligence to describe the ability of an individual to:

- Be self-aware—able to recognize and understand ones own emotions, moods and motivations
- Self regulate—able to control disruptive impulses and think before acting
- Understand what others might be experiencing emotionally
- Have a passion/motivation that goes beyond material things
- Manage relationships and work with others to find common ground

His research indicated that these factors more than intelligence or education made the difference in successful leaders. When we live the spiritual exercises and a discerned lifestyle, we develop and utilize these very capacities.