

Anton Eckl

Coaching via Patterns

The Short-Breviary
for
Self-Guidance

DITION CKL

Imprint

Anton Eckl: Coaching via Pattern.
The Short-Breviary for Self-Guidance

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0. Preface

A smile comes to my face when I recall a statement from a coachee who spoke to me about my coaching and consulting work with managers from various sectors.

“How are you able to have such a wide range of knowledge from so many different fields? You must have read and studied a lot. You couldn’t have pulled all that knowledge out of thin air!”

I hesitated for a moment, and then confessed that I hadn’t spent my time with reading and studying. I do indeed pull my knowledge out of thin air, if you will.

I learn directly and instantaneously from contact with people, in spontaneous reaction to situations and organizations. This doesn’t function on a level of content, but rather through the recognition of patterns, which I compare with other experiences, and through questions which make solution patterns recognizable for my clients.

It is precisely because my consciousness is not bound by content that it has the alertness and energy to identify recurring patterns and to reveal their effects. On account of my work as a director and actor, I have been trained to

perceive the processes, “staging” or body language patterns of my clients. I have also become familiar with the subtle inner patterns of people through my training as a breathing therapist. This basis has helped me to develop my own very special approach to business coaching.

I would like to share with you my methods and the helpful patterns I have discovered for finding concrete solutions to the multilayered issues germane to daily life.

I wish to convey something that has moved and captivated me for many years: The possibility that everyone and anyone can refine their awareness as a human being.

This short-breviary should serve as a stimulation to self-discovery and a means of “exploring” the apparently firmly established reality of life. Today, I am sharing my experiences knowing that they are influenced by my own limited perspective.

I would like to impart to you how limiting and burdensome perspectives can be changed.

When I was a young artist, I assisted George Tabori, a top director and author of this era, with the preparation of the film “Frohes Fest” (A Happy Festival). My task was to find

physically handicapped individuals and prepare them to act in a scene in the film in which a fashion show for handicapped people would be staged.

On the way to the institute for the disabled, I told George about the problems I expected. “Tony”, he interrupted me, speaking German with his American accent, “Problems for me are clues to creative solutions.” As if struck by lightning, I immediately understood. I could physically feel something opening in me. I was totally shaken by this deep insight, and it has remained with me until today. Thank you, George!

It is my wish to give the people who read this book the courage to perceive more often the intuitive impulses from their own realizations, and to follow these impulses. I would also like to encourage people to pursue open dialogue with those who have similar questions. It is my experience that new questions open the creative senses. Is it not an essential aspect of our humanity to place exploration and inquiry at the focal point? Is it not our wish to seek, to test the unknown, and then give form to these ideas in creative, artistic, or technical achievements; and thereby engendering our own individual way of life?

1. How Do You Read the Short-Breviary?

When you read this “short-breviary”, you will notice that in the first part I illustrate how we recognize, loosen, and even change our fixed patterns: A new kind of interaction with ourselves and a special form of introspection that leads to self-certainty.

In the second half, the opposite: An offer of “helpful patterns” which should act as a common thread in helping you find your way through the labyrinth of professional communication.

But doesn't this lead to new fixations and stasis? Not from my point of view. You receive points of reference that you can utilize in a variety of forms and combinations.

You can read the book from beginning to end, i.e. in a linear fashion. Wonderful! Then you would be following my dramatization.

Do you always read books that way? If so, that would be a really constraining pattern. When I want to form a quick picture of a book, I read the beginning and then the end: It's a really beautiful thing to be able to access knowledge

so quickly. In this way the book will become a short-breviary of your own.

The short-breviary means that this work can be accessed in all kinds of ways, e.g. just selecting a relevant point, theme-oriented, or also in a random fashion, for example: Start reading the first page that you intuitively turn to.

Perhaps, you only want to study the helpful patterns that you can employ for a current task. The detailed table of contents should make this possible.

If you have the tendency for use-oriented pragmatism, then I recommend that you first use the pattern for managing time and power. In this way you will accelerate your access to relevant themes, and have time to use for other things. Maybe you can use this time for contemplation?

You could also follow the case example: “Balancing with Helpful Patterns” (from page 109) and feel your way forward. At the same time you could apply the suggestions to your personal situation.

At best, the short-breviary is helpful when kept within easy reach, either in paper form or as an e-book.

Use the ideas and patterns in all situations of daily life. And talk about the impulses and your success through their application. Test the short-breviary from beginning to end. However, this could take time...

It can become a type of playful research of our attitudes and perspectives. Enjoy the happiness and stimulation that you experience when you do and discover something new. Maybe through working with the short-breviary, you will develop a special relationship to it, allowing it to become a constant provider of impulses and support.

This would make me happy and content.

2. How I See Things

Patterns Influence How We Live

As I see it, our whole life is permeated by patterns: from the microcosmic level of the human cell to the entire universe—patterns and structures are at work everywhere. These patterns complement each other and recur and react to one another.

Our actions over the millennium as “humanity” have formed the patterns of our history, culture and society, which in turn influences our social and communal patterns: The impacting patterns of family, group affiliation, or even company structures in which we work. All of these things impact our behavioral and communicative patterns.

The basis of our human “being” is the processing of our sense impressions in interaction with thoughts and feelings. From this process emerges our attitude to the circumstances in our life, and we create our preferences that determine our intentions and our strivings in the world. All of us develop his/her individual personality through the interplay of these patterns. Of course, we need patterns for the purpose of orientation. We would be

deprived of a considerable amount of energy if we had to completely reinvent the world each moment.

The interplay of patterns usually remains unobserved because we find the content of our lives so exciting and interesting. These contents, however, consume our attention and alertness. Therefore, we very often don't recognize the power and effect that these patterns exercise on our daily life. We are so entangled in minor content discussions that we are unable find solutions.

It is my wish to broaden the view, and thus draw comprehensive interrelationships into consideration that serves to provide impulses for our daily actions. Through the recognition and observance of patterns that operate on various levels, we have the possibility of making other decisions. In this way a new *modus operandi* is at our disposal.

Most importantly, new possibilities of choice develop on the level of personal patterns when these patterns, through our recognition, lose their power and become flexible and transparent.

Our “I” in Subject-Object Patterns

Nowadays, our reality is defined and determined by the subject-object pattern. It is the focal point of our world view.

What does this mean? Our “I” observes events in the world from a distance, forms a picture from these events and subsequently defines itself as an independent entity. We adopt this standpoint and interpret the world through this perspective.

In this way we live in our own reality, based on a selection of sense perceptions that we have processed. That means that one could, through our seven senses, consciously perceive 2000 components of information simultaneously. By this means we construct our reality that by necessity varies from that of other people who have made different selections. This selection process normally occurs unobserved.

In communicating with each other, people often argue about which of these subjective forms of perception is really the truth. However, the basis of subject-object observation is seldom taken into consideration.

I don't think that this pattern was so prevalent in archaic naturalistic societies, where the humans experienced reality as a unity with nature and group.

Perhaps it is in the West that the "I" as subject-object became so dominant, first through the Renaissance and then through the Age of Enlightenment.

This attitude leads to a need-to-control the circumstances mindset, driven by fear and longing.

This in turn generates a feeling of separation and incompleteness.

The longing for coalescence and unification expresses itself, as I see it, as a seeking for ecstasy. From my point of view, this can be witnessed in a wide variety of manifestations, such as extreme performance sport, addictions, religious motivated fanaticism, or also in the so-called civilized form of wellness oases.

The unconscious aim is the dissolution of the "I" pattern, the distance between subject and object, which is based on, and considerably promotes, the separation of mind and body.

In our age of consumption-orientation, such a positioned “I”-consciousness is perfectly suitable for the capitalistic system. The “I” finds satisfaction in consumption and in merging itself with the consumed articles. The sensations of consumption, however, only lead to a short-term satisfaction and can never overcome this chasm permanently. Our inner-core is unsatisfied. What remains is our discontentment.

This process is intensified by our “disembodying” work procedure that especially requires the cognitive, observing subject-object pattern. The body-mind satisfaction is realized through physical strain. Therefore, an experience of emersion, a kind of fusion of the processed object and the forming subject is still only available in a few professions.

We can transfer this subject-object pattern to science: We believe that objectivity occurs when observations are made by machines and technology, and not people. We expect that scientific experiments can be carried out objectively. These attempts, however, only tell something about the perspective of the researcher and not about objective truth. So the subject-object pattern also exists in scientific procedures. This is not questioned despite Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle and quantum mechanics. It only proves what has already been presumed or the opposite.

In my assessment, new knowledge can only appear when the subject-object pattern has been weakened.

On the other hand, it is possible that our “I” needs this pattern in order to define itself. Is a stable “I” only possible through the reflection of the subject-object pattern? As soon as it is established, it must protect itself, and thus limits our existence. Instead of possessing a connection to all existing things, there emerges a defense of the “I”’s perception.

With regard to the development of our human culture, the question must be raised if it would have developed in such a way without the “I” in the subject-object pattern.

Within the framework of “coaching”, we try to determine how the limiting aspects generated by the subject-object perspective in the personal pattern can be opened.

The Moment of Being Free of Patterns

Thesis: The moment we are able to open ourselves, everything becomes available to us. The perquisite is that we

have to let go of the practiced and ossified patterns which cloud our perception.

We experience the moment of being free from patterns when there are no longer correcting habits or conceptual patterns at work in us. When we are free from recurring forms, we are fresh and alive. In this state of spontaneity, our access points are open, and new thought impressions can flow. This state of being awake allows impulsive action before limiting filters and feelings can intervene and exercise their controlling mechanisms.

In my opinion, people in Western societies have learned to live predominantly by the motto “I think, therefore I am”. The human defines his/her “I” by means of this credo. However, we are, of course, much more than just thought processes. Thinking is probably only a radical, superficial abbreviation of the human complexity, especially since most thought processes (as I have ascertained personally from my work with many clients) are driven by fear and avoidance.

In addition, thoughts driven by longing and covertness, which have a different quality, remove us from pattern liberation.

A vital openness is significantly jeopardized by our normal subject-object pattern. As soon as we formulate what we have just experienced, there arises a positioning and distance to things through our labeling. These said labels are often coupled with prejudicial attitudes. This reestablishes the condition of being in the subject-object pattern.

By being alert, being present in the body, and exhibiting sensory openness, it becomes possible for us to achieve a state of being beyond our habitual thoughts, emotions and thinking patterns more frequently.

The original state of vitality is for many of us an extremely rare situation. In order to achieve this freedom from patterns—this null point—it is very important to reduce the constant deliberations, commentary and inner narratives that impair and devitalize our perception. In other words, we arrive at a state of stillness. If thoughts were something like the subtitles in a film, and I exercise the freedom of reading or not reading the subtitles, then these thoughts lose their power and their impairing effect. In such a way our thoughts can be utilized to lead their own existence or not. We have freedom of choice.

In this state of openness, we can deal with the things that life presents us. Meaning, we can change them or accept

them.

The freedom from patterns also occurs when we don't resist external and internal adversity, and when we don't defend our "I" or constantly reaffirm it. The conflict with our resistance is a decisive point regarding "freedom" and for accessing the null point. By means of this conflict we open our recurring patterns of thought and feeling, which maintain our conditioned behavior pattern. I suggest "observing" the internal resistance and not attaching any importance to it, thus depriving it of its power.

A small example from my own world of conditioning: The smell of feces caused my father to have extreme eruptions: nausea, and a hasty escape from the room. Bodily excretions were depicted as very negative in my family. I also found them repulsive.

On my very first day of my civil service job, I was directly confronted with this at a home for senior citizens. Of course, I understood that the cleaning of this old man was a necessity for his human dignity. Although I felt a physical retraction, and at first I could only endure the situation by breathing through the mouth, taking long deep breaths, and short inhales; I was able to clean this friendly old man.

This event changed something in me. Suddenly, “I had a breakthrough”; I felt an unbelievable sensation of liberation. An energy of contentment flowed through me. I was free. At that time, this event brought an ease and calmness into many areas of my life. I was proud that I had succeeded, and this established a new “I”.

The possibility of a neutral, open action supplanted a behavior of avoidance. I also learned from this how to overcome a mental and physical “No”, and how to become freer in making decisions.

To be more precise: It is not a question of being able to do everything, or avoiding nothing. It is rather that this confrontation with our patterns, questioning them, and experimenting with them is the key to success that grants us the flexibility, mental freshness and ultimately success. This in turn also prevents our mental aging process.

We don't repeat old formulated ideas, boring ourselves and our listeners. Instead, we discover every situation anew. This inquisitive, attentive attitude creates in us access to all resources, and then we are able to render our best.

In my view, to act in this prescribed fashion is the pursued objective in the work with my coachees. Subsequently, it is

the collaboration in coaching that brings contentment and fulfillment, providing one with power, and leading us to new and helpful solutions.

3. Coaching via Patterns

How I Coach

The coaching process is an individual path. No two ways of my coaching are the same.

Experience shows that only a few “good” coaches operate in a linear fashion. Linear means: A theme or issue is complete/resolved and then one moves on to the next one. In fact, it is quite the opposite. I personally value confusion. That means initiating a contact, considering nothing as certain, and sowing the field of personality with questions. This is a form of Ping-Pong as equals, if you will. Feeling when things are faltering and when things are flowing.

The process is clearly perceived by both parties: the coachee (or client) and the coach.

Naturally, the starting point of the coaching enterprise is the agreed upon goals between him and the client. In other words, factual objectives that have to be fulfilled. Still, what is the path to creating profound and vital results that lead to the opening of old patterns and vital success?

Very often this means a very fast “mental” leap, while simultaneously opening many themes so that the coachee loses his entrenched and thus limiting patterns. These are then dissolved in the whirl of changing perspectives. Many times a quick answer is found via this new positioning. Other things remain open so that solutions can “flash” later in special situations, exactly when they are needed.

Main Theme: Self-guidance and Communication

The theme that most coachees approach me with pertains to the area of self-guidance and communication.

For many people in positions of responsibility, it is becoming more and more complicated to cope with frequently diverging demands. Professional responsibilities, personal development, family, relationships, and friends—all competing for the greatest good: Time. This means for me that one must have available energy.

To master this challenge in a sensible and satisfactory way is one of the central lessons.

Assuming Responsibility

Coaching only works well for coachees when they refrain from giving others responsibility for their fate. Placing blame is a sign that we feel powerless, cut off from options for action and understanding. However, we live in patterns and systems that have their influence. These limitations and all the possibilities are to be used and recognized in business coaching.

Working with Facts

In coaching, I prefer to talk about facts, when there are facts to be considered.

I consider facts to be concrete observations, statements, and the current situations that the coachee is confronted with. For example: When did this stress start? How does he register the physical symptoms of the stress? Which issue does the coachee have to resolve tomorrow?

All of these things can be dealt with and verified in the daily business life. The personal feelings of others and all the What-if games are not interesting. When one is so connected with concrete facts, even methods that appear

unconventional are credible, given the fact that they provide discernible support.

Many coachees worry about what other people think of them if they behave in a particular fashion. These types of thoughts block the contact, and prevent an open perception of the situation at hand. My answer to this: Observe yourself when you act. Ask yourself how others perceive your actions. Then precisely observe the physical reaction of your partner in dialogue when a question is posed. In this way you can recognize immediately if the answer is honest and coherent.

Clear External Frameworks

The external framework is clearly agreed upon: Time, time investment and fees.

I find a setting of eight appointments for three hours each over a three to four week period optimal. With shorter sessions over a reduced period, business coaching is crises intervention for a narrowly defined theme.

A Successful Long-term Partnership

Some coachings become long-term partnerships in which I accompany developing managers for several years. The frequency of the sessions decreases over time. We meet each other between one to four times a year, depending on the circumstances. This type of contact provides me with a way of determining the sustainability of my coaching methods. The realized “growth” can be measured.

Confrontation and “Friendship”

I am very direct in the preliminary talks. I “poke” around in order to clarify if the consultant relationship that is to be developed can also withstand frankness and friction. This type of confrontation is important for me for business themes if success is to be achieved. For we live a pattern of vital feedback that is continuously open and clearly positioned.

Yes, I do put my coachees under crossfire and use questions to search out inhibitions. I point out, designate, and set up hypotheses which need to be explored.

Although necessary, these confrontations can only be

successful when a relationship is established between us that is based on respect and fondness. For the most part, I look forward to my coaching sessions with the coachees. For me, it is important to find the amicable aspects of my client that I can truly appreciate.

In my business coaching, I address my clients with “Sie” (a formal nominative pronoun used to address a third person in German) when I speak German. Although I treat my coachee as a friend, this salutation maintains a measure of professional distance that I think is important for us both.

The Room Used for Coaching

Coaching can take place anywhere, where confidential interaction between people is possible. Nevertheless, a room should be used for business coaching which is outside of the company premises, at least during the initial phases. The coachee then has a spatial and temporal distance between themselves and the company, and can be better prepared and focused for the session. The predominating pattern of the company can be left behind for a time.

I have worked in a modern Japanese garden pavilion since 1995. This has become an ideal place for my work. The

pavilion is constructed out of wood, simply furnished, and with a view of the garden. There is a window in the ceiling where light comes in and a window with a view of the lawn. It is an open room that simultaneously conveys security and comfort. There is an interplay of light and shadow in the room depending on the daily rhythm. There is always clear water to drink.

The path to the pavilion consists of a few round stones. Therefore, the coachee is brought into a state of alertness when he/she walks this path whether in high heels or smooth leather soles.

Here a meeting can take place for two or three hours between two different worlds, coach and coachee, in a protective atmosphere. At the conclusion, the coachee goes back to his working life with a task, a decision or a question.

The special thing about business coaching, in comparison to private coaching, is its orientation to concrete tasks in the company. This type of context fosters creativity and permits the assessment of the solution's sustainability.

A Presence for Experiences that Enhance

Awareness

As a man possessing presence and strong eye contact, I work intensively with my presence in this room. I often allow my voice to resonate, modulating it and generating vibrations. In this way I can initiate the right atmosphere for the meeting. When in dialogue, my voice and an alert physical presence are essential. I utilize my experience from theater, repeatedly using role plays and the coaching period as a sort of rehearsal. As in a theater rehearsal, something will be found which works for the actors and the situation. This rehearsal, the experimentation with various new patterns serves to facilitate one's effectiveness in the "drama of life" outside in the "real" world.

My goal is to devise experiences in this place of refuge that are applicable for the often hard and demanding business world. This is only possible if the senses of the coachees are becoming awake, the noise of normal thinking and feeling patterns become quiet, and if the coachee is able to create a distance to things. At the same time, I offer the coachee the opportunity to immerse themselves in what is really happening deep inside, and to express thoughts and feelings which normally have no place in conventional life.

Our Perspectives

Ossified positions make our perspectives inflexible, and narrow our focus. The playful experimentation with our standpoints can change this.

What kinds of essential perspectives are there?

The first perspective is the I-position from which we experience the world in a completely authentic way, firmly rooted in our body and its senses. The second perspective is “You”, whose situation I can place myself in in order to acquire an understanding. Very often there is a lack of this ability in business life. When we are able to understand the “You” better, we can generate suitable solutions for all concerned.

In the coaching session I put myself in the coachee’s situation if I would like to know more about him. This allows me to understand his motives, feelings and structural patterns (mentally and physically).

When I was a five-year old child, I often had considerable problems with my brother’s reactions. I suffered so much from this that I could actually visualize taking off his head and switching it with my own in order to understand him.

This was a big help for me at the time.

The third perspective is the meta-position, a position outside of us, which can be anywhere: above, beside and behind us. We can perceive, guide and advise ourselves externally.

Zeami, the most important dramatist and theoretician of the Japanese No theaters in the 14th century, instructed his actors: “Be completely in yourself when you act, and merge the role with your body,” and simultaneously, “Be above yourself and observe how you act spatially.”

This is one of the greatest physical-mental demands one can make on an actor.

I would like to also bring people to this level of alertness in coaching sessions, which in turn has an effect on our actions in the world. This is something intensively trained in the pavilion, when necessary.

Questions

Through open questions we are capable of opening aspects of our consciousness. In this way we begin to think

differently. The question is what medium do we select for exploring ourselves and our areas of life.

Questions open; questions prompt movement; questions point things out; as well as lead one away from something in order to free the mind. Only a person who questions is able to develop himself and remain truly alive.

We are able to explore the world through the dynamic of questions. Questions create a resonance within us. Not to answer questions which reside in our mind is practically impossible.

Questions are answered and these answers create openings for new questions. In contrast, an assertion that we have made must be verified or defended. The questions that I ask, as in homeopathy, try to create balance and find something complementary, so the person is complete and “whole”.

My questions open: every coachee has to find the answers in his own way, in the form of new ideas, accompanied by subtle physical reactions. The coachee calmly assumes the responsibility for the newly acquired attitude and the new behavior that it creates, because now he has a new defining experience which serves as a basis for an extended frame of

reference. Through such “reference-experiences” we are able to form new paths of orientation for the future.

“Embodiment”

As humans, we embody certain qualities. What do I mean by this? It is as if our personality and mind have a special connection with our cells and personify them.

This connection conveys a special, individual radiance that very often has a much more potent effect than our words or mimical expression.

For special people, this is like a force field that surrounds them. You know this situation: A person enters a room and immediately the atmosphere is changed by their presence and charisma.

Based on our talents, this embodiment is the expression of the life we have lived, our habits, and also the result of our specific, acquired knowledge and integrated experience.

Here is a Zen story which portrays this:

A monastery is plagued by mice. In order to get help, a

monk finds an animal dealer and after some bargaining acquires a young, strong cat. This cat enthusiastically starts its work immediately. Blood flows, soiling the tatami mat floors. The killed animals are placed in the meditation room in front of the alter, but it doesn't seem that there are less mice than before. Disappointed, the monk brings the cat back. The dealer now shows him his best animal: which is an old, gray cat that sleepily lies on a pillow. The monk is not only surprised at the cat's appearance, but also about the high price that the dealer requires for the cat. But the monk sees no alternative. When the cat arrives, it immediately finds the warmest place in the monastery kitchen and falls asleep. From the next morning on, no mouse was ever seen again in the monastery.

What does the story want to tell us?

The old cat had so intensively embodied the ability of successful hunting that he didn't need to take any action: the mice could feel immediately that it was time to leave the monastery.

What we experience through the senses—I also include the mental processes—, what we have learned within our own environment, is engraved in our cells. It appears that it is possible to retrieve and transmit this information by

means of certain exercises. It is almost as if physical/mental being was able to transmit a kind of statement that cannot be captured in words. Where words are linear, providing information in a sequenced process, the physical transmission has the possibility of sending information into the world on many levels at the same time.

On the other hand, every physical posture has, of course, an effect on our thoughts and feelings. Through our gestures we create emotional and mental states.

In pattern coaching, we work on the authentic embodiment of the coachee. The greater goal of coaching is achieved, only when new realizations have appeared in the body through exercise and reflection. This is not new automated behavior, but rather an embodiment of abilities and mentally supporting attitudes.

The Flash of Realization

There is a special moment in coaching. I call it the “flash of realization”. This is when we break through our patterns; this is when things that have been thought or felt become visible and perceptible. I consider this to be a central turning point in life: Information becomes a vital

orientation, as I mentioned earlier about my experience with George Tabori, as problems are transformed into signposts and then into creative results.

In my experience, these impulses can often be triggered by a minimal interaction, and our thoughts and feelings acquire a new facilitating focal point: A source of infinite knowledge becomes available to us, providing us with answers for life.

I often hear from coachee feedback that these flashes of realization can occur in the most unusual places and frequently when one isn't even thinking about the theme.

Mundane procedures, such as taking a shower, when thoughts are defocused or meandering, are moments when open questions are frequently, spontaneously answered.

When these flashes occur in coaching, I discern them as luminous, physical impulses in the physiognomy, and in the lighting up of the eyes. This is probably the essence of good coaching: to offer the impulses which help to trigger these moments of realization.

What would life be like, if it were a succession of such moments of realization? Perhaps in such moments we are in

our real unconditioned state of being, deeply alert, bringing each moment to life anew.

From the Abstract to the Concrete: Helpful Communication Patterns that Provide Orientation

Over the years, it has proven very efficient to provide my coachees with certain basic patterns for successful communication. I offer my experience with helpful behavior patterns in response to coachees' questions. I have developed these through my experience with repeatedly posed questions and situations that my coachees have been confronted with. The most important of these helpful patterns are on page 115 onwards.

Of course, the coachees don't simply adopt these patterns as if they were following a musical score. The application of these patterns is checked in dialogue or through action—almost like a theater rehearsal. This could be modeling through role plays or through simple development plans which depict the successful pattern. Subsequently, the behavior pattern will be tested in the reality of business life, and its suitability and effectiveness assessed based on various situations.

The coachee returns to the next coaching session with his insights. We can then build upon this knowledge and continue rehearsing with new questions: A spirited work on the play we call “life”.

My General Goal

If I have a general goal for the development of my coachees, it is to create a sensitive alertness which is deeply rooted in body and mind; an awareness that, at the same time, possesses the openness and flexibility to adopt various viewpoints.

I believe that this is the essence of a vital, responsible and successful life. A mental attitude that is based upon these principals will inspire us and promote a happy state of being.

*In order to recognize patterns
it is necessary
to make a pause
and retreat from daily, contentual
“entanglements”.*

4. Playing with Patterns: Impulses for “I” Research

Recognizing Patterns

Thesis: Trapped in our patterns, we dream our life away, thus losing our vitality and the appropriate level of performance often required in professional situations.

Patterns provide our “I” with form and structure.

Do other patterns create a new “I”? Do patterns create our stable “I”?

Patterns are helpful in reducing the complexity of human activity for our understanding. If we always had to relearn how to drive a car or ride a bicycle, this wouldn't be very helpful. Nevertheless, automatic patterns lead to somnolence and reduce presence.

Personal patterns are characterized through a constant repetition of a certain procedure. This can consist of a thought that recurs over and over again, or it can mean always following the same routine in the morning. For example, how we start our day or arrange our work place. These are

the patterns of preferred ways and behaviors that we have cultivated, and the internal sensations that are connected with them.

When it is possible to observe the rhythm of one's patterns in one's own life, then we realize which effect patterns have in our life.

The crucial question is if the mere observance and recognition of a certain pattern is enough to change it. Through recognition, awareness enters into the pattern, and awareness creates change and a new structure. This all leads to alertness and fulfilling presence.

I would now like to invite you to conduct various tasks of self-experimentation by which you can recognize, open, and change your patterns. These exercises help to make our thoughts and actions become more transparent and flexible.

I suggest that you begin with an observation of a pattern that you carry out on a daily basis. For example, a routine you perform in the morning at breakfast.

What do you perceive?

What is the sequence of actions, thoughts and sensations?

Slow down this process somewhat and you will discover overtones in the external perception and in the inner experience.

Which of your daily patterns do you want to experience more intensively in this way?

What happens to our “I” when we change the pattern? Is the “I” altered in any way?

The Effect of Patterns

Thesis: How our life appears is the consequence of our habits, the “good” ones, as well as the “bad” ones. Before you pass judgment on this thesis, check your own behavior.

Select a recurring behavior you have had for a long time.

Observe what has developed from this behavior over time.

Can you remember how this behavior came to be?

If you are interested in exploring your recurring behavior,

then recognize the minor as well as major patterns in your life.

Recognizing Life Patterns

Recognize the recurring patterns in your life.

How are these patterns triggered?

Observe these patterns in their external manifestations and how you experience them internally.

Which behaviors frequently manifest themselves?

Investigate the following patterns in various time periods:

- *“long-term” (activities which have recurred over the years)*
- *“daily”*
- *“minutely”*
- *“instantly”*

How and in through what are these patterns different from another?

Where and how are they similar to another?

Is our life influenced by a bundle of helpful or inhibiting habits?

If so, what can we make out of this realization?

The Pattern: The Inner Narrator

How did your memory function in the last exercise? Did you discuss with yourself which of the patterns you should or want to select?

How does your memory recall information? Images? Tones? Feelings? Smells?

Were there words or voices that accompanied the remembering?

Did various aspects of the personality consider and weigh which memory and which pattern was suitable or unsuitable for the exercise?

Could you recognize an “inner narrator”, a commentator that you could equate with your “I”?

The Inner Narrator

How does the “inner narrator” express itself?

Does it have a voice that can be heard?

What kind of posture does the voice assume?

From which position does the narrator observe?

Or do you have a quite different experience?

Of course, our kaleidoscope of the inner observer is different and probably unlimited. Therefore, every one of us has his/her preferences and tendencies. There are feedback systems that guide and lead us, praise and rebuke us.

Is our conscious “I” a composition of these interactions?

A large component of the recurring inner pattern is a reaction to influential experiences. If we want to experience an open future, then we should reduce habitual reaction patterns, especially when they are not beneficial, i.e. based on fear and avoidance.

What do I mean? Our established patterns reproduce our past and project this into the future. In order to encounter

the inner narrator, it is helpful to question it, even when we generally experience it as the central element of our guiding “I”.

As long as we fully identify with the narrator, it will chart paths through our inner landscape which we have traveled again and again because they are sure and well-known.

Simply observe yourself! The following impulse questions can be helpful!

Investigating the Inner Narrator

Determine if there is a communicative voice that accompanies you throughout the day.

What effect does this narrative companion have on you?

Does it influence or decide what is good or bad for you?

When do you notice the comments and statements made by the narrator?

What other possibilities do you have?

How does this inner authority relate to you?

In a friendly way? In a critical way?

Where is its location? Inside? In what direction?

Could it be that you don't have a narrative voice?

If this is so, how do you then experience your inner world?

When the inner narrator (the commentary voice) is constantly active, it also has an impairing effect. This is because we are not able to establish a state of quiet, when thoughts are silent.

Of course, the inner narrator can also be helpful when it allows us to reflect on our behavior and thereby helps us with self-organization.

This Is How We Construct our Reality: How our Preferences Become Patterns

This internal interaction that we have now observed is “our reality” in which we live. Through our sense perception—hearing, feeling, smelling, seeing, and taste—we obtain information from the outside world. The inner senses process what we feel, hear, see and sense within our inner world.

When we encounter this information, a mental process begins that can result in a value judgment or assessment.

Principally, we experience as sentient beings—here I adhere to the Buddhist psychology, as far as I understand it—the quality of perception in three ways: as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral.

If it is pleasant, we want to have it again. If it is unpleasant, we want to avoid it. Frequently, a recurring pattern emerges from this that functions unconsciously. Our thinking process labels these forms of sense perceptions as fear, pain, happiness etc. We derive our intentions and actions from these automatic reactions so quickly that we are not able to notice these phenomena.

This type of pattern building applies to all humans.

We are preconditioned through our “environmental

circumstances”, the era in which we live, our type of society, our family, and our social status.

Nevertheless, we select our individual preferences from these various given conditions, structure our perceptions, and arrange our assimilated impulses. In this way we create our reality, formulate our sense of right and wrong, and establish what is true and false.

Juxtaposed with the societal determined reality that we often regard as self-evident and constant, all of us live on their own island of “reality”.

When all of us are able to describe our own reality, and we discuss these varied positions in relation to each other, then we can interact with one another on much more concrete terms. Conjectures and evaluative interpretations about one another can be avoided. We come on the island of another person with our island in our “backpack”. We can, however, form and shape our island by being alert, and by actively changing our patterns.

Automatic Reaction Patterns in Recurring Situations

You can recognize how mechanically you react to external impulses in certain situations.

Automatic reaction patterns

Observe yourself and others. How do you react to the following exemplary patterns:

- *On Monday mornings*
- *Uncomfortable conversations*
- *You are summoned by your boss.*
- *A particular behavior of a colleague disturbs you.*

Find other recurring situations.

How do you experience your “collage of impressions”? Are they hindering or helpful?

How are you able to reach an acceptance of the situation, and what changes as a result of this?

Every pattern creates a “collage of impressions”. This collage of impressions is held in a form of fixated, frozen states through blocked energy. If we are able to bring this energy

into a flow, we obtain new power and ideas for solutions. The problems dissolve. We go from victim to co-actor, and have access to our power, intelligence, and intuition.

The dissolution of obstructive patterns is an essential part of an effective pattern coaching. If the client succeeds in reversing the polarity of this debilitating pattern, he then has a pool of resources at his disposal for all kinds of crises situations.

Inner and Outer Patterns

Resource devouring patterns are always reflected on two levels: on the level of inner experience and on the level of outer interaction.

Observe what kind of inner patterns is triggered by external situations and how you respond.

For example: the telephone rings.

Are you looking forward to experiencing something new, or are you feeling discomfort?

Or is your feeling neutral?

How do you respond?

At the same time, are you able to register your physical reaction?

What does this feel like?

How does the inner and outer pattern change after you have recognized it?

You could probably observe how the inner resonance supports your actions or subtly hinders them. If there was subtle resistance to the actions, I would search for a way to come to an easy and supporting posture.

Next I would like to distinguish between the structures of inner patterns and the structures of outer patterns, although these structures naturally and interchangeably interpenetrate and influence one another, as we have just witnessed.

Regardless of whether we work with inner or outer patterns, both approaches show their effects. From the inside we can create things through inventions, through insights and through confrontation and “interactive play” with the inner sensory impulses.

We can just as well approach things from the outside, in that we assume various postures and thus arrive at a better embodiment. We can forge the inner mental attitude and emotion through external behavior.

Our daily conditioning occurs on the basis of the outer form: When we live in certain patterns daily, then these have an impact on our internal field. In this way, the external is a penetrating and formative force.

By using a telephone call as an example, I wish to show how an external posture can support inner resourceful conditions.

When I have a challenging telephone discussion, I keep both my feet planted firmly on the ground at the beginning, and assume an upright posture. However, as soon as the contact with the counterpart begins to flow, I lay my legs on the table and casually lean back in my chair. So, in this way, I am full of esprit and humor, and the conversation will be a great success.

At first, the posture (feet on the earth, and upright posture) generates focus and stability, then in the second posture, openness and a creative flow of ideas. Everyone can find external modes of behavior which support them.

Our body-mind state is casted into a form through behavior. This posture influences the mood in our environment and workplace.

I doubt that my model for success is often practiced in modern open-space offices, because having the feet on the table doesn't conform to the convention of concentrating on your work.

Frequently, we follow instructions that have been set by others and thus lose our resourcefulness. We don't feel comfortable in suits, but we still wear them because this conforms to an unspoken rule. To help identify the resistance against such situations and find an appropriate way to deal with them can be one of the goals of coaching. Even though something new can feel strange, this strangeness contains the potential of a new knowledge and learning.

When I decided to work for companies, I bought myself my "armor": a blue, well-tailored suit. And I became comfortable with it very quickly: It gave me support and security and a strong persona when I presented myself.

Opening Patterns

For me, opening patterns means to open up the static mechanics of our positioning of feelings and thoughts and to “let light in”.

There is one thing that patterns don't like: Contact. As soon as patterns are placed under observation, they are immediately subjected to change and dissolution. We can open patterns by activating the senses and returning to a discernment of the original, undesignated, and not yet assessed. This cognizance of our inner and outer senses allows us to feel how different patterns function. Let's trace our observation back to small individual moments that aren't captured in patterns. Slowing the course of patterns helps to do this.

For example, let's take the pattern “brushing the teeth”. When we brush the teeth slower, the predominating pattern is no longer present. It becomes neutral and dissolves. This procedure can also be transferred to more complex processes. When we recognize patterns, we can make inquiries and go deeper inside the pattern. Perhaps, we want to know more about the pattern. Which thoughts are involved, while we are conducting this pattern? Are the thoughts ordered and calming? Is this pattern helpful and

comparable with a ritual that provides us with stability and security? Of course, in the long run, every kind of “positive pattern” can be a hindrance when the situation is not appropriate, or we begin to fossilize through constant repetition. Through opening patterns, one manages to restart and to revive one’s own resource system. Our inner resource system is endangered by mental and energetic limitations. One trigger is often a moment of fear that usually feeds on a biographical experience.

For example, when the telephone rings and we feel uncomfortable because we’re afraid of receiving bad news. This will usually be transmitted to us today by telephone. This may be a subtle reaction resulting from receiving news that was difficult for us.

Patterns of traumatization proceed automatically, and can be overcome when we have contact with them. In coaching there are also, as previously depicted, two different accesses: It is possible to work directly with the blockades in the body and mind internally, and/or to attain security and confidence by practicing new structures and learnable, helpful external patterns. New and helpful experiences can be used against the old experiences from traumatization.

Freedom from Content

All of these considerations are based on one thing: Ignoring content, so one can be able to perceive this behavior and sense patterns.

Our consciousness has been created so that we cannot process and observe a lot of information at random. Therefore, the first step is to dissolve the contentual entanglements and only to listen, see, and feel.

When we feel inwardly blocked or uncomfortable in a new situation, the first priority is observation: Where and how does this inner blockage come to be? Normally, we register an energetic contraction. As a rule, we ask why this is happening and find countless reasons that don't help us to start the situation flowing again.

Many times there are certain thoughts that reject the situation and try to build-up distance to the sensation. The consequence is a thought carousel which looks for solutions, but cannot, however, build-up any contact to the fixed sensations. Observe the sensations that accompany your thoughts.

Observe the thoughts and sensation patterns in interaction

How does it feel?

Where can you localize these sensations physically and spatially?

This is how you dissolve the thought carousel:

Merge with the inner sensations.

What has changed?

Expand the sensation pattern, intensify it.

Can you change the form, position, color?

What happens then with your condition?

These subtle inner perceptions may seem unimportant to us, but in my experience they are essential when it concerns a profound pattern opening. Our entire life is steered by subtle sensations: What we like to do, what we like to eat or which voices we don't accept. However, as soon as we become aware

of this, we develop selection options. At the same time the segmented compartments within us become activated. Our mind creates a new room.

Shifting the point of observance

From which position do you observe?

Can you shift the observance point to the outside?

Can you shift it to the inside?

What is changed when you do this?

What happens when you bring the observation point in the center of the belly?

How do you feel now?

Monitor the observance point.

Merge with the act of observing.

What can we do externally in order to dissolve a blocked situation, e.g. in the course of a discussion? This is a helpful

pattern to apply:

Ask questions during the discussion in order to gain time so you can reorient yourself mentally (e.g. “What do you exactly mean by that?”)

Repeat what has been said (“Do you mean this?”)

Change the position of your body, sit upright, stretch and adopt a resourceful posture.

Relinquish your fear by breathing deeply several times.

Assume a meta-position, in order to observe the activity from outside and above and thereby make helpful realizations.

Adjust your posture, so you can be better attuned to your discussion partner.

Take a break and go to the restroom. In the restroom you can say “Navel” several times loud and slow; this calms your agitated consciousness.

Break off the discussion and make a “new start”.

Basic idea: Figure out the discussion pattern and relax in

order to allow the appropriate answer.

The good in the bad: You are confronted with an interesting situation which you are able to work on. This allows you to master such a situation in the future.

5. Body and Mind

The Separation of Body and Mind: Dissociation

One of the strongest patterns of our time is dissociation, the separation of the mental from the physical. More and more frequently we live the content of our thoughts, imagination and dreams in our consciousness, instead of the physical presence with our senses and the energy which flows through us.

This condition is the result of the intensive manifestation of the subject-object pattern in us. If used correctly, this ability helps us to perceive from outside, and to serve as a means of advising ourselves.

If we are not able, however, to switch to our physical perception, we lose our inner feedback system, which allows us to feel what is harmonious and what isn't.

The expression of the personality and the current authenticity is based on this balance: The consciousness enlightens the body; or the body embodies the consciousness.

We are trapped in a constant dissociation; we completely identify ourselves with our thinking. We consider our very own bodies as separate objects that one can shape as our mind sees fit. This is acceptable, that is unacceptable.

Our bodies are like exhibition pieces to be styled and trimmed for others. Measured against the omnipresent Photoshop beauties, we lose the natural acceptance of our bodies. We may even manipulate our bodies in order to fit to this fantasy.

In this way we destroy the trust in our bodies. How is it then possible for our bodies to radiate its power and charisma if we so often call it into question and disregard it?

The interaction between body and mind is one of the great mysteries. The disruption of this connection is responsible for the numerous psychological illnesses of our time.

We now have the chance, because today so many practices of Eastern traditions are available, to achieve a healthy interaction between mind and body through various exercises. I use a variety of these methods, also when I'm coaching, to help reestablish access to the body's invigorating energy.

An actor only has a convincing expression on the stage when his whole body speaks, and he/she doesn't only express thoughts with words.

Ossification of the Senses in the Clamor of Thought

The “loss of the body” also involves the constant stream of thought that labels everything and absorbs a major part of our daily consciousness. As a result, our senses lead a “stunted existence”. By means of an immediate labeling of our sense impulses, we switch very quickly to an interpreting thinking pattern and thus drown out the sensory contact to the object.

The sensory contact, however, possesses an intensive nurturing and relaxing aspect.

Listen to birds singing, as if the sound were inside of you.

Feel the gentle breeze on your skin without the commentary, “Oh, how nice!”

Normally, we give the things from our sensory experience a name and extract them from the level of experience, and

put them on the level of labeling and imagination. With the constant utilization of this pattern our contact to our senses becomes increasingly dull. It is therefore indispensable to give our senses space. For example, to experience the light and colors of a sunset without being occupied with the commentaries from the inner narrator.

This leads back to the original interaction of subject and object. It overcomes the head dominated corporeality.

Perhaps, this is the key to the inner balance that is so necessary for us.

Worrisome Questions: Cyber World and the Body-“I”

Visualized imaging processes of the new media dominate our knowledge intake and world of experience. The result is a visualized life secondhand which is enthusiastically accepted.

Are the majority of people in the Western world afraid to experience their sensory perceptions directly? One prefers a visualized dream of a computer game or a long-distance chat, instead of living and suffering the world directly. Is

it that everything that doesn't appear controllable is seen as a threat? Sensory impulses that could lead us into the instinct area of our being are being evaded by the superficial distance of a visualized cyber world. Is this leading to disembodied people?

Can we survive without touching? Without a direct sensory feedback system? How are our relationships affected?

When people are constantly dissociated, they are not able to experience empathy and lose their physical feelings for others.

Does this mean that we lose the inner understanding that all elements in this world are connected, and we are a part of nature?

Only an "I" that is aware of itself as separated, is capable of treating others with cruelty, because it doesn't realize that by doing so it also does harm to itself.

A positive aspect of the visual cyber world, which intensively stimulates the mental aspect and thus creates a distance to the sensory level, could be a freedom from fear: a sensory channel directed to the outside that we ourselves codify and define, which visual impressions are positive

and which are not. In my experience, pictures and visual processes, in contrast to hearing, first need a recognition process before an event can be considered threatening.

The next decades will show us how this “new kind” of communication, in addition to the behavior that we see today, will change our inner “processing” of data.

6. Live the Body More Consciously: Exercises for the Senses and the Integration of Mind and Body

Energy Centers and their Impact

The concept of various energy centers can be found in many Eastern forms of meditation and exercise. From my own experience in meditation, I know it makes a great difference in which energy center my consciousness resides.

I would like to encourage you to find out for yourself which treasures can be found in the body-mind exercises of the East; the best way is to learn from a knowledgeable teacher. Now observe, if and how you hold your consciousness on the different levels of the energy centers.

Find out what effect the different energy centers have on your thoughts and perceptions.

Crown of the head

Forehead

Throat

Heart

Stomach

Sexual Center

Roots

Observe yourself. On which of these levels is your consciousness normally focused?

Can you send your consciousness into the heart level? How does this change your perception?

Concentrate on the lower abdomen and observe yourself and the world from this position. How does this change the feelings, the shading of your thoughts?

How does your voice sound when you are in contact with your heart?

How is the tension in the body changed when you stand?

How does the perception change in the different of the centers?

Coming into the Present

In elementary school, I read a story about Till Eulenspiegel. One of the stories confused me, but at the same time it captivated me.

Eulenspiegel walked uphill and downhill. When he went uphill, he cheered and exulted, and when he went downhill, he was saddened and complained. As he was asked why he did this, he answered: “When I go up the hill, I’m happy about going down. When I go down, I think of the climb uphill.”

Eulenspiegel is a good reflection of us, especially when we, like a manager, plan the future: Seldom are we in the present.

Because we move in today’s time in our inner world of thought, it can be very refreshing to orient our senses towards the outside world. Thus we can intensively connect ourselves with the joy of appearances.

If we lack the perception for all the beauty that surrounds us, then we turn towards the outside and try to complement what is missing: Through consumption.

However, if we are able in the present situation to merge with our senses completely, there is no need to continually search for luxury articles or long trips as providers of well-being. The refinement of our existence leads to joyfulness in the moment. When we merge with the senses, the observer and the inner voice dissolve in vibrating being.

Opening the senses towards the outside

What do I see?

What do I hear?

What do I feel?

What do I touch?

What do I smell?

What do I taste?

How can you totally concentrate on one of the senses?

Which nuances have I discovered?

What part of the body is now touching the earth?

Where in my body do I perceive my breathing?

What kinds of thoughts distract me from perceiving the senses?

What kinds of feelings accompany these thoughts?

Go to the outside again and again and make contact with your different senses to external appearances.

Body Scan

A body scan can help us to relax and to decelerate. We submerge ourselves in our inner field.

Sit still. Fill your body from head to toe with consciousness.

Which areas can you perceive more, which areas less?

Observe the area of your body which is in contact to the earth. Place your weight there and relax the area which is holding the weight.

Observe the moment of your in- and exhaling.

Bring your breath and your inner movement in the areas which are more distant and darker.

What effect does it have then?

Feel where and how the relaxation takes effect.

Relaxing through Listening

Now try, as shown in the following description, to work with listening in a sensitive and playful way. Eliminate the sounds when you listen. Place your awareness in the direction of the sound source.

Concentrate on the sounds which surround and reside in you.

Refrain from characterizing the sounds or making assessments, how pleasant or unpleasant, how beautiful or terrible the sounds are.

Relax within the sounds. Feel the sounds from outside generate resonance in your inner space.

Follow the sounds to their origin and to where they disappear.

Listen to the sound within the sound.

When the sounds penetrate your body, visualize them.

7. Steering Inner Patterns

The Meta-Perspective: What Does a New Positioning of the Observer Change?

When we can consider situations, themes and people from various perspectives, then we are intellectually flexible.

In coaching, we are concerned with three perspectives: The I-perspective, how we see the world from our point of view. The Your-perspective, in which we perceive our self-projected in the being of the other, and the meta-perspective observes communications and events from outside us.

In stress-loaded situations, the I-perspective is often constricted and highly emotionalized. With the help of the meta-perspective, the coachee can view his own situation and also the world from outside, and thus collect additional information that helps him to behave in an appropriate way.

Because the meta-perspective is dissociated and intensively visually polarized, it activates the mental in us.

Every perspective contains its own knowledge and richness

of insight. When we have the capability to ingest a variety of perspectives as different levels of reality, we open ourselves. This creates understanding and is the basis for a tolerant and supportive worldview.

Be attentive to which perspective you observe from.

What happens when the observer's perspective changes?

Observe yourself from the perspective of the other.

How many different perspectives do you discover?

How does your observation, feelings and thinking change?

How does the observer observe?

Impulse goal:

- *Develop alertness and consciousness*
- *Bring flexibility in our unconscious positioning*
- *Penetrate patterns*

The Interaction between Thoughts and Sensory Experiences

Which sensory experiences accompany your thoughts?

Do you experience them as:

- *Positive*
- *Neutral*
- *Negative*

You can try to condense or expand these sensory experiences?

What kinds of new experiences are possible when you do this?

How does this change negative sensory experiences?

How?

How One Brings Head and Heart into Harmony

Head and Heart: The mental-analytical center and the emotional, sentient heart center compete with each other to lead our “I”. However, as soon as both are in energetic flowing contact, they complement each other optimally, and we live in balance.

The constriction point is the throat, whose permeability is often disrupted by subtle tension and stress.

Open and relax the “passage”

Slowly circle the head

Chew in slow motion

Resound the letter “A” in the throat area

Envision and feel how the energy circulates between heart, throat and head, back high and front down and back, in circulation.

Balancing decisions between head and heart

What do you feel in your head? How do you perceive it?

What do you see in the middle area of your chest?

How do you feel your heart?

Try to switch back and forth between the two areas.

Which decision is open?

First, ask your heart the question. How does it react?

Now your head. How does it react?

Switch back and forth between the two; several times.

How does your heart work with your head?

How do they complement each other?

Many coachees repeatedly report how very rational, thought-out processes are also decided “from their stomach.” The better our access to our knowledge of the body, the clearer and more viable our decisions will be.

Dissolving Inner Resistance (I don't want to)

All of us know the moment in which something in us says: I don't want to. I'm not interested in that. Not again.

Some of this is determined by others, or inner processes put out the stop sign. However, it is important for us to be concerned with this situation if you don't want to be dominated and fixated by these blockages. It's worth the effort.

The following approach for "I don't want to"

Simply do it, continue to do it.

Evaluate the resistance.

Ignore the "I don't want to" and direct your mental focus towards the outside.

Expand your own energy field in all directions.

Define a clear goal.

Focus clearly on it and more towards it.

"Dilute" this collage of feelings by expanding it in all direc-

tions.

Discover the “I don’t want to” point in your body, and communicate with it.

What do you want to tell me?

Then play with the “I don’t want to” point, by contracting, stretching, moving, coloring it, etc., until it changes, opens, breaks ...

Thought-Halt: Dissolving the Recurring Chain of Thought

Who doesn't know this: A thought comes again and again, and we try to eliminate this thought. This is a rotating circulating thought. Because no solution exists on the level of thought, it doesn't work.

Thought-Halt

Take two minutes, and observe all physical tension.

Exhale three times.

Say out loud "Stop" to the tormenting thought.

Then immediately direct the attention to the external perception.

Repeat the exercise until the thought is gone!

How Do I Master Pain

Now and again sensations manifest themselves in our body that confuse us, and cause us pain. If we consider sensations of pain as an area for exercise, this perception can be a source of inspiration for us. It is important to relinquish the characterization “pain”, and to accept that this is a manifestation, which seen from another point of view, is only energy that has manifested itself in a particular way.

“Pain” is an intensive sensation with its own “character”. Depending on the individual sensory input, we can feel pulling, throbbing or something entirely different. Looking closely at this condition allows us to submerge into this energy field and thus deal with it in a completely different way.

Also the task of a fixed spatial perspective leads to a change. Do I consider “pain” externally or is it possible for me to submerge deeper within the “pain”?

What happens when I shift the observance point of the “pain” within the “pain” itself?

Am I able to completely merge with the “pain”?

As an actor who wasn't immune to training injuries, I always found it very exciting to go onto the stage with minor "pain". This new reference point of contact in the body provided the performance with a special dynamic and deeper quality of expression.

In the same way, we can also utilize "pain" in our daily life.

Another possibility would be to ignore the "pain" and divert our focus on completely different things.

Through frequent practice and the observance of similar conditions, you will be able to become more flexible. Every type of daily challenge becomes an exercise.

Mastering “pain”. First variation.

Relinquish the labeling “pain”.

*Explore its “character”. What type of dynamic does it possess?
What form? Which direction? Hot or cold?*

*Change the “character” by changing or supplementing the color
and form.*

*Merge with the “character” and you yourself will become this
energy field.*

Mastering “pain”. Second variation.

Ignore the sensation. Divert your focus on another theme.

*Observe the “character” only visually. Keep it in your focus on
this visual sensation channel.*

Utilizing Positive Feelings

The following exercise aids us in creating our own anchor in our consciousness, body and mind, in order to intensify the positive. When we recognize the texture of our positive and friendly feelings, we can change ourselves with positive energy in a difficult situation.

In a direct intervention, I could help a coachee, who was in danger of burnout, to create for himself a positive anchor for great satisfaction, power and strength. A real and positive experience for the coachee (climbing a mountain peak with a panoramic view of the countryside) is by means of a physical pressure point “anchored”, something like the pressure point between the thumb and the tip of the fingers. This physical anchor helps the coachee to regenerate himself.

Explore the texture of a positive feeling.

Imagine yourself smiling at a baby.

Where do you feel this?

How is the mood within you?

Which senses are involved?

Intensify the mood, deepen it.

Expand the mood in space, and in time.

When you feel the most intensively, set your anchor.

Press the left thumb against the left index finger; the more intensive the pressure, the higher the intensity of the positive feeling.

You will realize that this anchor also works when you, without envisioning it, press the left index finger against the left thumb. This previous designated feeling will develop automatically, because our body stores memories, and sense impressions in this way. We use this phenomenon to recall positive feelings through physical contact, and bring ourselves in the desire state of being.

8. Basic Pattern of Communication with Others

Levels of Communication

After our intensive observation of inner patterns, let us turn our attention to the basic outer patterns, as I see them. From my observance, I have recognized that communication processes between the sender and receiver operate on four levels, parallel and simultaneously:

1. Pattern concerning the discussion process

In what sequence does the interaction occur? You will be successful when it is consistently planned with interaction points.

2. Content

We all act consciously on this level. The preparation and training pertain to the content. It absorbs our “observation energy”.

3. Non-verbal interaction

Here, we recognize how good the communication works with each other, and which subtexts are involved. We can also recognize here if statements coincide with the inner reality of our contact partner.

4. Relationship and factual level

Officially, the factual level is in the foreground in the business process.

The relationship level often determines the success of cooperative engagement. Mutual recognition and appreciation secure an intact business level. This is, of course, not to be confused with chumminess or something similar.

A simple example from daily coaching illustrates this: A coachee from midlevel management in a large company told me he made sure that his colleagues were well-informed about a big project they were working on. He told them everything there was to know, but they didn't do what he thought they should do.

After we had recapitulated his behavior pattern, we found out that in the meeting he had spoken about 95% of the time. He also asked questions that his colleagues could

answer with yes or no. He also didn't pay attention to the negative renunciative body language.

He was helpless and angry. If he had continued to be “trapped in content”, he would have had no chance of success.

He had to change his behavior pattern and involve the other levels. He could, for example, change the amount of time he talked in discussion and ask open questions, so the colleagues could be more involved in the discussion.

The 5-Step Model: Pattern Process of Communication

Regardless if it is a telephone conversation or a meeting lasting several hours: If we want to deal with things effectively, then we need to utilize the 5-step pattern.

I am continually amazed by how much clarity and effectiveness arises when this is employed by my coachees.

The 5-step model of a successful conversation

- 1. Getting started: Taking care of the relationship level*
- 2. Depiction of the discussion goals and time investment*
- 3. Compile the results*
- 4. Fix the results with dates and task assignments*
- 5. Exit: Appreciation/evaluation of the common performance (secure the relationship level)*

At the beginning one starts with clarifying the relationship level. How do we open ourselves for each other in order to be in the position of securing trust, and achieving a resourceful mood?

The second point is the setting of the goals. A discussion leads to nowhere if we don't know what we want in the end. In order for things to become manifest we need enough time. Therefore, we define precisely how much time we want to invest. This focuses us and brings good results.

The third point is what we normally do: The compiling of results.

In many cases, the discussion has already ended here without going on to the important fourth point: fixing the results together, i.e. task allocation and appointments are committed to.

At the conclusion, the appreciation of the collective performance should strengthen the relationship. And when we debrief together, then we improve our collaboration for the future.

The Four Elements of Non-verbal Communication

Non-verbal communication is mostly understood as body language. For example, when someone crosses the arms, people interpret this as refusal and closing. I see this in a much more complicated and comprehensive way. Inspired by my work in the theater, this is the subject matter for my next book.

Essentially, non-verbal communication consists of four elements.

The voice

How does it sound?

Listen to yourself when speaking?

Modulate your tone so that you like to hear your voice.

Which orientation did you give it?

Loud and soft?

How do you modulate it?

How does the voice tell its story?

How does it reach the other?

What do you hear from others?

Does the voice correspond to the content?

When is it “raw” or “thin”?

The body

How do you bring your body to express itself in an energetic way?

How do you express yourself in gesture and mimic?

How authentic are you connected to your body?

Does your body have charisma when it positions things?

When do you feel “strong”? When do you feel sensitive?

Spatial structuring

How do you use your “entrance” in a room?

Where and how do you move in a room?

Every space has different qualities. How do you use this space?

Relationship and contact

How do you experience the field between you and your discussion partner?

How does this energetic field change?

Where can you perceive this?

How can you guide it?

Observe these four elements (for example, during a presentation).

9. Balancing with Helpful Patterns

As previously announced, I will now portray a number of helpful patterns that my clients have used successfully.

In order to illustrate how you can work with the short-bre-viary, I have designed an example case with a theme that managers have to deal with.

The task:

You should present, together with a group of colleagues from your management level, solution proposals regarding a concrete change theme. You then have to discuss these proposals and finally motivate your colleagues to participate in implementing the project. You should develop the project together. You are the leader of the project and your bonus is dependent on the success of the project.

1. Employment of a helpful pattern: You clarify if you want to or are able to assume responsibility for this project (see page 151 “Assuming Responsibility”).

2. You consult the “Work Preparation” (page 115) and make your preparations accordingly. You view the following issues at risks in the cooperative venture:

a) Colleague B is always difficult to motivate for any kind of implementation and

b) You find working together with colleague C as “difficult”. Both are important partners in developing the project.

3. In order to understand colleague B’s behavior better, you look up “What motivates us and our team members” (page 149).

While studying the material you realize that colleague B is somewhat isolated and his contribution to the project’s success is underappreciated because he is only responsible for keeping systems running. You consider how you could make his contribution to the solution stand out more, and offer him a more visible role which makes him a more fundamental part of the project.

4. You arrange a clarifying session with colleague C. You study “Feedback” (see page 137f), and thus describe the type of difficulty you have with him and your wish as to how you would like to work together with said colleague in the future.

5. To prepare for the meeting, you can also study

“Non-verbal signals in communication” (page 129), to better observe and estimate his reactions.

6. You prepare for your presentation. You’ll find support on pages 119 to 121 (“Preparing yourself for a good speech”).

7. Suddenly, you also remember that you are insecure regarding “theme-less” situations, for example, on the arrival of the participants, or dining sessions during a conference. You can find relevant suggestions under “Small talk” (page 147).

8. After the presentation you will chair the team that will realize the solution proposals (see “Planning with creativity and brainstorming”, page 126f).

9. Perhaps you can use the transparency “How do you react to mistakes?” (page 146) for participants who continually look for mistakes and problems.

10. You can record the results in the “Action plan” (page 178), which can also be helpful in steering the project.

11. To obtain concrete results with delegated responsibilities and a clear approach, use “Open questions” (page 133f).

12. When a colleague is nominated for carrying out a project, use “Potential Evaluation” (page 161) and decide on the basis of this criteria if the colleague is suitable for the task.

13. Before the start of the project redefine your daily and weekly plan (page 174), with the goal of successfully continuing your other work in addition to the project tasks.

14. As soon as the project is running, give positive feedback (page 159) and

15. head the project with “Delegating Leadership” (page 155ff).

16. When there are decisions to be made that you are not quite ready to make, study “Decisions” (page 163f).

17. If you realize that you don't have enough time and energy, clarify this under “Time- and Energy Consumers” (page 176).

18. If this doesn't help, then exam your work styles by using the 4-point rule (page 169).

19. If you are working optimally, but the current task is

becoming too big, then consult “Work Time Management when Overstressed” (page 180).

20. Perhaps you are so occupied with the project that you are no longer able to free your head: “Ending the Workday” (page 182ff).

21. Tips for relaxing are provided depending on the type of person in “Body Scan” (page 84) or

22. “Relaxing through Listening” (page 85),

and... no project is more important than preserving your physical and mental welfare.

And... how satisfying it is to collectively work towards a positive goal with all our energy.

And... as long as we are intrinsically motivated and act in a self-determined way, we are able to do great things, without damaging and burning ourselves out.

10. Helpful Patterns for Preparing and Planning

Pattern for Work Preparation

Good planning helps one to act successfully!

What are my goals?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How can I define my goals in such a concrete way that I can check the results at the conclusion?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How do I exactly proceed?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What risks does the task involve?

What kind of intermediate steps and checkpoints do I need?

Who do I have to inform and/or involve?

What kind of help and support do I need to be successful?

When exactly have I achieved my goals?

Does everything make sense?

Preparation for Having a “Good” Discussion

What are my goals for the discussion? (set fixed points)

- *Preferences for discussion partner? Who knows them?*
- *What common interests do we have?*
- *What do I find interesting about them?*
- *What kind of personal things do I want to show/tell about myself?*
- *What good joke would be fitting for the situation?*
- *A remark that reflects the mutuality of the situation*
- *Something that I spontaneously notice about the room, about the desk...*
- *Do I trust myself to give feedback about appearance and behavior?*
- *What do I want to tell him/her?*
- *My attitude about a current event (news, sport, fashion etc.)*
- *What information could interest him/her?*
- *What kind of statement could provoke him/her?*

The goal at the beginning of a discussion is to develop a good relationship to the discussion partner and achieve openness.

If possible, avoid the question “How are you?” at the start.

Where/when is a suitable place/time for the discussion?

I introduce my themes/goals by obtaining the allowance to...

- *ask questions*
- *obtain information*
- *provide information*
- *discuss themes*

How can I give the discussion partner good “feedback” for his understanding and cooperation at the end of the meeting?

How do I concretize the results at the end of the meeting?

What can I derive from the discussion? For me? For others?

How do I forward important information? Which information should be passed on?

Preparing and Gearing Oneself Up for a Good Speech

Many of us don't like public appearances or speaking in front of a group, the more people, the more difficult.

My scale: step 1 up to 5 people; step 2 up to 12; step 3 up to 25; step 4 up to 50; step 5 up to 300; step 6 up to 1,000; step 7 in a stadium; plus television, plus live. Everything is a matter of practice and becoming accustomed to something through repetition.

Due to a feeling of "I want to avoid this", one does not invest time in the necessary preparations. The subsequent lack of success confirms our belief that giving presentations "is not my cup of tea". Our performance and the resulting reputation, however, precisely depend on this particular public appearance. This "blemish" on our reputation cannot easily be made up for in other areas no matter how hard we try.

Thus, try and overcome your negative attitude and open up for new input. No matter how talented we are, every one of us benefits from mental preparation and practicing skills that are useful for public appearances. Once we have prepared ourselves a couple of times, we will develop useful

routines (patterns) which in turn help us to grow and face these challenges with increasing confidence. If you cannot do this on your own, you might want to consult an inspirational coach. The ability to present ourselves in a confident way is so important for our career that we have to learn it!

Preparing a good speech

What is my message?

Which arguments do I present - and in which sequence?

The process: on paper, cards, transparencies? (the fewer the transparencies, the better)

Which questions do I have to expect?

Which topics could provoke resistance?

Try to put yourselves in the position of the audience: What do I want to “serve” the audience, what do I want to confront them with?

Opening gimmick/cliffhanger/marker

Exit marker, for example, a personal message, a look into

the future

Visualize the entire speech, perhaps in front of your partner or the mirror, but never right before the speech because you will have “given your best shot”.

On the day of the speech: comfortable power clothing (including comfortable shoes)

At the location:

- *arrive on time*
- *prepare the room*
- *test technical equipment, plus plan B (e.g. handout on paper)*
- *contact with organizers etc.*
- *stop everything else: turn off mobile phone etc.*

Final concentration phase:

a ritual or posture that brings me into a powerful and present state of mind

By the way: Stage fright has a focusing power which enables good actors to get really warm up.

Preparation for “Negotiations”

Many decision makers only prepare for the content of the negotiation. They do not waste second thoughts on the most promising approach or supporting behavior.

The following impulse questions can significantly contribute to clearly defining one’s own role. Switch from the role of a defender to the role of the match maker who structures his negotiations in a targeted manner.

Of course, as always, it helps take on the role of your negotiation partner. Which successes does he or she need?

Once I know the point of view of the other person, it is easier for me to find a way to bring good results for both parties.

Which role do I want to take on?

What are my goals?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What arguments do I need to reach these goals?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How would I think and act if I were in the position of my conversation partner?

What are the key moments to reach my goals?

What might help me to actively enter the discussion and fulfill my role?

How do I react when I observe personal differences?

How can I create an atmosphere and situation where the negotiation partner sees him/herself as a winner?

How do I concretize the results by setting up new appointments at the end of the conversation?

How can I give feedback to my negotiation partner at the end of the discussion to ensure the quality of future encounters?

Preparation for Job Interviews

Employees who switch positions within a major company or apply for positions with other companies are often expected to know how to present and assess themselves. This process begins with the creation of a current profile or by using a self-assessment sheet. Human Resources professionals have become experienced when it comes to assessing the credibility of an applicant and determining whether the applicant's self-assessment is realistic. Employees who are able to assess their strengths and weaknesses well are reflective. Consequently, they are easier to develop and lead.

The following pitch will support you with sharpening your profile. This applies particularly to pointing out your strengths. In many cases, the things we do particularly well are taken for granted and therefore not considered. Ask your friends and partners about where they see your strengths. Surprise yourself by filling in this example sheet!

Goal:

I will briefly explain how I assess myself and what my employers/customers can expect from me.

This is what I do well: ...

This distinguishes me from others: ...

This is how you as an employer/customer benefit from...

I am not the right person for: ...

This is what motivates me: ...

Planning with Creativity and Brainstorming

Mixing the creativity phase with the clarifying phase of implementation and feasibility kills any well-intentioned brainstorming phase and prevents creative ideas from having a real chance.

This behavior repeatedly leads to barriers in the developing of ideas. Therefore, it is important to clearly separate these phases and not allow discussions about feasibility in this phase.

During the creativity phase all varieties of “thinking aloud” and “asking unusual questions” are desirable: From seemingly irrelevant things and entertaining nonsense to profound ideas and the most absurd level of detail.

The second step is to bring together these multi-faceted ideas and assign them to the different levels of observation in order to develop and extract solution scenarios from them. These solution scenarios can be further developed by individuals or small work groups in the scope of a preliminary project or a feasibility study. Often it only makes sense to plan and make decisions after this expanded database is available.

Yes: Who decides? Who is the employer? Who is the customer? How do you identify the success of the projects?

Only after these issues have been clarified, can responsibilities, resources etc. be assigned.

Prior to the conversation

- *Clarify the scope of the discussion*
- *How much time?*
- *What are the goals?*
- *How do I reach the goal? How do we reach the goal?*

Start of the conversation

- *I establish a good contact with the conversation partners.*
- *I introduce the time frame and the goals of the discussion.*

The creativity phase

is separated from assessment and selection.

All kinds of ideas and statements are welcome!

We are looking for solutions and consider the questioning from different points of view. Assessment /selection

Which solution will help us most?

Decide

- *What do we do?*
- *How do we do it?*
- *Who does it?*
- *Until when have the various tasks to be completed?*

Action Plan

Use this pattern like a travel guide you consult to prepare yourself, or when you have lost your way. Until then, find your way towards your projected goal in a thoughtful and cautious way.

11. Helpful Patterns for Intervention in Case of Disruptions

Non-verbal Signals in Communication: Approval and Disapproval

In many cases, when communication does not seem to work or orders are not accepted, this can be ascertained by body language. Therefore, it does not make much sense to continue negotiations on a factual level. Here it is important to ask questions to find out about the inner processes: Does it involve a specifically personal behavior? Is the current job situation creating problems? How do you identify the non-verbal warning signals?

- *turning away physically, particularly when receiving the message (front, chest, head turned to the side)*
- *avoiding eye contact*
- *plain/blank/reserved expression*
- *darkening of the complexion*
- *becoming stiff*
- *reduction of breathing*
- *denying symmetrical alignment*

Possible causes:

- *Theme and task*
- *The relationship between the participants is disturbed.*
- *The colleague has “difficulties” with him/herself.*

Differentiation criteria:

When do these “symptoms” occur?

- *At a meeting with the conversation partners? more likely on the relationship level depending on the theme -> it has to do with the task*
- *Permanent behavior -> it has to do with the person*

Clarification: by asking questions in dialogue

How Do You Recognize that the Obstacles Have Been Eliminated?

Non-verbal signals of approval and support

- *The eyes and the facial expression exude charisma.*
- *nodding as approval of the statements of the conversation partner*
- *turning towards the conversation partner*
- *eye contact*
- *The back and forth movement reflects the same rhythm of the conversation partner.*
- *adopting the same center of gravity (mirroring)*
- *following the movements of the speaker physically*

Reaction to Non-verbal Warning Signals

Identify and inquire about behavior; if possible immediately, in an appropriate environment and in a private setting

Form of address:

“I’ve noticed that you today... Is that correct?”

The goal of this immediate, fast reaction:

Clarifying the factual level before the relationship level is affected.

Because:

Problems on a factual level are often taken personally and destroy the relationship level.

The consequence:

- *The conversation partners are losing the joy in creating something together.*
- *There is a risk of a continuing “alienation”.*

Clarifying and Leading with Open Questions

Using questions is a powerful tool for any type of communication. Questions make it possible to change perspectives, help find answers or raise new questions.

Questions connect people.

Our thought carousel becomes open for dialog.

Taboo areas are identified.

The question “What?” enables a concretization of the respective topic with the coachee or conversation partner.

“How?” describes the actual process.

Just try out the various options for open questions in your next feedback/planning/or staff discussion and surprise yourself with the new facets that emerge in the course of the conversation.

Goals

- *Achieve a comprehensive understanding of a situation or task
in order to make the right decisions and act appropriately.*
- *Meet the conversation partner on his own ground.*
- *An inspiring communication*

In the course of the conversation

- *Ask questions, listen carefully and don't interrupt.*
- *Identify the most important aspects of the response and continue asking from this point—to either get more specific or contest it.*
- *Ask questions concerning connections and hidden goals.*
- *Use open questions to determine results and solution processes and make them verifiable.*

So you know what we do, how we do it and why we do it!

Direction of the different questions

“WHAT” asks about

- *a situation*
- *a topic*
- *a correlation*
- *a problem*

“WHY” asks about

- *a cause*
- *hidden motives*

“HOW” asks about

- *activities*
- *characteristics*
- *solution path*
- *methods*
- *skills*
- *processes*

“WHAT FOR” asks about

open and hidden goals

“WHAT IF?”

opens up new perspectives

What are the next steps?

Assessment and planning of processes and actions

Questions that support solutions

Where do you recognize that... ?

Clarify statements, exam statements thoroughly

What is this good for?

What prevents us from it?

How exactly do you understand this?

What else do I need to make it work?

Why not?

Feedback for Successful Communication

The feedback structure illustrated here is derived from the methodology for non-violent communication. For me, feedback is the most decisive behavioral component for maintaining dialog and achieving collective success. Without transparent and fair feedback, it is not possible to work together in a company in a respectful and appreciative way. It is no different with our relationships and friendships.

Whoever receives feedback, learns how others experience our behavior.

For many of my coachees, feedback is associated with stress and often causes physical discomfort. The reasons for this probably go back to previous experiences. The fear of not being allowed to talk about ones feelings is probably the result of childhood conditioning. In a professional environment one can also observe that colleagues breakoff contact if they are criticized.

Most of us know stressful situations where they have been criticized or even penalized for making mistakes. This is the reason for the patterns of avoidance and stress which we should be able to solve. If we as managers do not give feedback due to these reasons, our team members cannot

know how we assess their performance. They would then feel insecure because they are lacking clear feedback. As a result, they would start interpreting non-verbal behavior and would possibly draw false conclusions.

Therefore, feedback has to be practiced: both giving and receiving. The more we practice this pattern, the more comfortable and precise we will be when using it.

Feedback establishes contact and closeness. It is a great tool for checking how our behavior manifests itself in the reality of other people. And it is also an important measurement tool for our personal and professional development. Apart from open questions, successful feedback is the most essential means of communication for successful cooperation.

Giving feedback

We formulate

1. *What we observe:*

What does the other person say and do? (the facts)

2. *What this observation brings out in us:*

our emotions and assessments

3. *Speech pause:*

Give your conversation partner time to ask questions and think about what has been said.

4. *What we desire:*

- *What we advise*
- *What kind of supportive behavior we would like to have*
- *Which behavior is helpful*
- *What we (as responsible managers) demand*

Receiving feedback

This is how to receive feedback:

- *Interested and attentive, this is shown by your posture and by making eye contact*
- *You ask questions concerning what the person giving feedback exactly means.*
- *You thank him/her and appreciate the value of his/her feedback.*
- *You try to behave in accordance with the proposals.*

Our feedback has a good chance of being accepted when we use I-statements and only identify and address one concrete individual case at a time. In this way, the recipient of your feedback does not feel criticized or even rejected.

You can also change concrete behavior. This change can be recognized, “assessed” and “feedback” positively provided by both parties.

If the Conversation Is not Going Well: The Quality of Time

The communication is not going well. We cannot establish “contact” and our opposing positions are becoming even more entrenched.

As soon as we realize that communication is not working, we do not continue as before but change something instead: Our attitude, e.g., or our assessment of our conversation partner? Our posture?

We project our consciousness into a meta-perspective and observe ourselves, the conversation, and the interaction of the participants. If we cannot get any helpful impulses, we interrupt the conversation—for example, in the form of a “bio break”, i.e. taking time for a drink, going to the restroom.

Often things have changed when we resume the conversation. If this is not the case, we provide feedback about the current difficulty of the situation.

Sometimes the reason is the quality of time. If, for example, the biorhythm of our conversation partner does not yet correspond to the decision, we have to find an appointment

that is more suitable. Some people work better in the early morning; others are most efficient in the evening or even at night. Negotiations on days with cloudy weather are often tedious, while on sunny days in the springtime, decisions are made faster and planned more target-oriented.

If you work in sales, find out which day of the week fits best for the task at hand. An exceptional sales manager believes that Thursday afternoon with a good weather forecast for the weekend is suited best. I wonder why?

The quality of time is determined by many external factors and has a major impact on if and how things work.

Goal: Getting the conversation flowing again

Interrupt and resume

Giving feedback

Questions: What do we need to proceed?

Align physically

Change the setting:

From sitting to standing, going for a “philosophers walk” together

Change the situation, the seating arrangements, the room etc.

Allow for quiet time

Check the quality of time, postpone the conversation when needed

Mastering Critical Discussions

Again and again we are confronted with challenging meetings which cost us a lot of energy beforehand because we are not sure whether we are properly prepared for them.

Create a sequential structure which helps you to end your conversation successfully. For this purpose, train the following support pattern to be better prepared for your next meeting.

Support pattern “Meeting”

*Ask questions to buy some time and reorient yourself.
(e.g. “How exactly do you understand this?”)*

*Repeat what was said before.
(“Did you mean the following?”)*

Change your posture, sit more erect, stretch and take on a resourceful posture

Release your fear by repeatedly exhaling deeply

Take up the meta-position to be able to look at your behavior from outside and above to gain helpful insights.

Align yourself physically in order to attune yourself better to your conversation partner.

How Do You React to Mistakes?

“Moving from the problem space to the solutions area” is my personal pattern transfer which was inspired by George Taboris’s “Problems as creative sign posts”. When analyzing mistakes, teams often get carried away with making accusations and justifications and thus endanger mutual trust and appreciation. It is much more positive to collect ideas for the solution after a fitting analysis. The resourceful body language of all participants tells us that they have left the problem space; the stiffness is replaced with a more flexible bodily expression. Furthermore: Mistakes have happened and have become facts.

From problem space...

- *attributing blame*
- *closing the past*
- *I can't change the past.*
- *emotionally burdened*

...to solution area

- *opportunities*
- *opening the future*
- *many possibilities*
- *full of hope*

Therefore: Remain in the problem space as long as necessary to analyze a problem but stay there as briefly as possible.

Afterwards: Use the positive impact of the solution area to support motivation and creative will.

Small Talk: Door Opener for a Successful Start into a Conversation

I often observe certain insecurity with coachees who are on their way to a conference or a big meeting. The reason: small talk. The cause for their discomfort is that they do not know how to cope with people beyond their respective areas of expertise—particularly with people they do not know or who have a higher position than they do. In order to handle such situations in a comfortable way, I have developed the following “guide” which contains impulse ideas to help when initiating a conversation.

Door opener for small talk and initiating a conversation

a question about the situation, the topic

a remark on what's happening at the moment

a personal statement regarding an upcoming topic and agenda point

a remark that illustrates the mutual aspect of the situation

*something that I spontaneously noticed in the room,
at the event location*

positive feedback on appearance and behavior

my opinion on a current event (news, sports, fashion etc.)

interesting information

a provocative statement

a good joke

*questions about the personal preferences of the
conversation partner*

exploring common interests

12. Helpful Patterns for Leadership

What Motivates Us and our Team Members and Colleagues

Many people believe there are only two things that motivate others: For example, praise and payment. I feel happy and motivated when I work on my self-defined learning goals every day. As long as a task includes a potential for learning, it remains interesting for me and is a reason to continue it. Look at your own personal situation with reference to the following criteria for motivation.

What motivates us

Receiving recognition for my performance and for me as a person from my superiors, colleagues, customers etc.

A feeling of belonging and being needed

A balance between giving and receiving

A good relationship to superiors and colleagues

Pride and identification with the company/business and its position in society, as well as its achievements and products

Knowing the value of one's own contributions to the success of the company

Personal development and growth through the assigned tasks, supported by promotion and continued education

My secret program for self-development:

Defining new learning and work goals every day

(What do I want to do differently? What do I want to do better?)

Chances for promotion and career

Clear, achievable and challenging tasks which help to focus one's energy

The joy of working in a group and develop topics together, even in the face of resistance

If you are leading people, how do these ideas affect your behavior? How do you concretely use these motivational

ideas when working with your team?

Assuming Responsibility

I believe it is essential to assume responsibility for what we do. I try to clarify with my coachees whether their job in the company corresponds with their ethical beliefs. For this purpose, it is necessary to observe our behavior from different perspectives:

For example: which impact does an implemented measure have on our colleagues, customers and/or our society/environment? Do we want to be treated the same way? Can we approve of the results of our actions?

Assuming responsibility

I look at the consequences of my behavior and the planned measures from different perspectives.

I act in a way that I would want to be treated if I were in the same situation.

I am aware of the impact of my actions and am willing to assume responsibility for them.

Even though I am treating the topic “being responsible” here in the context of “managerial responsibility”, nevertheless, this maxim also applies to all of us, all the time.

Let’s consciously assume responsibility for what we do!

Delegated Leadership in Feedback Interviews

A dialog is the medium employed by managers to motivate their team members and prepare them for their tasks.

Particularly when new members are joining the team, the scope of actions and targets have to be clearly defined, and internal processes have to be conveyed.

We make sure in the course of the dialog that the staff member has understood his task and clarify what else he needs to resolve the issue.

I always grant a measure of trust when I have decided to work with someone. I can verify if this was justified by observation and via the feedback dialogs.

In the beginning, it is recommendable to discuss results in short intervals in order to ensure quality. As soon as the employee has mastered his tasks, you reduce the number of checks and give the employee the opportunity to work more independently.

I have noticed that most employees are extremely satisfied as soon as they no longer have to discuss the “how” of their daily tasks, but are able to work independently and are only

concerned with achieving their goals.

At this point, I have repeatedly noticed a major mistake: managers interfere with the ongoing tasks of their team members without giving them the opportunity to complete their tasks themselves. This causes insecurity and generates additional work.

Provide deadlines for clearly defined goals which apply for both team members and managers.

The staff member should be responsible for the status report.

You thus develop performance-oriented and self-confident employees while at the same time save your own resources of energy/time.

Delegating Leadership

Define tasks as accurately as possible.

Discuss the goal and the way to achieve the goal with your colleagues and explain how their work contributes to the success of “the total project”.

Repeat the task and ask questions to ensure the team member has fully understood and accepted the job. This results in the employee knowing how to complete their tasks successfully.

Define the deadline together with the team members. Should there be a shortage of time resources, decide together on what other task can be put on hold.

The team member delivers on his/her task independently and punctually and with the quality that has been defined beforehand:

The manager gives positive feedback and reinforces the work/solution-orientation with regard to future tasks.

If the team member does not deliver the desired quality: Find out the reasons for this and then decide:

Was the task clearly defined?

Was the solution scenario realistic with regard to the required resources time, money, and manpower?

Did the team member possess the necessary authority/competence for the project in his field of action?

If the problem is inherent to the task, the task has to be re-defined.

If the problem is a team member's approach to the solution of the problem: Arrange a feedback interview.

The Goal-oriented Feedback Interview

Do the feedback interview in private.

Constructively criticize the work behavior and the performance and not the person.

Voice your criticism in a friendly but determined tone.

Give the criticized person a chance to admit their mistakes without having to fear repercussions.

Give the criticized person a chance to make a statement. But do not accept excuses.

If possible, try and find a solution for the problem together. Do not demand impossible things.

Define concrete tasks and processes as well as delivery dates. Provide the criticized person with the necessary competence and resources.

End the feedback interview in a constructive atmosphere.

Check the result at the predefined date.

Discuss what has been “learned”.

In case of success: Praise the criticized person.

In case of failure: Find out the reasons and then decide anew:

If the problem is the team member’s approach to the solution of the problem:

Which type of support will help?

Coaching or a different development measure

If the team member cannot be enabled to deliver the required performance: Release the team member from these kinds of tasks.

If the problem is the attitude and the motivation of the team member: Give him/her at first an oral reproach, in case of recurrence a written warning

Monitor the results and progress at short-intervals.

Praise and Recognition

Praise and recognition are indispensable for our balance of giving and receiving. Most of us probably receive far from enough of it.

So let's praise each other! This strengthens our self-confidence and assurance.

If you are a manager, it is extremely important when and in what situation you offer praise: For your team members, praise is a virtual reward for their performance and gives them both orientation and a confirmation that they have completed their tasks correctly and appropriately.

In companies without a culture of praise, employees and managers become obdurate and hard to motivate. Companies that use praise instead of appropriate payment demotivate and irritate their employees.

Innovative companies hold debriefings after collectively working on a task and use this opportunity to express their appreciation for good performance and directly address potential for improvement. Unfortunately, at many companies the slogan "If nothing is criticized, then that is praise enough" is still prevalent.

Praise your team members at the right time, immediately after they have performed their tasks.

Offer concrete praise and explain in detail what you appreciated.

Praise sincerely.

Separate criticism from praise.

If you catch your colleagues doing something good, praise them!

Praise yourself when you achieve your goals!

Criteria for the Evaluation of Staff Potential

I developed the following collection of criteria for a company that wanted to be able to make staff decisions at the conclusion of the probationary period. My goal was to enable those responsible to make their decisions based on criteria that looked beyond professional qualifications. With the help of these criteria, the company succeeded in finding out in just a few weeks whether a staff member had the right attitude for the task. Decision makers and internal customers were asked to evaluate the individual questions on a scale from 0 to 10 that ranged from “never” (0) to “this always applies” (10).

It can be ascertained very quickly, for example, if the new employee takes the initiative in assuming responsibility. These employees are performance-oriented, learn quickly, and are probably well-suited to be managers. If they combine these skills with the ability of self-reflection, they probably blend in well with the existing systems and are capable of development.

If someone has difficulties recognizing his or her own shortcomings, there is a risk that their self-image and image of others are distorted. It is often difficult to lead such people.

But try and test these criteria on yourself and then on your colleagues and team members. Score between: “never” = 0 and “always” = 10

Criteria for potential evaluation

- *Does the team manager like to take the initiative in assuming responsibility?*
- *Is the team member self-critical and possess the self-confidence to admit mistakes?*
- *Do they define their tasks by asking their manager precise questions?*
- *Do they keep their promises regarding deadlines and quality of work?*
- *Is the team member quick to understand processes and general interrelationships?*
- *Do they successfully apply the currently applicable guidelines?*
- *Do they contribute to a positive atmosphere within the team?*
- *Can they complete their tasks successfully and in a fair and humane manner?*
- *Do they respond flexibly and efficiently in case of changing and short-term requirements?*

Decision-Making: The Most Decisive Leadership Task

Many people think binary: either black or white. They only know “yes” or “no” as possible answers when it comes to making decisions. They avoid grey areas and transition zones.

When we find it hard to make decisions, then it’s mostly due to the following reasons:

- We don’t have enough information.
- The benefits do not outweigh the disadvantages.
- We are not ready to take on the consequences of our decisions.
- It’s not the right time for this particular situation.

At first we have to decide which knowledge and information is required to make a decision.

If this doesn’t help, we should find out whether we want to avoid the consequences of our decision: Maybe we are worried about our reputation or we would have to do without something we hold dear. In such cases we are not ready to pay the price for our decisions.

An example: We could take a job in a new company. We would get new, interesting tasks and more money, but we would also lose good colleagues and a familiar environment.

When it comes to difficult decisions it is helpful to set a deadline for ourselves. This helps us to focus our consciousness on it.

Reactive people tend to sit out decisions until external circumstances decide for them or the topic has been resolved.

With decisions that are constantly postponed, the advantages and disadvantages often seem to be equal and thus negate each other. Especially in such situations it is particularly important to decide for one option to disperse this state of uncertainty. This will enable us to clearly focus on a target and gives us back our flexibility and creativity.

Options for decision-making

1. *Complement a “yes” decision with an agenda and deadlines*

2. *Complement a “no” decision with a valid explanation*

3. *Put a decision on hold and determine a deadline for making a decision*

- *Information is missing*
- *Agenda is missing*
- *Goals are not clearly defined*
- *A preliminary project in order to weigh risks and opportunities is required*

4. *No decision*

- *Questioning is not in focus*
- *Lack of relevance*
- *Time-dependent development will eventually bring forth a solution*

Risks with items 3 and 4:

The dynamics of time can overtake you and others will decide for you!

13. Helpful Patterns for Energy- and Time Management

Whether we want to realize it or not, our life span is extremely limited. In the great pattern of “life” it is thus crucial how we want to use our lifetime.

If you reduce the self-observation of your use of time to one day, it will become clearer how we waste or sensibly use our time.

Let's use our time to create things we enjoy and which are important for us.

Eventually, when people assume comprehensive leadership positions, time becomes scarce. Then it is crucial to have a strict clarification of what is important and how we are using our time because we also require time for our personal development and to organize our relationships.

I have the impression that time is the vessel of our life energy. Every day I experience that a focused use of time gives me satisfaction and joy.

Wasting time due to boredom, however, expresses itself as mental and physical paralysis. Our life is depreciating in

value. Of course, we also have the option of slowing down time, meaning we can have profound experiences without external activities: This functions when we are able to be in the moment, to be rooted deeply in our senses. Then we realize the quality of our existence in all its power and beauty.

In the scope of my coaching, I have developed and tested elements of self-guidance that allow the sensible and efficient use of time.

The Four Rules for Successful Time Management

This pattern for self-guidance is the first step to enable us to arrange our time-energy.

1. Unpleasant things first!

As soon as we have to deal with unpleasant things, they occupy our mind and we are no longer focused.

Dealing with unpleasant things first makes it easy for us to find solutions and clarify things. We are thus able to open up our obstructive patterns.

We establish new and helpful patterns and learn how to overcome inner resistance. Overcoming these obstacles is awarded with a positive feeling of relief.

2. Do what has a long-term effect!

Decisions, strategy development, setting-up processes which can be valid for years—this is what I call “things that have an impact”. In general, everything that makes a difference in the long-term.

Time and energy that are used differently merely produce a “nice to have” and is ultimately expendable.

3. I do every step of the process only once.

Work interruptions eat away lots of our time budget.

Resuming tasks and refocusing cost lots of time, and leads to an increase in invested energy. Intelligent planning in dedicated work blocks guarantees timely, highly qualitative completion of tasks. These work blocks have to be skillfully placed in the work process and cleverly defended afterwards.

4. I plan for interruptions/unexpected events in my daily work schedule.

When working in companies and teams, we are often subject to external stipulations. Again and again, unexpected events, additional tasks, requests, appointments or simply interruptions caused by inefficient processes occur. Therefore, it makes sense to integrate enough time for unexpected occurrences in the daily work plan. Depending on the task it is recommendable to plan time blocks for this.

At the end of the day we are responsible for accomplishing our daily tasks. Thus, it is important to plan in an appropriately challenging yet manageable way. At the end of the day, our success brings us satisfaction and motivates us for the next day. Never being able to deliver what is expected wears us down and destroys our motivation to work.

Time Management: This Is How We Set Priorities

First of all, you define your goals.

Then you order your tasks depending on their priority with regard to your goals!

- *important and immediate:*
Do it now!
- *important but not immediate:*
to be scheduled in planning
- *another person can also do it:*
delegate or outsource
- *not crucial for success (nice to have):*
to be omitted

Pattern Structure for Daily and Weekly Planning

I have noticed again and again that many people only start working after they have been assigned with tasks and thus operate in an entirely reactive way. Therefore, a certain degree of basic planning for every day work is recommended in order not to lose the overview and be able to provide information on planning on one hand, while being able to optimally integrate different tasks on the other hand. Experience shows that people who are constantly available on the phone or are taking care of their ongoing email correspondence, often find it hard to finish more time consuming tasks and are, therefore, forced to work at home at the weekend. What can we do to address these different tasks? The following pattern for daily planning has successfully passed several tests and has enabled people who have complex tasks to successfully reorganize themselves.

Goal:

Integrating spontaneous actions with goal-oriented planning

Premises for action:

- *Structured work is more efficient than spontaneous reactions.*

- *Phone calls are the fastest means of communication (if the conversation partner is available).*
- *Emails document results and have an informative character; they can be used to compliment other work processes.*
- *Time slots for processing and answering emails are necessary.*
- *Meeting schedules in small time frames increase the quality of results.*

Which time slots are essential for me?

- *Time for focused completion of certain topics blocks which I will not interrupt*
- *Time for bigger tasks in the scope of the entire weekly plan*
- *Time for direct availability on the phone (for last minute clarifications)*
- *Time for email correspondence (2-3 timeslots per day)*
- *Time for discussions with team members*
- *Time reserved for short-time interruptions or unplanned events*
- *Time for the most important meetings (a rather small time frame to avoid wasting time, e.g. 30 minute timeslots; focused work even seems to “stretch” time*

These time slots should be clearly shown in the daily and

weekly plan.

Proposal for a Daily Plan

Invested time: 9 hours

3.5 hours for planned meetings and discussions

2 hours for conceptual work

3 hours for processing and answering emails as well as “unexpected events”

0.5 hours for daily planning

Depending on the task, these different time slots will be larger or smaller.

An important detail: Create a morning block, a noon block, and an afternoon block for processing emails and “unexpected events” to make sure that meetings and conceptual work are not interrupted.

The Time- and Energy Consumers

The various patterns which affect us in the form of personal habits or unclear communication often turn out to be persistent time- and energy consumers.

Being aware of these patterns is the first step towards improvement. Next, you use the solution approaches described above for change.

Because: Time is the only non-renewable resource in our lives.

The way we use the time factor determines whether we will live a successful life or not.

Time- and energy consumers: patterns that constrain us

- *unclear goals*
- *unfinished works*
- *unclear relationships: customers, colleagues, supervisors, team members*
- *decisions which have not been made*
- *bad habits*
- *a deficient ability to delegate*
- *lacking priorities (you want to have everything at once)*

Identify your other time consumers!

Action Plan

As simple as this action plan might look at first glance — this type of visualization and structuring is helpful for the planning process. The action plan has proven particularly successful in project planning, because all relevant points are clearly outlined and verifiable. Here, every project can be depicted including goals, measures, the agenda and the quality requirements. This planning pattern is particularly recommendable for employees and managers who don't like being concrete.

Impulse goal:

- *clarifying pattern for the structuring of tasks*
- *implementation control*
- *increasing commitment among co-workers*

What?	How?	Who?	Until when?	Track Record

Work Time Management when Overstressed

In companies there are again and again situations where individual employees are overstressed. In such cases, a clear analysis is recommendable.

The following impulse questions can be used to help with this:

- 1. Firstly, take your time to quietly plan and analyze.*
- 2. How do I communicate being overstressed?*
- 3. Where do I create “bottlenecks” for my colleagues?*
- 4. Which measure can I use to solve the biggest problems?*
- 5. What is really important—and for whom? Do I really have to constantly please my boss to survive?*
- 6. Where do I prove the courage to leave gaps?*
- 7. Strategies for gaining time via co-operations, communication, arranging new appointments*
- 8. Stick to your decision after the solution has been found.*

9. How do I create personal space for relaxation and recreation in my spare time?

A radical pattern when overstressed is the drastic reduction of contacts and communication channels.

What does that mean? My boss and my most important customer are the only persons I am permanently available for, and I focus my entire strength on the success with these two partners.

Ending the Work Day and “Unwinding”

In these days of permanent availability through smart-phones, work is steadily invading our private space. It is becoming increasingly important to regenerate and maintain a certain amount of privacy parallel to the professional environment. In order to also free your thoughts from work, it is recommendable to end the work day with clear, recurring patterns to be able to enjoy your spare time, your family, and your friends.

Before leaving the work place:

A short evaluation of the situation (mentally or in written form)

What have I achieved today?

Which topics are still open and how can I plan them in for tomorrow?

What preparations are necessary for this?

Cleaning up the workplace for a clear new start

Use the way home to shift the focus of your awareness

The following things help with this:

- *physical activity*
- *music (possibly louder than your thoughts)*
- *other mental focus: reading, audio books*

Ritual at home:

*other clothes, comfortable shoes, a hot shower, even better:
a hot bath*

a place to relax with a beautiful view

reward yourself for what you have achieved

*(traditional rewards used to be: getting a drink, lighting a
cigarette, switching on the TV, putting your feet up)*

How do you reward yourself?

Switch off the mobile phone.

Don't check emails

*(In case your boss or the task at hand require otherwise, you
complete these tasks in a small and cleverly positioned
time window)*

In case you work in a home office:

Always work at the same place!

What do I do with good solution proposals which occur to me during these free phases?

Have your notebook ready, note these ideas and determine in writing when you will return to the topic again.

The basic principle of unwinding is to activate other sense channels and focus on helpful patterns.

What do I do when I wake up at night and remember topics I have to find a solution for?

Note these topics and set deadlines for solving them.

What I do when I cannot get back to sleep?

- *Read in a lying position until you become tired again.*
- *body scan*
- *relaxation through listening*

14. The Patterns of Our Time

The patterns of our time today have a massive impact on our daily lives.

When I am with a client, I like to take a good look at the various work areas, so I can get a gist of the atmosphere where we will work together. And what do I see everywhere? People sitting together in large open offices staring at computer screens. It is often not possible to understand if they are working or what they are doing. What kind of impact does the changing work place have upon us?

I think it helps us to clarify the predominating pattern, so we can be able to skillfully function within this pattern and to utilize its positive aspects. This gives us calmness and assurance.

The recognition of various patterns helps me to set up hypotheses for future chances and risks.

Practicing this pattern of thinking is an additional training for my coachees that they can transfer to their own fields of action.

Observing the pattern

- *in an organizational and economic context*
- *in daily tasks and projects*
- *in a larger historical and cultural context*

Examine the recognized pattern for its transferability and observe how this pattern influences our actions and our daily mental state.

When do certain patterns break?

When are patterns so rigid that a downward spiral begins?

What new patterns can they be replaced with?

How do economic patterns influence our world and our daily reality?

15. A Great Pattern Transformation on the Horizon: What If?

An essential pattern for me is the one that prevails in Western society, the USA and Europe, which is reaching the end of a developmental cycle.

Western culture, which through Europe has dominated and shaped the world over the last centuries, is losing its power and influence. It has shaped the entire world through the export of democracy, capitalism, Christianity, and also pattern generating articles such as suits, chairs, and machines.

On account of shifts in economic prosperity, oligarchical models, post-communism, and Islamic fundamentalist societies are prompting a shift in the weight of power. Our western concept of human rights is not shared by these governments and, therefore, we do not have a common basis. The purchasing power of these systems permits a share of successful companies, natural resources and infrastructure. These states plan to obtain a long-term influence on emerging markets through these acquisitions. The decisions are being made as a result of the faster and more radical authoritative distribution of power than is possible in pluralistic societies.

What effect will this have on our democratic countries? What will happen to our civil rights and our understanding of fraternalism, law and freedom, when we are under the economic influence of “dictatorships”?

These changes are being accelerated by the rapid transfer of know-how via the internet, and the globalization of the world’s labor market. Knowledge is available for anyone who has access to the World Wide Web.

Earning capacities will be equalized worldwide because today many kinds of work can be done at a computer screen online, at any location in the world in real-time. The knowledge and skills which are generated by these activities are reducing the still existing preeminence of German industry.

On account of new work methodologies, the end of human industrial labor is coming nearer. Just as in the last century industrialization radically changed agriculture and a minimum of workforce today produces more than ever before, so too will less laborers be needed for industrial work. Every recurring work process that does not require an “intelligent” decision can be performed by a computer.

People will be needed for correct data entry, for the

development of new industrial technology, and its maintenance. But even now there are computers that create computer programs, and machines that repair machines.

The great fear, illustrated in science fiction novels, that one day computers and robots will take over the world, has already occurred. Just order something without complying with the IT order process. Put another way: What can you work on when the computer system crashes at your job?

The pattern of “technology” also simultaneously effects human thinking and behavior:

Many of us think and argue completely binary. Causality dominates. The human is being “technologized” by the world he works in.

The next question: What will it mean for our highly developed society, which till now has been supported by the tax contributions of its members, when less people work and the state’s tax income consequently sinks?

The machine pays no taxes. How will we then be able to maintain our affluent society? Wouldn’t it better to create a sales tax on machines and productivity as an additional tax income?

Another pattern that stands out is the disintegration of the traditional form of capitalism. There is too much money in circulation that isn't backed or based on any real value. Governments are so extremely in debt that these debts could never be paid off without an inflation that would eradicate a substantial amount of wealth. This fragile situation will probably lead to the change or dissolution of the world's economic system as we know it.

What will the future be like? What are the opportunities? What are the risks?

Let's begin with the risks: Democracy will no longer be a given in Western societies. Authoritarian systems with capitalistic economies will gain the upper hand. As a consequence, we will see human rights, the rights of the individual, and the rights of minorities endangered.

This all transpires under the acquiescence of the rest of the world's societies. These are political patterns that place our civil liberties and social freedom at risk. The economic system is collapsing, and we haven't found a solution for how we want to further operate economically together: "situations like Greece" and others will emerge.

There is also a good chance that a system will be comprised

of humans who no longer have to be responsible for production. Today pedagogy and education are misused to produce children and adults mainly for performing in a business context. Technicians and businessmen are created but no “philosophers” and “healers”. The value of professions which don’t directly contribute to the maximization of profit are dwindling away.

Compare the salary development of teachers to engineers in the last two decades. If people are no longer needed for such endeavors, perhaps it is possible to use the time and energy to devote themselves to another form of humanistic education.

I can imagine a transitional society in which, as opposed to the last 150 years, the human intelligence is mainly utilized to promote new technology.

Such a society can begin to place the human intellectual and developmental potential in the focal point. At the same time, I am also convinced that people, as soon as they have sufficient food, clothing and, most of all, a satisfying occupation, will no longer be consumed by the growth factor. Unlimited growth destroys our basis of existence—the planet earth.

In school, children learn how to get along with each other socially, and how to develop their intellectual capacity. Purely factual knowledge and everything that can be recorded meanwhile can be filed, categorized, and reprocessed by computers. Today, this knowledge is basically assessable and available to everyone for free. Of course, how to deal with these machines and the sensible employment of knowledge has to be learned.

When our inner needs as humans are satisfied and we have a good contact and exchange with others, then the wish for constant stimulation and the growth of our “I” disappears.

The idea of growth and becoming, which is naturally a basic need of all humans, can be deeply satisfying for people when refocused on inner, intellectual growth, and on the growth of collective social forms.

One vision would be a worldwide society which was devoted to these themes and which was based on inner and collective growth. A society in which fulfilled human beings prosper and in an environment that is designed to provide all that is truly necessary.

On the path to such a society, I see small groups and collectives, who as individuals or in variously arranged

family constellations live and exercise this model. Through the possibilities offered by a global network, these small, perhaps isolated groups would be able to exchange their experiences with each other quickly and directly. Their knowledge could be made available internationally via the network. A prerequisite is, of course, the acknowledgement process that true satisfaction is never outside of myself or to be found in consumption, but rather is found within me and in contact with others.

This requires a pause and self-examination and the inspection of our patterns. Thus the wish for growth and having more can be satisfied in a sensible and positive way.

16. Acknowledgements

When I recollect, I discover that it was often brief, direct meetings with people that gave me unique impulses, upon which I have built my decisions during my life. These people awoke in me the wish to experience life in a special direction.

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for 20 years.

About the Author

Anton Eckl has worked as an artist and educator with people in various areas since 1977. He has guided as a successful coach for executive managers and employees in key positions in major corporations since 1995. On the basis of this experience he has developed his methodology for pattern coaching, which facilitates reflection and self-guidance. The pragmatic action-patterns have been tried and tested in numerous coaching sessions and are a substantial aid in mastering the challenges of daily professional life.