



## 4. ACTIONS

Actions speak louder than words, but everyone must always be mindful of any actions. Not everything will go your way so you need to learn to accept that others are entitled to make different choices and ones you may not like. Learn to ask for what you want in a firm but gentle way, express your needs politely and accept disappointments graciously. When frustration and anger arise, stop when you feel a rage building up. Step back from interactions that are becoming volatile, and reflect, on what could happen if you continue with these actions?

### **Give yourself time to identify the issues.**

Sometimes the issues go deep and why it's a good idea to use something like the Sieves to get rid of those tangled emotions and mental chaos, so you can think more clearly and in turn react better. My friend was always anxious, and one day while we were on a bus heading for the town I counted her breaths, they were thirty-two to the minute, if she was a dog she'd be panting and in a way she was, discreetly, but enough to have others around her notice.

### **Watch your breathing.**

However, breathing like my friend was doing sends the body in fight or flight mode, and while I know, my friend was ill at the time and in shock at the news she had, if she could have calmed down somewhat, she'd have felt more in control. If my friend had sat next to me, I'd have held her hand, because I knew my presence reassured her. When I reached through to the front and put my hand on her shoulder, her breathing slowed down. Her husband was oblivious to her anxiety.



## **DISTRACTIONS ARE RIFE IN OUR WORLD**

An exercise to do is to look around you. What do you see? List those things and ask yourself are doing any of these things? And if so, how does that make you feel? If you are thinking or acting in a way that comes over as authoritarian, then stop, it does nothing for your image. Be aware that any awareness involves a sophisticated spiritual level of intelligence, and before you change behaviour and the actions you take, you need to reflect on what you want. Do you want respect or fear?

### **Action tempered with inner work works.**

We need to be honest, fair and transparent about ourselves. And others, we need to acknowledge that most people have inner wisdom and may even be wiser than us, this is about humility — a trait we all need to cultivate more in our quest for understanding and awareness. Distraction and entitlement are all around us. And sadly, these actions have led to the erosion of listening skills and conversations.

We type away (I do) on my laptop and talk to Eddy, my dog and in your case maybe it's your children without looking at them. I stroke him thinking that's enough. However, like a two-year-old child, he demands I stop because it's his time and he's spot on with timing because when I look at the clock, it's ten o'clock to the minute.

But I do know many people answer their phones during a meaningful conversation or meal. People text or scan their phone while socialising with real, live people, looking past the person. I people watch a lot, and I see people chatting with someone, but their eyes are scanning behind the person looking for something they may believe is more important. We're disengaged from hearing what others have to say to us.



## **STOP, STEP BACK, REFLECT**

So try this, Stop if you find yourself doing this, respect the person and situation and do something honourable, take action and listen with the ear of the heart and soul. Step back and ask yourself how you would feel, then engage in the person, in my case, my dog. At home, remove any intrusions when speaking to someone. Turn off the mobile phone or tv. Close the laptop down, and step back from your computer.

Better still take action and close the door to the office, go into the home space and talk with the person who has visited. I do. However, if this was an impromptu visit and you're working on a project, I say, 'how wonderful to see you, I was just about to have a fifteen-minute break, let me save this, and we can chat. They rarely stay past the fifteen minutes, but in that time they get my fullest attention.

## **Practice heartfelt listening**

Make eye contact, don't look over the person's shoulder, reflect what you've heard, bear in mind be mindful of not sounding like a stuck record, can cover over as condescending. Genuinely acknowledge feelings or ideas, in person and on the phone, that way you're communicating well, are attentive and respectful. One day, all this love or neglect will happen to you and look at your reflection and see the truth; you may have so many regrets and guilt you'll need therapy. And if you have no regrets or guilt, you'll see a satisfied beautiful face. How do you know if the negative ego is doing all the talking? If your first reaction is defensiveness and you tell yourself you have too many important things to do, then the demanding ego is filling your head with nonsense. Ask yourself this. Are you that superior to others?



## DEAD MANS SHOES

I had a client come to me who had cancelled so many holidays his wife was in despair, expensive long haul flights to see their family when I asked him why he replied. 'No one can do my work, but for me.' So I told him about a man who felt the same, he never got as far as booking a holiday as he was too important to the company, no one could negotiate like him, no one could talk to officials as he could.

Then one day he died, one minute alive, the next minute dead. And while he had a massive attendance at his funeral and everyone wept and said the place would fall apart, it didn't. Why not? Because someone had already stepped in his shoes, someone, the company, had their eye on for a while. A few faces had changed, and his wife?

She heard no more from his company, her husband never even reached retirement age and all, because he thought no one could do the job as good as him. Not true, we are as dispensable, someone will invariably fill our shoes, but not to our family who we may ignore in our belief that anyone couldn't do as well. My new client did book his holiday.

### **But together we implemented a clause, one he wrote:**

- ❖ That he didn't keep everything to himself
- ❖ That he'd complete the sessions with me
- ❖ That he came to me and to go holiday,
- ❖ That he would show his assistant how the place worked.

Giving up the reigns scared him because he thought a thirty-something would take his job and he was spot on, it happened.



## **A DIFFERENT ACTION CREATES A DIFFERNT REACTION**

On his return from his holiday, he was promoted to a less frantic role, overseeing others, bringing them on, mentoring them, which meant less time at work and more family life. I had such a lovely card from my client's wife. A simple 'thank you, you saved our lives.'

What actions have you taken so far to make those small changes? Are you thinking too big? Are you still procrastinating? Remember, small steps, but not that small, you do something else and forget. Go back and adjust the lists, add or delete, and keep it manageable. There are no shortcuts to anything worth doing well.

### **The main aims**

The aims in life is to be happy, motivated, balanced and working smart not hard and contented. The actions we take when happy or unhappy creates a legacy, which is undeniable; good or bad, but the aim is for the good. If these four levels:

- (1) Environment,
- (2) Situations,
- (3) Behaviours
- (4) Actions,

Were okay, then we'd explore these next four levels of Optimum Learning starting with capabilities. If I were a client or student I'd do the Sieves and the Protection before moving on. Why? Because they help to clear rubbish from the mind and emotions.



## STEPPING BACK AND REFLECTING

Bear this in mind, no one can never achieve anything in life if running in three directions and why it's a good time to have a break and use the technique, so you can think more clearly. The Sieves and the Protection work together as a team, and has been very successfully used since 1995 and they're free.

So, close your eyes and imagine how you'd like yourself to act in any given situation. You can use an old actions or ones that have become a habit, one you think is going to be hard to break. Go back to the situation, but this time stepping back further than you would typically do. Ultimately walk right outside of your body by imagining you're standing at a doorway looking at yourself.

### **This is the image you've portrayed to the world.**

- ❖ What do you see?
- ❖ More to the point, do you like what you see?
- ❖ Are you ashamed or embarrassed at your actions?
- ❖ Are you proud of your actions?
- ❖ Would you do anything differently?
- ❖ If this was your adult child, how would you feel?
- ❖ What advice would you give this adult child?
- ❖ Observe from the doorway for a while.
- ❖ Now step into the room and walk into yourself.

Breathe and then change the actions before you do any more damage. Speak to yourself, mentor yourself, be the wise person you are.



## INSIDE, OUTSIDE WORK

Do this for five-seconds periodically through the day, we call this inside outside work and it works!

- ❖ Believe you can change.
- ❖ Imagine you are changing.
- ❖ Feel you are changing
- ❖ Hear your voice calmer and more modulated
- ❖ Achieve because you can.

Within a few days, you'll notice more energy and clarity. Your actions will be different; people will see the change and comment; if people have been wary of you in the past, they become more willing to speak to you. How can you tell you are changing?

- ❖ The reaction from others

We must always be aware that working inside first will give us a better outside. Try doing this, instead of scowling and frowning, smile more. And please don't say you haven't got anything to smile? If you genuinely cannot find anything and you are feeling low as well, then please go to the doctors. Talk to someone; talking can help. It's called the talking cure for a reason.

*An inch of time is an inch of gold,  
But you can't buy that inch of time with an inch of gold.*

Chinese Proverb