

MY CONCEPTS - PROCESS & OUTCOMES

“Life is a process, outcomes are the products of this process. When I focus on process I will always get the outcomes I need even if it is not the outcomes I expected”.

- Toye Oyelese

I think of an outcome as the result I want and the process the manner in which I get there.

I do not know what happiness is but I am happy anyway, for what I feel fulfils for me what happiness would be.

I was brought up to think about outcomes and so I would spend so much time worrying about how things were going to turn out, often times forgetting to focus on and enjoy what was happening in each moment and the series of actions that bring about the results I wanted.

I could worry about how next year is going to turn out and how I can get a good outcome or simply realize that sixty good seconds give me one good minute, sixty good minutes give me one good hour, twenty four good hours give me one good day, seven good days give me one good week and fifty two good weeks give me one good year. It is important to choose to be more focused on what I am doing in each unit of time.

A process is a series of actions, changes or function that brings about a result. An outcome is an end result of a process. Life is a process, outcomes are the products of this process. When I focus on process I will always get the outcomes I need even if they are not the outcomes I expected.

When I put my outcome ahead of my process I run the risk of what I call a process / outcome conflict in which the process I am involved with is not consistent with the outcome I desire. An example would be where I want a healthy outcome and spend a lot of energy worrying about how to achieve this outcome but I am not

involved in enough healthy processes.

When I experience a conflict between the process I am involved in and the outcome I want, process always wins and in this case where I am involved in unhealthy processes it is unlikely that I will achieve a healthy outcome.

In this regard if I was wondering how to be happy (this is an outcome that may be difficult to achieve because I may not know what happiness is), I would simply reflect on the moments I am experiencing and how I feel in each moment adjusting it to approximate with what I find enjoyable or satisfying, for example step one may be my eyes pop open and how does that feel? If it does not feel good and I don't have time to do it again I simply imagine what a satisfying eye opening experience would be like.

A process / outcome conflict uses up a lot of energy and will affect my direction in life so I am very motivated to avoid them. I believe that process / outcome conflicts are the reason why some of the most well meant intentions that are not consistent with the processes of those it is meant for always seem to fail woefully?

My belief system is a very important part of my ability to engage in processes and so changing or modifying my belief system could be an important step in obtaining the outcome that I want. Every complicated puzzle is made up of individual more simple pieces in the same manner that every complicated process is made up of less complicated pieces, being able to process these pieces provides a better chance of a desirable result.

I remind myself to take bite sizes i.e. small baby steps and reflect on what I feel and be more present in the moment so that I am experiencing the steps as I move towards the outcome that I want. An analogy for me would be, if I was taking a trip to New York to say maybe see a show or buy something that I thought was unavailable in Canada, getting there would be the result I want (outcome) but this would not happen unless I buy the ticket, get my passport, pack, make sure I leave for the airport in time, board the

plane etc. and all these steps are what refer to as process. It would be impossible for me to accomplish what I want without them. As I go through the steps I may find out that wanted was available in Canada and I could accomplish the same thing without necessarily having to go to New York.

Process is a series of steps that lead to an outcome, in a process directed approach the steps are as important (or sometimes even more important than the outcome) and there is inherent value in experiencing each step, ultimately the goal is the experience and becoming skillful.

The process steps are a form of progressive planning that allows me to focus on the next stage within a series of stages, thereby allowing my imagination to fully engage in the direction I want. If I want to succeed naturally I am worried about failing and quite possibly my imagination can lock on to the idea of trying not to fail rather than trying to succeed.

What I see that is often used is an outcome based approach, the steps are only important if they achieve the outcome and ultimately the goal is the outcome. By focusing on the process (steps to get there) rather than the final outcome I am able to counteract this tendency. Another example would be I have a terrible fear of heights but I can counteract it by focusing on each step I am taking and not that I am trying to get across a hanging bridge. Although it is important to focus on the results we want it is more important to be aware of the steps that get us there.

If I am looking for the answers I should also be creating a set of circumstances where the answers can find me. Routines are helpful processes because they help me form the habits I require and create familiar patterns consistent with results that I want. It is important that I engage in processes that are consistent with my desired results.

When someone is consistently not getting the results they want they need to recognize that they are becoming skillful at not getting the

results they want and a change of tactics is required. Skill is developed through repeated action and this action involves repeating the processes that will get us the results that we want.

There something else I do that I have called **substitution of processes**, if I have a problem and I can't figure out the solution I keep it in the back of my mind while I rearrange the furniture in my living room, surprisingly when I find a very desirable arrangement I usually get a solution to my problem within a short period of time. I initially considered this a coincidence but the frequency at which it works had convinced those around me that it was authentic, the only downside of course was my sitting room kept changing and my kids grew up not realizing that most people leave the furniture in the same spot for years, but luckily I now have fewer problems.

Points to remember:

Process is a series of steps that lead to an outcome.

In a process directed approach the steps are as important (or sometimes even more important than the outcome).

There is value in experiencing each step as the ultimate goal is to become more skillful through this experience.