

MY CONCEPTS - VALIDATION

The most important relationship is the one that I have with myself.

Love is an expression of value and the more I value myself the more I love myself and the more opportunity I have to value others.

I am worth what I perceive my worth to be and not what it actually is and this ultimately determines how I value myself.

I have no control over what others do to me but I always have control over what I do to myself and so I choose to validate myself even when others do not.

During some of my most difficult times it was very hard to feel good about myself. I remember being unemployed for three weeks and applying to any job I found listed in the papers, I even interviewed for a job as a dishwasher and was not hired despite the fact that I was willing to travel two hours one way to this restaurant in downtown Toronto. I came back home and cried bitterly feeling very sorry for myself.

I attended Toronto cab school in the hope of finding a job as a taxi driver but was unable to pass because I did not know the city well enough and in those days there was no GPS. It was hard to remain positive. The future looked bleak and I certainly did not feel like the hot shot that had graduated medical school by his twenty second birthday.

Part of the problem was I was so new to Canadian society and had no mentors, so I was unable to take advantage of some of the opportunities, like meeting new people, or benefit from new ideas, for example I did not realize that perfect strangers could rent a place together and split the rent so I did not make any attempt to do so.

Even when I started meeting people I was constantly encountering unusual situations, like when a girl I was dating said we should go Dutch for supper and I found this confusing because it was an Italian restaurant or I had not given a workmate who offered me a soda money for it because I did not want to insult him (trying to pay someone for an offered gift would have been considered an insult in Nigeria), but instead of asking me for the money he told anyone who would listen how I was a cheap skate.

It was very difficult to feel good about myself. I felt isolated and was wrecked with self-doubt. I started wondering why I was so affected by these incidences. I came to the conclusion that I was hardwired for validation (information that made me feel valid) and this need was there whether I liked it or not. I also observed that most people around me seemed to have the same predicament.

It was as if my very being needed to be reminded that my existence mattered and that I was worthwhile. I came to the conclusion that this validation could only be generated by me (internal validation) and whatever was provided to me by others (external validation) worked because it reminded me to provide it to myself. When my internal validation is weak I am dependent on external validation to feel good about myself.

I had no control over what others did to me but I had control over what I did to myself, I could validate myself even when others did not. So every time I felt put down or less valid I reminded myself of two or three things that made me feel valid (I would always say it out loud so I that my brain could hear it) and over a period of time I found I was feeling much better about myself.

I decided to get ahead of the game and not wait until I felt bad but to do it every day like putting a deposit in a bank for when I needed to make a withdrawal.

I have observed over the years that being a problem solver I have a tendency to look at and remember the things that are not going well

(because they need solving) and less likely to remember the things that are going well. In the same manner I was less likely to say nice things about or to myself and more likely to correct myself or remember the things I don't like.

Once I became aware of this I spent a lot of energy trying to think positive and suppress the negative thoughts. My real break through happened when I stopped thinking of things as positive or negative but simply as **results I wanted** and **results that I did not want**, I realized that it was not the "bad" thoughts and expressions that were causing my problems but my lack of "good" thoughts and expressions.

I adopted a "ratio" approach to counteract this problem and started with two good things or thoughts for any bad thing or thought and gradually increasing that ratio as I deemed necessary. The worse things were the higher the ratio that I applied.

My sense of self worth is determined by my internal validation which is a form of self-talk consistent with the results I want (feeling good about myself). I found self-affirmation statements to be very effective when I repeated them often and aloud so I could hear them.

The most important relationship is the one that I have with myself. I am not talking about being narcissistic and self absorbed but I am referring to being self reflective and "being my own best friend", doing unto myself as I want others to do unto me and through this process really discover how to do unto others.

I should always be truly responsible for my own choices. Although the need to be liked and valued is strong what is more important was if I liked and valued myself or not, this would determine whether I got the results that I wanted or not .

Self-awareness means that I would always know everything about myself, that I will have conversations with myself acknowledging the things I like and those I don't, the things I am proud of and

those that I am not. Nobody would be able to tell me anything that I do not already know about myself. Self-acceptance means that this is who I am and it is okay. It does not absolve me of responsibility, in fact it encourages me to take responsibility but without judgment.

Self Awareness + Self Acceptance = Self Love

The bank, the banker and the value of balance

I use this analogy to explain the concept of value and to emphasize how easy it is to increase your chances of getting the results that you want. When you have deposits in the bank you can cash the emotional and psychological cheques that we have to write.

The currency is validation, the bank is where my sense of value resides, I am the banker and the only one who can make deposits but I am also the client and the only one who can make withdrawals.

I have the most to gain if my bank is prosperous and the most to lose if it does not succeed. The balance of value within the bank indicates the state of my account or how I feel about myself. I am also the only one who has access to the bank and external validation works by reminding me to make deposits.

Self-affirmation (internal validation) = Deposit

External-affirmation (external validation) = reminder note to deposit

Anything else = Withdrawal

Every time I appreciate myself and acknowledge my ability and effort to get the results that I want I affirm myself and put a deposit in the bank, although it is effective just to think of it, I have found that I have a greater deposit when I say it out loud, in a convincing manner, so that my brain can hear it (in the same manner a chant is more effective when said aloud). Any process that I am involved

with that is not making a deposit is making a withdrawal and as far as the bank is concerned there are no neutral processes.

I am the only one who controls or influences my deposits and withdrawals, a good portfolio is one where I make more deposits than withdrawals at any given time on any given day. Any forms of validation no matter how trivial are deposits and any other interactions (including problem solving i.e. rectifying a potential or actual adverse outcomes) are withdrawals.

When I initiate the reason for a withdrawal I am writing a cheque, when something else other than myself initiates the reason for a withdrawal I am cashing a cheque. The more money in the bank the better I am able to cope with withdrawals and the more cheques I can write or cash. The importance of continuous self-affirmation is that:

- 1) it is free,
- 2) it is within my control,
- 3) it is easy to administer,
- 4) it is always in line with the results that I want,
- 5) it ensures a continuous deposit in my bank

It is important that I maintain balance in everything that I do.

Points to remember:

Self Awareness + Self Acceptance = Self Love

The bank, the banker and the value of balance

Self-affirmation (internal validation) = **Deposit**

External-affirmation (external validation) = **reminder note to deposit**

Anything else = **Withdrawal**