



Steve Dickinson's

REALITY MANAGEMENT

- Understanding
- Insight
- Fulfilment
- Success



An understanding for insights.

Hi, thank you for requesting this information resource. I hope you will find it informative and useful.

Are you being pressured to squeezed more, and more, results out of your time?

Are you experiencing unwanted stress and sometimes missing your deadlines?

I know that most people want to experience happiness and success, in all areas of life: business, hobbies, relationships... everything.

Also, we have all had experiences of feeling enthusiastic, energised and motivated. That is how I want people to feel the majority of their time.

With 24 years of experience as a corporate trainer, and 14 years as a transformational coach, I have increased the efficiency of over 80 companies across Europe, USA, South America and Asia. I specialises in leadership, performance, and transformational coaching for CEOs, small business owners and consultants.

So, I have developed an approach to replace uncomfortable feelings, insecure thinking and procrastination, with a feeling of well-being. From this foundation, a person can have an immediate experience of achievement and notice options, for their life, that they did not know were available to them.

Establishing worthwhile goals, creating a second income, reducing anger, stress and frustration are all areas where I have helped people change their attitude.

I offer an understanding of principle-based psychology that can help a person create:

- confidence and resilience
- elevated levels happiness
- powerful presentation
- self-esteem and a serenity of spirit
- decreased levels of stress
- a desirable work-life balance
- self-reliance
- motivation
- a secure belief in the ability to create success in every area of life.

(See my website for further information).

Understand the information over the next pages and **you will have an immediate change in your levels of wellbeing.**

There is a lot of information here. I would suggest that you might want to read each section several times to allow you to understand the information at an emotional level.

To your balance, happiness and success.

A reality paradigm and an understanding for insight.

Paradigm

Understanding that we all have a different paradigm, or way of experiencing the 'world', can make a real difference when we are trying to influence other people to create a successful outcome.

Many people, including me, have said, "I understand this at an intellectual level but...." and then go on to explain why they do not feel it.

I have since found that I did not really understand it at all. Being able to recall a description of a theory is not the same as feeling it and experiencing its benefits. However, it sometimes starts with an intellectual understanding... so here goes.

I use the word "Paradigm" as a description of a perceptual point of view. For example, if a person were to draw the digit three (3) on a square piece of paper, put it on a table and have four people sit around it, one on each side, each one of them would have a different experience.

Each person would describe what he or she saw differently to the others three. Therefore, there would be four different descriptions for what they saw:

1. a '3',
2. an 'm',
3. a 'w'
4. and a badly drawn "E".

Therefore, the definition I am using of a Paradigm is; "a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality for the community that shares them".

However, a difficulty we all experience is that each of us has a different paradigm when it comes to reality. This is because **we all create our own personal reality.**

This is easy to understand at an intellectual level but that 'intellectual understanding' does not help during the 'emotions of the moment'.

Reality

How do we create our reality? The answer to this question surprises the majority of people and can have an incredible affect on our levels of wellbeing.

Recent advances in brain scan technology show that 80% of what we experience actually comes from within our own mind.

One bit of visual information sent, from our eyes, (via our thalamus) to our occipital lobe (the visual processing centre), triggers five bits of information to be presented to the thinking part of our brain (the hypothalamus portion of the cerebellum and temporal lobe).

One bit in; **five** bits to think about.

That means 80% of what we experience, as reality, is coming from our own interpretations.

A number of people have challenged me when I make this assertion. So, I have asked them to describe what they see.

Each one starts to give me a description and then, suddenly, realises that everything they say (all the words and meaning) comes from their own mind, not from 'outside'.

In fact, if you think about it, our entire experience is created by our own conscious and unconscious 'thoughts'.

This is easy to understand when we consider our dreams. When we dream we create a reality, our 'dreamscape', and experience it as we create it.

A dream world that seems real.

I have felt pain when I bumped my head in a dream, and felt the coldness of water when I dipped my hand in it. All in the unconsciously created thoughts, that we call dreams.

What interests me is that we use exactly the same bits of our brain to experience our waking reality.

The only difference is; when we are awake, we have a 'live data feed' - from our senses - eyes, ears, nose, etc. The electro-chemical signals that our Mind forms into thoughts of pictures, sounds, feelings etc.

This means that our own thinking creates our entire experience of reality (I use the word thinking to describe the conscious and unconscious activity in our brain). This experience is contained completely within our own body. The rest of the world is out there, but our experience of it is 'self-created' using the energy of our minds and our conscious awareness of our thinking - along with the feelings, and meaning that our thinking creates.

An example I often use is how we can notice the feeling of our clothes on our skin. However, most of the time, it is not part of the reality we experience. It is there; but it is not an important feeling.

Polish-American philosopher, and scientist, Alfred Korzybski (1879 - 1950) highlighted this distinction with the phrase “The map is not the territory”.

A map of London was a useful thing for me to have when I first started living in London. After a while, I created a map, of the parts of London that were relevant to me, in my own mind. I can recall images from my memory, which I can **re-present** to my conscious mind when I need them; I have a **representation** of London in my mind.

I use the same parts of my brain to process those memories, as I use to process the sensory information from my eyes.

This means that we all operate using our own unique map of reality, not on ‘reality’ itself. I have a **representation** of reality that is entirely my own creation. I unconsciously built it from my filtered experience of life.

Understanding

Really understanding this and feeling it at an emotional level is, in my experience, incredibly liberating. The options that are available to me are not limited to what I thought was real because I know that my mind and thinking creates my reality and the feelings I experience.

Someone once asked me what I mean by “the feelings you notice are caused by your thinking”. I explained that when we experience a feeling it is our conscious awareness of feedback from our nervous system.

This could be touching something with our fingers, feeling the heat of the sun on our face, or noticing a change in the balance of our endocrine system (body chemistry). For instance, ‘butterflies’ in our stomach, or our stomach ‘turning over’, as we notice a dangerous situation.

The intensity of a feeling will vary according to where we focus our attention. In addition, we tend to notice changes in a feeling more strongly than a continuous feeling.

Try putting a finger on a textured surface and hold it still; then move your finger about a bit. You will get a better idea of the texture from the changing feeling as your finger moves.

We have a range of descriptions for the feelings we experience; hot, cold, rough, smooth, pain, warmth, fear, love, frustration, pleasure, anger, excitement, anxiety, etc.

Some of those feelings we refer to as emotions, and the way we react to these emotions will be dependent on our experience of the moment: where we focus our attention, and our thinking at that moment.

Fear, frustration, anger and excitement have the common elements of adrenaline and cortisol. If my unconscious mind notices something that seems dangerous, I would not have to consciously think “Oh, this looks dangerous. What should I do now?” My unconscious thought would automatically trigger my ‘freeze, flight or fight system’. The feedback from

my body, as my breathing and heart rate increases while my blood flow alters, I would describe (in hindsight) it as “feeling frightened”.

If I were to be caught in a riot, that feeling would be a perfect neuro-physiological response. Part of this particular neuro-physiological change would be to reduce my cognitive function.

I would not need to think, I would just need to react. Consciously considering options, or consequences of a specific option, would just slow down my reactions to a dangerous situation.

However, if I get that same feeling of fear just before doing a presentation to 200 people, then my thinking is obviously inappropriate for that moment; I would need the ability to think!

It would be the evolutionary older part of my brain preparing me physically for some, unconsciously, imagine survival situation.

Our emotions and ‘reactions’ are caused by our own thinking, and our ability to think will vary according to the balance of our endocrine system: how much sleep we have had, how much stress we have just experienced, the emotions that memories bring with them.

Diet can have a profound effect on the way we think. Some people get very tense and can anger quickly if they are hungry. It is important to have the right proteins, fats, carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals for proper brain function. Having an imbalance in brain function can lead to cravings from what is known as ‘Reward Deficiency’.

This is where our brain function drives us towards excessive behaviours: drinking; smoking; caffeine; drugs; sex; violence; depression and more. These are all symptoms of an imbalance in brain chemistry. Self-medication can make things worse.

I have found it very useful to understand that my thoughts are my own creation.

We are just meaning making-machines. We are designed to notice patterns.

Meaning cannot exist without language. I may have a feeling, caused by a thought, but to define what it means, I must use words.

"The limits of my language mean the limits of my world." - Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889 – 1951) Austrian philosopher

Meaning only exists in conversation. This may be a conversation with other people or just a person’s inner dialog. The more energy invested into a thought the more "real" it starts to feel.

Once I have decide on what something means, I can have thoughts about what **that** meaning means about me - my intentions, my goals, my objectives, outcomes and purposes.

I can then have thoughts and feelings about what **that** means about my social skills, relationships, and my ability to work with other people.

I can then have thoughts and feelings about what **that** means about my sense of power and resourcefulness.

I can then have thoughts and feelings about what **that** means about the world; is it a friendly or unfriendly place.

I can then have thoughts and feelings about what **that** means about time – what I have done in my past? Am I doing the right thing in the present? What will my future be like?

What so many people do is to take their experiences of the past, with the meanings they created, and project them into the future. As if to say “That is the way it has always been, so that is the way it will always be!” Therefore, a person can live in the present as if the future has already been decided.

It probably won’t be the first thought, the third thought, or thirtieth thought... it is more likely to be the three hundredth thought that will make me feel really bad.

The alternative I prefer is to notice it is just a **thought**. As soon as I start to feel slightly anxious, I can notice the thought, accept it as a thought, and then ‘let it go’. It is my choice. I can invest energy into it, or just notice it and let it go for the wisdom of my unconscious mind to deal with. I do not try not to think about it because that would be more thinking about the thought. I just release it so the “meaning upon meaning” process does not start to affect my life in a negative way.

I am not always successful but if I can identify the positive intent of the thought, I prefer to focus on that meaning. If I can reframe the original thought, I can save myself a lot of time and worry.

This ‘understanding’ enables me to let go of any ‘made up’ helplessness that I believed was true. So any “annoyance” and “upset” I might experience are short lived, because I do not give those thoughts any unnecessary energy. I now find that stress is very difficult to maintain (I used to be able to keep it up for days!).

Why would I put energy into making myself feel bad?

Why would anyone?

I find myself doing it every day!

The difference I now experience is that I can notice myself doing it, and I let go of the thoughts in seconds (minutes, hours or maybe after a short ‘sulk’ if I don’t catch myself in time).

The idea that is now paramount in my mind during a stressful situation is to leave any decisions, or any communication I wish to make (or shout?!), until I have a better quality of thought.

Even if, with a quieter mind, the solution, or answer to a problem, does not come to me I will be happier (due to a better quality of thinking) – so it won’t seem so bad anyway!

I do not always manage it but I try to keep my thinking in congruence with my environment. I do this by using the way I feel as an inner guidance system to the quality of my thought. The more clarity you have, the better your decisions, and the better your experience of life.

Just remember the illusory nature of reality.

The world of form is out there but your experience of it comes from within you.

Insight

How does this information help us create success?

If we can slow down our thinking, and let go of our unhelpful thoughts (and these are usually thoughts about thoughts about thoughts) we can create an amazing connection with the moment, with a person, or a group of people.

By approaching a situation with nothing in mind, not thinking about the past or about the future, and letting go of any meaning we might have, we can have a much better experience of 'the moment'.

Sports men and women will say that they are in 'the zone'; psychologists refer to a 'state of flow', a spiritualist; 'being at one with the universe'.

This state of 'higher consciousness' has been referred to as experiencing the 'Universal Mind'. Theosopher Sydney Banks uses the term as part of his principle based approach to life - the three principles of Universal Mind, Universal Consciousness and Universal Thought.

A physicist might call this 'mind' part of the 'Implicate Order', while religious people might talk of the 'Spirit of God' living within us. Carl Jung (Swiss psychotherapist and psychiatrist) might call it the collective consciousness of life. American self-help author and motivational speaker Wayne Dyer refers to it as 'Source'. He says "Some call that source God, soul, spirit or consciousness... It has nothing to do with religion. I'm talking about a source of energy that lives within each of us."

Deepak Chopra (Doctor, public speaker, and writer) suggests that "intelligence exists at a subatomic level" and I recently heard a physicist point out that biology, quantum physics, cosmology and consciousness are all, basically, the same thing. Ervin László (the Hungarian philosopher of science) refers to it as "quantum consciousness", and a Star Wars fan might refer to 'The Force'. I am not even going to try to explain what theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking says!

However, the consensus is that no one can definitively describe the way the mind works, or how it is connected to the subatomic world, but we all experience it.

The mind and body are one system; nothing can happen in one without it affecting the other.

We all know that we have a physical immune system that fights bacterial and viral infections and repairs physical injuries. This is just part of our neuro-physiological immune system. Less noticeable is our mental immune system that maintains our emotional wellbeing. We were all born with an innate wellbeing, which, when we have a clear mind and a high quality of thought, will always be present.

Many people use the expression “Time is a great healer”. It takes time for a broken bone to heal and it takes time to come to terms with the sudden change to our map of reality. Our mind and body will do its best to bring us back to a healthy equilibrium, to a state of wellbeing. Only our thinking can suppress our innate wellbeing.

My behaviour, health and situation are just a ‘reflection’ of my past, and current, thinking.

The way to access your wellbeing is to notice that when you are feeling bad, or behaving in an unhelpful way, and to realise it is an indication that your thinking is suppressing your innate health and wellbeing.

Alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, fizzy sugary drinks, not exercising, mindless TV watching are all indications of unhelpful thoughts, or trying to suppress and ignore unhelpful thoughts.

Every day I try to avoid two mistakes.

1. Attributing my un-happiness to external circumstances.
2. Attributing my happiness to external circumstances.

Happiness and wellbeing are innate and are only one thought away.

Understanding this principle enables people to use their feelings as an ‘inner guidance system’. If you feel bad, uncomfortable or upset, know that those feelings have been created by your mind, thoughts and consciousness. Reassess your thoughts to see if they are helping you. If not, is there something else you could think, and/or do, that would be better for you?

This is not so easy to do in the ‘heat of the moment’, but recognising that the experience is of your own creation helps to slow down your thoughts and increase your quality of thought.

Before I had this understanding, I would try to think my way out of a problem, by building on the thinking that was making me feel bad in the first place!

“If you always think how you always think, you will always feel how you always feel” – Steve Dickinson.

Someone recently said to me “Come on, it isn’t just about thinking. What happens if someone says something unkind to you and behaves in an **unacceptable** way, surely you are **justified** in feeling **annoyed**”. I responded by highlighting the following:

- The decision as to whether something is acceptable or unacceptable takes some thought. It could be an instantaneous reaction but thought would drive that reaction.
- If you justify something you aim “To demonstrate or prove to be just, right, or valid”. This takes some thought.
- You cannot feel annoyed without having something about which to be annoyed (this could be an unrealised expectation, a thwarted intention or an undelivered communication). This takes some thought.
- We have to make judgements all the time. Our mind is continually modifying our map of reality. This takes some thought.

One of the secrets to making a great living doing work you love; is to let go of your false identity (the source of anxiety, worry and limitation) and connecting with your true identity; **Who you really are.** Not whom you think you are.

“We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience.” - Teilhard de Chardin (1881–1955) French philosopher and Jesuit priest

Success comes from happiness.

I have heard people (including myself) say, “I will be happy when....”

This ‘differed happiness’ does not usually last long, assuming it turns up at all! If a person spends their time fantasising about happiness in the future they will probably miss opportunities to be happy in the present.

Any golfer will tell you that thinking about the next shot, or the last shot, will distract from the needs of the present shot.

You are just here. In the present. Thoughts of the past, or worries about the future, hinder peak performance in the ‘now’.

Most people will agree that learning from their past, and planning for their future, is the most effective way to success. However, if a person holds these thoughts in their conscious mind, they can never be 100% effective in the present.

How can a person create clarity amongst the 60 to 100 thousand thought that happen each day?

How would you clear murky water?

Stir it?

Boil it?

No. The answer is to leave it: Allow the principle of gravity to draw the particles to the bottom - so the water can return to its natural state: **clarity**.

If things are 'getting on top of you' and you are developing a poor quality of mind (and you will know because you will be feeling anxious) you need to create clarity, and access to your 'innate wisdom'. The best way to do this is to notice your thoughts and let them go. Allow your unconscious to deal with them. If you, consciously, decide what something means when you do not have a high quality of thought you may come to the wrong conclusion. It is easy to get lost if you do not know from where you are starting your journey.

"The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." - Albert Einstein

Allow yourself time and the answer will come to you; the best time to relax is when you do not have time for it. If you are feeling stressed, take a minute out and become present to the moment.

"Nature does not hurry – yet everything is accomplished" - Lao Tzu

I love this analogy:

A man owned a beautiful diamond. When he showed it to people they told him how lucky he was to have the diamond; how beautiful it was and how they would love to have a diamond just like it.

However, as the years went by the diamond collected a little dirt and the man felt too ashamed to show the diamond anymore. So, he decided to use some red nail varnish and paint his dirty diamond and make it look like a ruby.

He was disappointed that people did not react in the same way as they had to the pristine diamond, so he put on more and more varnish. However, the more varnish he applied, the fewer people were interested.

As a result, he got quite upset and withdrawn.

Most people would ask "Why not just brush off the dirt and let the diamond shine?!" An excellent question.

We were all born as a diamond, but over the years we start to create beliefs about who we think we are; we develop fears and insecurities that we do not want other people to know about.

So, we put up a façade to stop other people from finding out who we think we are.

The diamond is who we are; the dirt is who we think we are, and the varnish is whom we want other people to believe we are.

A lot of therapy is about digging through the dirt, moving it about and understanding it. A lot of leadership training is about applying more or better varnish.

Understanding that we are all the same with just our Minds, Thoughts and Consciousness means we can shine like the diamonds we were born to be.

'Thought creates the world & then says "I didn't do it"' - Physicist David Bohm.

No matter what seems to be going on in our lives we do not *have* to do anything. We may think we do, we may want to, but the chances are that we do not actually have to. We could just sit in a chair until men in white coats take us away. However, we are usually in a hurry to do something. Very often, a person will rush because they have just got used to rushing.

Many people experience stress because "things aren't happening fast enough". However, if you just plan to have an average day you may be surprised at how effortless creation can be. If a person were to set aside an hour or so each day, to write 1000 words, they could have written a book within three months. However, the self created stress that the thought of "I must finish my book" might slow things down with 'writers block'.

"You have an 'A'. The pressure is off. Have an average day." - Steve Dickinson.

Benjamin Zander (conductor with the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra) told one of his university classes, during the first lesson, that they all had an 'A'. All they had to do was to come back the next week with a letter, written by them, dated a year in the future, explaining why the 'A' was justified; what they had learned in the year and what they had personally achieved. Not only did they have a map of the next year's learning but they also had one stress free lesson each week, because they knew, for certain, that they were not going to fail. The less they stressed the more creative they became.

Marianne Williamson (spiritual activist, author, lecturer and founder of The Peace Alliance) said:

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.

"We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world.

"There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.

"It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

“As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

If you wish to comment on anything you have read here, please can I ask you to comment on my blog?

Details are available on my website: <http://www.stevedickinson.co.uk>

Thank you for reading.

To your future success.

Best regards, Steve.