



SUMMARY : UNIT 1 : Chapter 4 : Self-Regulation

Self-Regulation

What I would like to do now is show you why you always act “like you.” Change can be difficult because of something inside each of us, something that allows us to get up each morning and act like us. Can you imagine how difficult it would be if, every morning, we had to remind ourselves of who we are? What if you had a poor memory? “Let’s see, I forget, so now I’ve forgotten what I’m supposed to remember.” Confusing?

That idea of who you are, held in your brain, is called a self-image or self-concept. The check and balance system inside of you maintains that self-image, and makes sure that you act like you. Suppose you believe yourself to be a poor person. You win millions in the lottery and become rich. Your mind says, “This isn’t normal. This is not the way it’s supposed to be.” You then correct for the mistake of wealth, and blow the money - usually very fast. Remember, sanity is more important than success.



The beliefs you hold about yourself - personally, financially, socially - are reflected in your actions, and your mind makes sure this reality holds, even if it is detrimental to your happiness. A person who doesn’t feel qualified for promotion, but gets promoted, will unconsciously come late, blow a situation, to correct for the mistake of promotion. You will correct up, or correct down, depending upon your set of beliefs about yourself and what you deserve.

I don’t know to what degree you are using your potential. Only you will be able to tell that. I do know that you have enormous potential inside you. If you can’t seem to get yourself past your present level of performance, then you probably should take a look at your beliefs, as you are self-regulating at your current level. It won’t do any good to force yourself to do better, because when you let go of conscious control, you will always revert to your belief level.



Self-Regulation Continued

When I work with college or professional athletic teams, they too self-regulate at the team's belief level, as well as the individual belief level. Baseball players have batting averages, and when they start hitting above average (unless they know what you are learning), they will go into a slump. Once they've corrected for the mistake of hitting too good, they come out of the slump and start hitting again.

Sales people may have a very good month, far beyond their expectations, and then take the next two months off. Or, if they stay on the job, they might as well have gone on vacation, because they won't sell. They correct for the mistake of selling too well for themselves.

If you want to change, beyond the power of trying hard (pretense), you must change what you expect and change your self-image. Raise your expectations, elevate your self-image to match those expectations, and watch your performance follow.

Years ago, Diane and I started adopting children. Some of them were very badly abused. Now, we decided that we were going to be the best mom and dad, constructive and positive, constantly reinforcing the kids. We were baffled at their reactions. (We didn't have this information you are getting, back then.) The nicer we were to them, the worse they behaved. You see, if you believe, at five or six years old, that "I'm not a good person, and the world beats me up," positive reinforcement doesn't take. They set fires behind the couch, steal from the neighbors or destroy something. We'd ask them why, and they'd answer "I don't know." I'd say, "Well, get in your room until you can figure it out," and they'd say, "Good!" They were setting us up to punish them.

Remember, you get what you expect. If you go into a meeting, knowing ahead of time that it won't work out well, you will subconsciously do things to cause that result. It is not the outside that you are dealing with, it is the inside. Most people want the world to change so their life gets better. The key is to change the inside, and the world gets better.

This is good news, because you have control. It is the quality and quantity of excellence stored in your brain that is consistently reproduced in your world. You want a better world? Then change on the inside! This is also good news for your future, because it will allow you to dream bigger dreams and create greater aspirations.

I want you to start thinking about the results you want to cause. The process I am giving you allows you to start making changes far beyond where you have made them before, and it will be easier and quicker than you have ever imagined. Now that you've started to examine your beliefs, I am going to take you one step further - your attitudes.