

ILLCP 94 - Building a Successful Thinking Plan

This class teaches prospective coaches how to address mental attitudes and life-defeating systems of thought and conversation; showing the importance of guiding someone to greater inner awareness that can lead to changing one's thinking patterns.

BUILDING ON HEALTHY THINKING

Let's get started on the process that inspires healthy thinking.

Let's look at a sample tool called: "**Drawing Forth Personal Vision**"

You are to work through this exercise personally, before you administer it to others. You will find this to be very powerful in giving you insight into yourself as well as the people you will be coaching.

SUCCESSFUL THINKING PLAN TOOL #1

See: **Drawing Forth Personal Vision**

Step 1: Describing Your Personal Vision

Step 2: Expanding and Clarifying Your Vision

Drawing Forth Personal Vision

Step 1: Describing Your Personal Vision

Answer these questions. Use the present tense, as if it is happening right now:

If the categories do not quite fit your needs, feel free to adjust them.

Continue answers until a complete picture of what you want is filled in on the pages.

Imagine achieving the results in your life that you deeply desire.

1. What would they look like?
2. What would they feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe them?

Self-image:

If you could be exactly the kind of person you wanted what would your qualities be?

1. What would they look like?
2. What would they feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe them?

Tangibles:

What material things would you like to own?

1. What would they look like?
2. What would they feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe them?

Home:

What is your ideal living environment?

1. What would it look like?
2. What would it feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe it?

Health:

What is your desire for health, fitness, athletics, and anything to do with your body?

1. What would it look like?
2. What would it feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe it?

Relationships:

What types of relationship(s) would you like to have with friends, family, and others?

1. What would it look like?
2. What would it feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe it?

Work:

What is your ideal professional or vocational situation?

1. What would it look like?
2. What would it feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe it?

Personal pursuits:

What would you like to create in the arena of individual learning, travel, reading, or other activities?

1. What would they look like?
2. What would they feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe them?

Community:

What is your vision for the community or society you live in?

1. What would it look like?
2. What would it feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe it?

Life purpose:

Imagine that your life has a unique purpose--fulfilled through what you do, your interrelationships, and the way you live. Describe that purpose, as another reflection of your aspirations.

1. What would it look like?
2. What would it feel like?
3. What words would you use to describe it?

Step 2: Expanding and Clarifying Your Vision

If you're like most people, the choices you put down are a mixture of selfless and self-centered elements. People sometimes ask, "Is it all right to want to be covered in diamonds, or to own a luxury sports car?"

Part of the purpose of this exercise is to suspend your judgment about what is "worth" desiring, and to ask instead: which aspect of these visions is closest to your deepest desires?

To find out, you expand and clarify each dimension of your vision.

In this step, go back through your list of components of your personal vision that you have written down: your self-image, tangibles, home, health, relationships, work, personal pursuits, community, life purpose, and anything else.

Now ask yourself the following two questions about each element:

4. If I could have it now, would I take it?

5. If I had it, what would it bring me?

Some elements of your vision don't make it past this question.

Others pass the test conditionally: "Yes, I want it, but only if. . ."

Others pass, and are clarified in the process.

People are sometimes imprecise about their desires, even to themselves.

You may, for instance, have written that you would like to own a castle. But if someone actually gave you a castle, with its difficulties of upkeep and modernization, your life might change for the worse.

After imagining yourself responsible for a castle, would you still take it? Or would you amend your desire: "I want a grand living space, with a sense of remoteness and security, while having all the modern conveniences."

Assume you have it now.

Now ask the question: **What does that bring me?**

Divining all the aspects of the vision takes time. It feels a bit like peeling back the layers of an onion, except that every layer remains valuable.

At each layer of discovery, you ask, once again:

**If I could have it now, would I take it?
If I had it, what would it bring me?**

This dialogue shows how someone handled this part of the exercise:

My goal, right now, is to boost my income.

What would that bring you?

I could buy a house in North Carolina.

And what would that bring you?

For one thing, it would bring me closer to my sister. She lives near Charlotte.

And what would that bring you?

A sense of home and connection.

Did you put down on your list that you wanted to have more of a sense of home and connection:

[Laughs] No, I didn't. I just now realized what is really behind my other desires.

And what would a sense of home and connection bring you?

A sense of satisfaction and fulfillment.

And what would that bring you?

I guess there's nothing else--I just want that. [Pause] I still do want a closer relationship with my sister. And the house. And, for that matter, the income. But the sense of fulfillment seems to be the source of what I'm striving for."

You may find that many components of your vision lead you to the same three or four primary goals. Each person has his own set of primary goals, sometimes buried so deeply that it's not uncommon to see people brought to tears when they become aware of them.

To keep asking the question, "What would it bring me?" immerses you in a gently insistent structure that forces you to take the time to see what you deeply want.

Charlotte Roberts, Bryan Smith, Rick Ross, from *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* (Doubleday, 1994)

Modified for educational and instructional purposes by Chris and Carol Green, C & C Connections.

SUCCESSFUL THINKING PLAN TOOL #2

Recall what Dr. Chris Thurman said about Emotional Reasoning:
The tendency to make your feelings and emotions equal to the truth.
For example, "If I feel this way, it must be true." The remedy is to separate feelings from truth.

Here is a recommended tool that can help you make these vital separations.

Truth vs. Feelings – This is a tool to help identify the lies in one's thought life. This exercise helps determine if what we are thinking is "Truth or Feelings".

You cannot build on a non-truth about yourself or your situation.

So, let's look at this valuable tool that will help identify the thoughts, beliefs and even cultural mentalities that are holding people back.

(You may have your client complete this tool as a homework assignment.)

But for now, use it for your own personal growth.

Walk through this Tool before you administer it to others.

Answer as genuinely as possible, writing statements about what you honestly believe to be true about yourself.

Examples of Negative Thoughts about Myself and My Life:

I'm not good enough.

I am a failure.

I will never be accepted.

Afterwards, you must test each one of your statements, using the **Thoughts are not Facts Practice** by Dr. Elisha Goldstein (page 49).

1. Take each statement and ask yourself the four questions in the practice.
2. Document what you learned about yourself.
3. With each statement that you discovered was a just a feeling, work with your coach to create a new Truth statement.
4. Make a list of all of your new Truth statements.

Truth vs. Feeling Tool

This is a tool to help identify the lies in our thought life. You are going to make a list of your negative thoughts about yourself and determine if they are a “Truth or a Feeling”.

Write statements about yourself and your life that you believe to be true.

Then use the **Thoughts are not Facts Practice** to determine if the statement is a Truth or a Feeling.

TRUTH vs. FEELING LIST

TRUTH (Clear/ Balanced Perspective) vs. Feeling (Emotional Reasoning)

Fears/Worries/Negative Statements about Myself and My Life	Truth or Feeling Test this thought with 4 questions

Sample Statements:

Fears/ Doubts/ Negative Thoughts About Myself and My Life	Truth or Feeling Test this thought with 4 questions
I’m not good enough.	
I will never be accepted.	
I am a failure.	
I can’t let people in because they will judge me.	

THOUGHTS are **NOT** FACTS PRACTICE

When you put some space between you and your reaction, it changes your relationship to your thoughts—you can watch them come and go instead of treating them as facts.

If you're stuck on a negative thought, ask yourself:

1**Is it true?**

Often the answer is, "Well, yes." This is the brain initially reacting—the autopilot you live with and believe is you.

2**Is it
absolutely true?**

Is this thought 100% accurate? Can you see the thought in a different way?

3**How does
this thought
make me feel?**

Notice any storylines you're holding onto, and name your feelings: *sad, angry, jealous, hurt.*

4**What would
things be like if
I didn't hold this belief?**

Imagine possible benefits to your relationships, energy levels, and motivation.

Truth vs. Feelings

Based on Thoughts are Not Facts Practice by Elisha Goldstein, PhD, adapted from Loving What Is by Byron Katie.

Fears/ Doubts/ Negative Thoughts About Myself and My Life	Is it true?	Is it absolutely true? <small>Is this thought 100% accurate? Can you see the thought in a different way?</small>	How does this thought make you feel? <small>Notice any past events that you're holding on to and name your feelings: sad, angry, jealous, hurt, etc.</small>	What would things be like if I didn't hold this belief? <small>Imagine possible benefits to your relationships, energy levels, and motivation and write them down.</small>
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				