TRAINING OF TRAINERS
LIFE SKILLS MANUAL

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PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

This manual has been created for the sole purpose as a TOT – Training of Trainers Manual. Trained Facilitators FOR CAP YEI and its Affiliates will have access and will require specific training in order to be able to use this manual for transference of this knowledge. The content in this manual addresses various aspects of life skills that go deeper than the surface. These modalities will be well understood through an intense one week’s training to ensure that every facilitator is well equipped to share with their participants and classes. The layout has been designed to allow for a natural flow from one important topic to the next from both the learning and sharing points of view.

The lessons on the Life skills will be reinforced throughout the 3 month process of each training period following the initial training 64 hours sessions. The objective is to ensure these new concepts become the new forms of thought, word and action. CAP YEI has had tremendous success with our programs and with this new Life skills modules we anticipate a quantifiable progressive change within the facilitators which will be shared with the Youth.

*** This manual is NOT for students nor is it for someone who has had no previous training***

INTRODUCTION AND CAP YEI OBJECTIVES

CAP YOUTH EMPOWERMENT INSTITUTE KENYA (YEI) is a Non-Governmental Organization that is dedicated to building safer, healthier and productive communities of young people by supporting self-directed growth and positive citizenship. The CAP YEI programs have successfully trained over (XXXX) youth in 5 years and provided them with important skillsets to attain self-sustenance.

The foundational skills for attaining a livelihood are Life Skills which are a big part of this program followed by focused employability skills which then paired together provide each youth the possibility of life-changing outcomes.

This is a ground breaking program which helps Youth exit from poverty and break the cycle they have been born in for generations. It is imperative that the understanding and importance of the CAP YEI programs is ingrained in every person involved in the teaching and learning.

This manual is a Training of Trainers Skills Manual that will now aid in ensuring every trainer at CAP YEI is fully equipped to instill, teach, share and convert the lessons to reality for themselves and the students.

CAP YEI Learn Earn & Save Initiative rests on the premise that disadvantaged youth need end-to-end community based solutions in linking quality learning and sustainable income earning opportunities to access secure futures. Following this central goal; to provide basic employability and entrepreneurship skills to youth, CAP YEI objectives focus:

1. To ensure that disadvantaged youth learn and acquire life skills, job market relevant skills, savings education, and small business development training through CAP YEI Basic Employability Skills Training (BEST) model.

2. To facilitate disadvantaged youth in accessing internships and job opportunities during and after their training experiences respectively, which are facilitated through institutionalized public and private partnerships.

3. To ensure youth receive vital pre- and post-job-placement counseling, support, and services, including fi-
financial services as they transition to work.

The learning, earning, and financial inclusion continuum, with a strong focus on life skills, savings education, and entrepreneurship as core competencies during the training, promotes youths’ economic empowerment, upward social mobility, and financial inclusion. The “learn” component of the model facilitates information on dynamic labor market opportunities for youth to make informed choices on pathways to the world of employment.

**MISSION** – CAP YEI’s Mission is to build safer, healthier, and productive communities of young people capable of supporting self-directed growth and positive citizenship.

**VISION** - CAP YEI’s vision is to be an end-to-end community based solutions provider in linking quality learning and sustainable livelihood for vulnerable communities of children and young people.

**QUALITY POLICY** - CAP YEI’s dedicated professionals commit to address poverty alleviation by linking learning and livelihood needs through innovative mechanisms for disadvantaged youth hereby enabling them to access equitable and promising opportunities through adherence to the Quality standards and practices.

**CAP YEI Centers** are located all over the country including: Athi River, Buru Buru, Dagoretti, Eldoret, Kisumu, Kakamega, Naivasha, Nakuru, Mikindani, Mombasa, Othaya, Machakos, Nyahururu, Meru and Thika. An expansion to additional centers is in the pipeline which will enhance the visibility and success of the CAP YEI Programs country wide.
CAP YEI CENTERS

KEY
- CAP - Demonstration Centers
- CAP - Replication Centers
- CAP - MSI Generation Centers
TRAINER SKILLS

Overview and objective for this segment is to ensure all facilitators understand their roles and requirements. It is essential that every facilitator is well equipped to facilitate and share the programs. The skills and qualities required for every trainer cannot be compromised and must be aligned and internalized prior to delivery to the participants. Apart from the skills, it is essential that each facilitator has been specifically trained to deliver the content in this manual as a clear requirement. This will be a program that requires certification for trainers.

Key Skills for trainers

Good trainers have the following attributes hard-wired into their muscle memory:

1. They know what the learning outcomes are that they want the learners to achieve for every sentence, phrase, exercise, session and period of learning.

2. They are able to set sensory-based indicators which tell them when the learners are achieving the planned learning outcomes, or not.

3. They constantly focus on the learners, not needing to think about the content which they could deliver and so they are flexible with the program in order to achieve consistent outcomes for the learners.

4. They adopt a position with their students of guiding and facilitator the learning and request the learners to accept an equal responsibility for their own learning.

5. They enable the learners to generate self-motivation for the learning and provide clear input explaining the subject being covered and how to apply it.

6. They have the ability to deliver training and be aware of their own performance, tracking the responses from the learners and then assessing these responses in order to generate improvements to future sessions.

Role skills:

~ Presentation - structuring and communicating ideas, using visual and other aids

~ Facilitation - managing activities, eliciting contributions and learning

~ One-on-one - coaching, counseling, mentoring, advising, assessing

~ Consultancy - investigating, diagnosing, advising, evaluating, partnering

~ Problem-solving and decision-making - insightful, innovative, intuitive

~ Design - designing programs, materials, activities, opportunities, e-literate

Personal skills and qualities:

~ Communication - listening, questioning, explaining, giving feedback

~ Interpersonal - building relationships, sensitivity, handling conflict

~ Assertiveness - confidence, challenging and supporting, negotiating
~ Flexibility - responsive, creative, adaptable, manage change

~ Expertise - knowledgeable, experienced, insightful, up to date

**Organizational skills:**

~ Team Focused – Democratic, supportive, dependable and collaborative

~ Self-management - managing stress, time and work, self-starter, learning

~ Influencing - instigating and driving change, transferring learning into performance, winning support

~ Strategic - coordinating, planning, leadership, linking, thinking

~ Problem solving - getting things done, working with operational difficulties,

~ Entrepreneurial - financial, marketing, customer care, managing information

**Essential Requirements Checklist for Trainers**

a) Public speaking and articulation

b) Unbiased and open

c) Knowledge sharing and learning

d) Organized

e) Multi-tasking

f) Informed

g) Answer questions with facts and not assumptions

**Illustration**

In the 70’s and 80’s it was essential that all Trainers/ Teachers followed a certain style of delivery that was standard. This was not geared to the diversity of the students nor did it take into account the various ways that a person learns.

A young teacher, Mueni, in her 20’s decided to challenge the system. Mueni was a highly creative, artistic and colorful individual with a deep passion to reach every child in her classroom. She did not believe the only way to earn was auditory. Mueni decided to use methods for each of the senses so each child could learn to the best of their abilities. She used color, smell, taste, sound and nature to get through to her scholars. Mueni’s students got totally engaged and she was able to get them to absorb all the information she taught without much ado. Her class ended up having the best results and performance.

Are you ready to take the challenge and teach with your own flavor? The aim is to get the best results so please use your creativity and knowledge to excel yourself and help your students do the same.
ACTIVITY

Each participant to consider something they would like to share with the class as a different learning experience. Take 15 minutes to think through your own concept and be ready to make a 2 minute delivery to the rest of the class.

CONCLUSION/LESSON LEARNT

It is very important to keep in mind that every individual is different. Every person engages, hears, learns, sees, and understands in their own way. Keeping this in mind, every facilitator needs to use their own creativity to create a beautiful and open learning environment.

Quote

Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.

Mark Twain
CHAPTER 1.

This chapter consists of introductory guidelines for facilitators to engage the students to create their own norms and personal and career goals. These guidelines will set the tone for the 3 month training. This process is to help the trainers to guide the trainees to set their own expectations.

Students are given direction and information in order to create their very own experience. The content helps each student to deconstruct and reconstruct their beliefs, mindsets which lead to improved and beneficial behavior modes and attitude.

The objective of this chapter is to ensure facilitators understand their role in relation to the students. How to set expectations, clarify the importance of the life skills program and its content, effective ways to interact with different types of personalities and make this a successful program by using one’s own creativity and diversity.

Expectations from work Rules to be followed during training

Activities, information, facts about life that will help build and learn the following:

**Time Management:** What it means, its importance, methods to maintain and keep time

**Communication:** Types of communication, Pointers for effective communication

**Decision Making:** Importance of decision-making, steps for effective decision making

**Conflict Resolution:** Types of personalities and how they deal with conflicts, Tips on dealing with conflict depending on situation and personality type

**Perception & Values:** To help understand how perceptions differ from facts and how individual experiences can color perceptions, to understand how one’s values influence one’s perceptions.

**Attitude & Self-esteem:** To understand the importance of the right attitude in building one’s self-esteem, to understand one’s identity, one characteristics as a person/worker, to see oneself through the eyes of one’s peers

**Personal and Career Goals:** short-term and long-term

**SWOT analysis:** self-evaluation

* Introduction of IYLDP, Daily plans, monitoring sessions by the course facilitator self and peers (forming Peer Groups)
* Money Management: To understand the importance of prioritizing one’s needs and allocating money accordingly.

Handling responsibility: in terms of maturity, focus and reporting

Empathy and sensitivity module: Gender issues, Handling Family pressures

Success at the workplace: importance of ethics and quality at the workplace (PC)
Understanding the entry-level job scenario and thereby the expectations from trainees
Field survey visits, alumni interaction, employer interactions (past and potential), etc. (PC)
AIDS, sex education and sexuality, violence, rape, early pregnancy and drug abuse awareness

**An Illustration**

Kimani who was born in the slums was told that he could never really get out as poverty was part of his life. When Kimani started school at 6, the teacher told each student in the class that they were bright, smart, clever and capable of changing their lives. Because Kimani was told the opposite at home he kept it a secret and did not tell his single mother that the teacher believed the students were capable of changing their life script. Somehow Kimani believed the teacher and strived against all odds, studied hard, did all he could to excel in class. As years passed and he carried on studying persistently the voice of his mother was repeated by the teachers that he encountered but the voice of his first teacher remained the strongest. Kimani became a teenager and during high school got the top results in his class. The head of the school was so impressed with Kimani’s resilience that he found and organization that gave him a bursary to university. Today, Kimani is a grownup man, is a General Manager of a firm employing 50 people and owns his own car, home and a farm. This Story can be you! Do not listen to the voices that ask you to remain small…there is no need. You have the potential to excel in what you choose to do. The ingredients required to create a better life that would be as large and as abundant as you choose.

**Questions for the participants;**

1. What do you think the story means for you?
2. What areas in your life do you feel need to be reconsidered for you to excel?
3. What do you need in order to overcome the hurdles? This question is based on something you can change inside of you and unrelated to money or your parents etc?
4. How are you going to ensure you learn to ‘believe’ in yourself as you go through this program?
5. How will you communicate this at the end of the 3 month period?

**Activity**

Ask each participant to write about something they would like to change about themselves. Whether it is communication, confidence, or whatever aspect that may be holding them back. Then ask them to get into groups of 5/6 and discuss this with their peers and get feedback. After they finish the discussion let each group come to the front of the classroom and discuss what they shared and what solutions were suggested. The most important aspect of this activity is that each student will realize that they are not the only one with an issue and that many have similar issues and that its human to have these challenges as one grapples with life.

**LESSON LEARNT**

This chapter shows us that anything is possible as long as one sets their mind to it. It would be helpful for facilitators to create this mindset for themselves and every participant in their class. The sky is the limit.

**Quote**

1. *In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of.* Confucius – Chinese Philosopher
2. *Poverty was the greatest motivating factor in my life. Jimmy Dean - was an American country music singer, television host, actor and businessman*
The Objective of this chapter is to ensure that every facilitator experiences these new training methodologies before they can share with their students. It is imperative that every facilitator goes through this self-unfolding process in order to be able to do the same with each student. You cannot give what you do not have or what you have not experienced. This is not an intellectual exercise. This is a hand on heart process. Facilitators will explore their own limitations, biases, belief systems and challenge themselves to change which will then create the possibility for them to help their students do the same. This Life Skills program will challenge each person to look within to find the greatness that lies beneath a lot of conditioning. To overcome self-created restrictions can be a most humanizing and liberating process in life.

The number of layers of conditioning that limit each human being requires clarity. The next step would be to de-layer and define the limitations to move forward and expand oneself.

**WHO AM I?**

I am the total sum of my experiences based on what I have been told, heard, seen and felt. This translates to how I perceive myself and others. Within this cycle of life there are many misperceptions, misguided advice, misappropriated information that clouds an individual’s perception. For example, if one was abused physically, verbally or emotionally, that person will find it challenging to be open or trust others. It is the Facilitator’s responsibility to help each student facing these aspects of the past to heal and create a new life. How do we do this?

One of the biggest limitations in life is the fact that we believe things about ourselves and life that are not true. It is essential to get each student to learn how to question what they have been told, how they think and feel about their life and to ensure that at the end of the day, each student feels more equipped, confident and able to deal with challenges. One of our biggest setbacks in life is that we are not told how to deal with issues and trials in life. These issues cannot be avoided and the better one is prepared the easier life will be.
Illustration

Mariam was born in a small village. She was a very intelligent, bright and clever girl. This was noticed by the villagers since she was very young. However being born to parents who believed that girls should not go to school and should be prepared for early marriage was a real issue for her. She did not know how to approach the subject of how much she wanted to go to school as she knew she would be punished for questioning her parents.

When Mariam was 16 years old a husband was being sought for her and by now she was clear in her mind that she did not want to be married off. During this time she had convinced her brothers, who were allowed to go to school, to teach her how to read and write.

She decided it was time to save herself and her friends from this way of life and went to the wife of one of the elders to bring together the people in the village as she had something to share. The day of the meeting Mariam asked her friends to be ready to challenge the way life had been led in the village and to ask that girls be given more opportunity and be allowed to study and not be married off so young.

When the villagers gathered they had no clue what the meeting was about. When the girls got up being led by Mariam, their parents were all very surprised.

Mariam then led an in-depth discussion on how she felt it was time to change things in the village. What she requested was that girls would allow to be schooled as they could do just as well as boys apart from the fact that if both genders were allowed to study they would be able to work and grow the economy of the village. She then told her parents she knew how to read and write which shocked them and the others.

Mariam defined herself by having the courage to speak up. This changed not only the course of her life but the life of many girls and the future of the village. This is how a belief can change oneself and an entire community.

Questions

What gift or hidden talent do you have that you feel deep inside of you?

ACTIVITY – This will take approximately 1 hour

This is one of the most profound exercises that will start the course by opening up each individual. Request the class to get into pairs and ask each person to share a deep (possibly painful) experience with the other and vice versa and discuss how it makes the other feel. Once the entire group has completed this very profound and powerful exercise, let them return to the classroom. Ask each pair to come to the front of the room and share their experience. Once an entire group hears all the experiences they will understand that every single human being has had to deal with hurt, disappointment, anger, sadness and pain. This point requires reinforcing that every single human being has been through challenges in their life and it is not a select few. The message LOUD AND CLEAR is that it is NOW time to let these experiences stay where they belong - in the past. It is now time to move on and create a NEW LIFE. Without this understanding, people stay stuck in their past.

Questions

1. What do you need to resolve in your past?
2. How can you do that?

LESSON LEARNT

Every single human being has a gift or talent. It takes an engaged facilitator to help this unfold for every student. It may not always unfold in the 3 months they have in class however once they have the confidence it will definitely rise to the surface.
**WHERE AM I GOING?**

**ACTIVITY – 1 hour**

Let’s consider how we are going to do this. Write down a list of these and then in a second column write down how you think you can achieve these goals and objectives. What do you need? Who is able to support you and how can you support yourself?

‘I am going to create a new life, a new way of understanding, taking complete and total responsibility for my life’ This is the mantra every student needs to embrace and acknowledge. The fact that responsibility is not taught as we grow and is not part of our culture, it is essential to create a new direction. Every individual has to take responsibility for their life, their future and more importantly the future generations to come. It is imperative to identify one’s own aspirations, vision, goals and objectives in life. Unless these are clear one cannot move forward or create anew.

**HOW DO I GET THERE?**

One of the ways to get to where one wants to go requires a clear set of skills, progressive thinking, challenging oneself and believing in oneself completely. Firstly and most importantly – LIFE SKILLS which is what this training is about. Secondly, a set of work skills which are provided for by CAP YEI in both cases. Every participant has to understand the significance of the joint programs to achieve a different life.

Your life is entirely your responsibility. Others may support you and many may not. It is significant that each person understands, accepts and acknowledges responsibility towards one’s own life.

As we get into ‘Values’ we will expand on the meanings of Responsibility, Honesty, Communication and so on. This is one of the biggest setbacks for youngsters as their concept of values is fragmented and corroded. Each facilitator has to clearly understand this in order to educate their students appropriately.

**An Illustration**

Atieno of 17 felt her life was over when she was molested and beaten on the way home one evening. It took her many months to even look at a boy or man. During this time Atieno was very fortunate to have her mother’s sister nearby and who had been through a similar experience. Her aunt made it a point to speak to her niece every few days and tell her that her life is not over. That it was important she put this experience away and get over it or she will destroy her life. The aunt explained to Atieno that sometimes things that are beyond our control happen. That this was a test on the strength, courage and faith she had. After a year Atieno unconsciously chose that what happened had to be left in the past. She decided to focus on her studies and decided that if she carried on feeling sorry for herself and being a victim, this would destroy her and her family. Today this young lady is a counselor/therapist helping change society. You can choose to allow adversity to ruin your life or turn it around to propel you forward even more strongly and leave the past where it belongs- in the past! There is not a single human being who has not faced challenges or adversity in life. We hide our pasts because we feel ashamed and think we are the only ones until we find that others too have faced challenges.

**Questions**

1. What have you been challenged with in life?
2. Can you look at the situation, circumstances and realize that it is better to heal and let it go?
3. What did you learn from that experience which will help you in the future?
ACTIVITY as Homework

Request students to create their aspirations about a brighter future by drawing, writing, creating some art or whatever they like as homework. They can bring these to class and they can go on the wall as a “FUTURE WALL”

QUOTE

“Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.”

The Buddha
CHAPTER 3 - CONDITIONING, SOCIALIZATION AND BELIEF SYSTEMS AND THEIR IMPACT ON LIFE

The Objective of this Chapter is to understand how we become the person we are. The impact of external input and experiences which added to our perception then becomes our very own lens that we look at life through. Once a person begins to understand their own mind then there is possibility to change some of the internal aspects that affect our behavior, attitude, and life.

Beliefs are ideas, thoughts, ways of life that we absorb from our external context (family, school, media, experts, religion, environment, education, etc.) consciously or unconsciously. They are also created through our direct experiences or experiences of others that we absorb. Beliefs come from the outside in. We accept them internally and we hold on to them like they are a fixed part of our identity. Beliefs are not ours, they come from the outside or we create them on the inside based on some aspect in our heads. Beliefs are NOT static, they are transient. This is not something anyone tells us so we believe that when we believe in something we cannot stop believing in it which is completely untrue. What if we became aware of many of our beliefs and changed them if they did not serve us anymore? What are some of the negative beliefs that guide you? Whatever our beliefs, they are mostly untruths passed on from generation to generation or because of biases or to avoid facing a truth of sorts, perceptions or ways of life that can be changed. Let us became more aware of our beliefs and chose carefully the ones that serve our highest good and internal unity now rather than those that feed the fear monster.

Belief systems are part of our conditioning. These include Social, political, economic, cultural, traditional using the conscious/unconscious mind to create perceptions.

What is a belief? Where does it come from? Is it true? Discuss examples? Discuss personal examples.
THE LAYERS OF CONDITIONING AND ITS IMPACT ON ONE’S LIFE!

~ What do layers of conditioning mean?
These are all the experiences you have had, what you have seen, learnt, been told and believe. All of these may not be positive influences. There are many that are negative and cause negative behavior and thought patterns which further lead to maladaptive behavior, attitude and stops one from fully experiencing life.

~ Understanding the depth and layers of conditioning
18-25 years of conditioning has many layers. Some good and some not so good. Deciphering the difference is what determines how one’s future will unfold. If one gets stuck in the old ways one will keep repeating the errors of the parents and grandparents and transfer the same to their children. This is not evolution nor is it progress.

~ How beliefs are created within the layers of conditioning and the impact on behavior
Let’s take a couple of examples of a belief and how that affects a person, their life and those around them in terms of behavior and attitude.
1. Women are not equal to men – Is this really true? If you are a man and you feel this than you are going to treat women as below you. If you are a woman and you think this you are going to feel inferior to men.
2. I am not good enough – you will constantly self-sabotage and
3. White or brown people are better than me – You will not ever feel you can become something or run your own company or compete because you feel inferior and because you have a racist belief instilled in you.
4. Only people with money can become someone or something in life or are worthy in the eyes of God – this is one of the most debilitating beliefs we have in Kenya/Africa. That money is what makes things happen. We put people with money on pedestals and treat them like mini Gods. It is one of the biggest untruths and keeps poor people in poverty.
5. I was born poor so I will never make it – this is one of the biggest untruths in life and many aspects of society drill this to keep people poor. This is a lie so let it go.

~ The conscious de-layering process
It is extremely important for participants to understand that once they define a conditioning that is limiting, they can change it. This is taking responsibility for choosing a different way. This is every human being’s right and choice and they must use this right to let go of limitations. Only each person can do this for themselves and once issues are identified then they can shift and move on.

~ Breaking old patterns and harmful habits to create a new life and way forward
It takes 21 days to make or break a habit. The Trainer’s responsibility is to instill this deeply into the student’s psyche so that they can undo/unlearn habits and patterns that are blocking their life.

~ Being able to change one’s perceptions and one’s limiting beliefs
This is ongoing work in every human being’s life. It does not happen overnight and it takes concerted effort to move beyond the old ways. One must believe in their own potential and possibilities to do that.

~ Looking at how limitations restrict one’s life
Example, if one is afraid to talk to people then how will one ask for a job? Or explain what they are good at? Or convince a person that they deserve a chance?

~ Stretching one’s life like a rubber band
This is a great analogy about life. We keep stretching and sometimes, it bounces back but NOT GIVING UP is the KEY to success. Even when there are challenges one must keep going forward. Nothing stays the same for long so let things pass but DON’T GIVE UP ON YOURSELF AND LIFE

~ Getting out of other people’s minds, stop assuming and ask questions and challenge yourself!
Most people live with assumptions and think they know what other people are thinking. This is one of the unhealthiest ways to live. Firstly, other people’s opinions do not always matter as they are just an opinion. Secondly, if one really cares about someone’s opinion it is better to ask questions ad discuss rather than assume. This is limitation in our society as we are not always taught to ask questions or be upfront. Challenge yourself daily!
An Ilustration

What do you believe about your life? Where do you think you came from and where are you going to end up? This was the question that a father – Kimutai asked himself when his wife died very young and left behind 4 children. Kimutai had loved his wife, was grieving, had 4 children from the ages of 2-8 to look after, had to work and felt completely lost. The best solution would be to take a second wife immediately which would solve all his problems. This is what a man was expected to do and also what he had watched his father, grandfather do even when they had a 1st wife. Kimutai looked at his children, shed tears at how much his wife had loved and cared for her children and for him, her husband. There and then he made a decision to do something different. He decided not to take another wife as he did not want his kids to suffer in the hands of another woman. There have been enough stories about what step-mothers do and are capable of. Kimutai asked his divorced sister with 1 child to come and help him and he would take care of her child as well and they would both make sure the 5 children had a loving home and environment. It would not be easy but it would be better. Kimutai’s children grew up with healthy minds and adored their father, aunty and her son. The respect the community had towards Kimutai extended when all his kids went to college and began their own lives becoming successful. Kimutai’s story proves that anything can be changed and is possible to achieve.

ACTIVITY – Takes about 2 hours

Breakout groups of 5/6. Ask participants to share something about a belief that has kept them locked in. Discussing poverty for example will make them realize that there are so many examples of people who have managed to get out of poverty by learning skills and changing their behavior to become successful people. Give them a few minutes to present their overall perspective on what was shared as a group, what new understanding they have and how it will definitely impact their lives.

Questions

1. What is the impact on your life now understanding that beliefs are transient and many untrue?
2. What 3-5 BIG beliefs can you work on dissolving in the next few weeks? List them and make this your homework
3. How does your life feel knowing you can change how you think which changes how you feel and affects your behavior and attitude?

LESSON LEARNT

Everything we believe, have been told, or read is not always true. We need to define what really is and what is not as a huge amount that we hold in storage in our minds could be untrue or distorted by our perception. We need to re-examine our minds and what it holds.

Quote

In life there is never a dead end. We all have a choice. As long as we choose not to give up - to persevere and to seek - we will always find, even in the midst of a desert full of sand dunes. By TazimElkington
CHAPTER 4
The basis of life - Experiences, status, the Past and its influence on life.

‘Gaps’ – Self-esteem, confidence, fear, attitude, behavior, complexes, output, input, delivery, performance, perceptions, projections and thought process. Relationships revolve on all these and more. How does one ‘see’ life? Mirror mirror on the wall!

The objective of this chapter is to understand how our experiences, the past and many more factors influence our thinking and behavior. Once one understands this aspect, one can and starts to redefine one’s own life from an informed perspective. Change is only possible when one understands what one can change and what one cannot.

The Past has a huge influence on the Present and more so on the Future. There is not a single human being that has not encountered pain, disappointment, lack of love, lack of understanding, anger, hurt, feeling they are not good enough and so on. The fact is that this is part of the growing and learning process. If one did not experience all this then we would not become stronger, not strive to do better in life and want things to change.

However it is important to recognize that it does not matter whether you are black, white, brown or whether you have money or not or whether you come from an educated background or not…every single human being will go through challenges in their life. What makes the difference is how you decide to deal with your challenges and what you do with your experiences. Here is a simple fact. One can choose to wallow in their misery and blame the world for their past or choose to take responsibility to accept it and move forward. Your life depends on how you decide to see it as you are the only person that lives inside your head. Your mind is not your master; your mind is your slave. When one feels challenged on how to make good decisions or is unsure of how to choose then this is an area that needs to be discussed with your facilitator for help and assistance.

For example, if someone was constantly told that they were ‘useless’ as a child or youth, or physically/mentally abused, or treated like their life had no value their self-esteem and confidence will be affected. On top of this there will be fear. Fear of getting abused again, fear of people and fear which could cause a person to become stuck. One would see every person as a threat, unable to trust due to past pain and feel paralyzed and helpless.

What happened to you as a child could stop you from becoming your full potential or rising above the negative experiences unless you choose to overcome it and heal. This type of situation will affect how you communicate, your confidence and esteem will not shine through, you will not believe in yourself and your attitude and behavior will project these limitations.

Every human being is gifted with the Power, Strength and Courage to change all this by comprehending the unique and beautiful human being you are. You were put on this earth for a reason and unless you grasp this you will remain a victim endlessly. Sometimes we need help to overcome our past and counseling, speaking to those who have managed challenges can help us greatly to heal our own pasts. We do not have to do this alone, help is available and it’s a matter of reaching out and not being ashamed of the situation at hand. By now everyone has understood that life is full of challenges. To take ownership of one’s life one has to go through the process to forgive all those who harmed you as they did not know better so you can live your life better than they expect you to. Ask for help as unless you ask no-one can really help you. This will stop you
from sabotaging yourself and also aid in leaving the Past behind so you can change your Present which in turn will change your Future.

Still plagued by your past? But only if you want to be free, only if you want to know the open-heartedness and enthusiasm for life that come with making peace with the past.

As you probably know, sometimes events from the past have a mind of their own. Memories keep recirculating when all you want is for them to disappear. You are way more emotionally reactive than you know is good for you. And you are limited by distrust, neediness, and a stunted view of what is possible for you.

If you know your past is still nipping at your heels, read on. Because you will discover 10 facts that may just be the key to unlock the door to your full, unbridled, joyful, infinitely sane expression of you. Be free of the past, and you can go on and simply enjoy your life.

A Personal Example (If the Facilitator feels inclined to share their own personal experience it is more powerful)

10 Life-Changing Facts - Here’s a story and 10 facts that are necessary to share.

What happened to me is, without question, possible for you. Apply these 10 life-changing facts to your life and see where you can make changes and define where you may need some help.

1. The past isn’t really about the past.

When you look with great clarity, you will see that there is no actual thing called the past. Everything that happens; happens in the present – it can’t be any other way. Memories of events are thoughts occurring in the present. Anger or hurt about the past is happening now. Your present moment experience in the now is what keeps the past alive.

What is amazing about this understanding is that it shows you that the way out of your suffering is always in the present. You can change your perspective – now, focus on something different – now, feel your feelings – as they are right now.

If you want to heal from the past, put your attention on your present moment experience.
2. Memories are not the problem.

A memory is a thought, and a thought has no power or meaning unless you choose to give it power or meaning. You have many thoughts about things that happened long ago, and these thoughts cause no problems. But some thoughts that have been painful experiences that have caused sadness, anger, humiliation, pain etc. cannot be so easily erased. You have an emotional reaction to them and you think about them over and over. You may even have beliefs related to them, for example, “I am justified in thinking this” or “I need an apology so I can move on.” This keeps them very much alive, affecting your ongoing experience.

If you want to be free of the past, start observing these thoughts. Ask yourself what you had to learn from each of these experiences? Did it make you stronger? More aware of life and the road we travel to learn? Careful not to repeat the same situation? Understand that people repeat what they think is right not what is really right or good? The most important knowledge is for you to know that it doesn’t serve you to repeat them and that thinking they are justified only delays your freedom. Be prepared to take a look at the pure experience of your feelings without the layer of thinking that solidifies them (see #6 below).

3. “Healing” means letting go so the thoughts and feelings don’t impact you.

Your goal is to neutralize the story from the past so it loses its power over you. It becomes transparent, with no meaning and no effect. You change your relationship to your thoughts so they don’t sit like a dark cloud over you. Thoughts are as transient as your beliefs. When a thought comes the more you hang on to it the stronger and more powerful it becomes. Hang on to the thoughts that will make your life better and not those that will keep you down. A thought is a chemical output that actually has no power until you focus on it. Your goal is not to:

- Make yourself forget about the past (impossible)
- Hide or ignore your feelings (creates other problems – addiction, anyone?)
- Wait for an apology or acknowledgment (postpones happiness)
- Wait for time to heal all wounds (you may need more than time)
- Wallow endlessly in your emotions (oh, so painful)
- Redo the past (you can’t change what happened but you absolutely can change your reaction to what happened)

Keep holding as possible: freedom…peace…sanity…freshness in the moment…fully alive now.

4. The path to healing opens up once you are fed up by how the stories about the past impact you.

As I’m happy to say as often as necessary, what you focus on is what will grow. If you cultivate sadness, regret, and revenge, then they will become your reality. As an alternative, be very willing to see through these stories as much as is needed. Be open to energy moving through your body rather than staying stuck. Prepare yourself to feel differently. Contemplate not defining yourself by thoughts about the past.

5. You get a jump-start on releasing the past when you take responsibility of your own life.
Once you see that the ball is totally in your court, you have set the stage for deep letting go. Your happiness is your responsibility alone, not anyone else’s. You might be very familiar with feeling like a victim. But this is a passive, un-empowered position, leaving you waiting for words or actions from someone else, something you cannot control.

6. Telling stories keeps the past lodged in your mind, heart, body, and spirit.

We tell ourselves all sorts of stories that bring trouble to our lives. Want to be trouble-free? Here is the medicine.
A) Try to look at how you think about what has happened to you in the past and how it keeps coming back to haunt you in your mind.
B) Try to lose interest in these thoughts and what they bring. (see #2 above)

B) You will realize that all that is left is the physical manifestations of your thoughts, like tension and sweating. The sensations (manifestations/behaviours/reactions) have always been part of you regardless of your feelings. They are normal experiences. How to overcome these will be understood better when we do an exercise about beliefs in relation to thoughts which then manifest externally as a behavior or attitude that is debilitating. The Thoughts we have lead to who we become, what we get, what we don’t get? Refer to religion as an example and make it positive.

7. Beliefs about healing can get in the way.

Besides getting stuck in your story, you might become aware of beliefs you hold about what needs to happen for you to let go. These are simply more thoughts that keep you distracted from the heart of the matter. Here are some possibilities:

- “I feel justified in staying stuck because I was wronged.”
- “It is someone else’s responsibility to make this better for me.”
- “If I let go, I’m somehow approving others’ bad behavior.”
- “I need an apology.”
- “Life is unfair.”
- “It was so bad that it’s not possible for me to heal.”

Your life begins now, in this very moment…and now…and now. You can always start anew. Don’t feed these limiting thoughts, and you won’t need them to disappear. Proceed to discover that you are whole, that a part of you has always been untouched by the world.

8. How relationship issues relate to your past.

Unless you see through all of it, you are a product of your past and the ideas you have formed about how relationships work. This keeps the past alive in the present. Do you fear rejection or commitment? Do you feel you need approval and attention? Do you isolate or push people away? Do you need to be on top and in control? Do you have difficulty trusting? If these tendencies cause you problems in your relationships, here
is your opportunity.

Untangle your thoughts and feelings about the past, and live in freedom from them as you move forward.

9. The middle path is the intelligent path.

Dwelling on what happened and exposing your feelings will keep you suffering. Hiding, indulging, or stuff-
ing your feelings doesn’t work in the long-term. Instead, bring intelligence and clarity to your direct experi-
ence. Cultivate a fire for peace and ease that serves you well.

10. Finding out who you are is the ultimate freedom.

If you define yourself by your past, you will be living as a fraction of what is possible for you. Say you think
of yourself as wronged or abused or victimized. Or you see yourself as having less fortunate.

It’s easy to believe in a mistaken identity. It feels so true to think we are the result of what happened or the
sum total of our thoughts and feelings. But the truest thing about you is that you become aware that these
are all passing experiences and events. They have the power to keep you locked in the past or you have the
choice to liberate yourself. Life presents a passing array of experiences – thoughts, emotions, events and
people. These all arise in you but they are not you. You are an incredible being created to live your life each
day as best as you can.

What have you learned about healing the pain from the past that has helped you?

An Example

How do I know? For many years, I had a very rocky relationship with my parents, filled with anger and re-
sentment about the past. My mind screamed about the “have’s and ought to be.” I kept an endless list about
what I deserved, but thought I had missed out on. There were periods with no communication and many
arguments as we tried and failed repeatedly to find a way of meeting. It was when I suddenly realized certain
things about life that my life started to change.

In a moment of insight, I took responsibility for my own happiness. I saw that my anger was preventing me
from experiencing the ease and well-being that I desperately wanted, so I stopped feeding it. No more stories
about what should have been, no more blaming or waiting for solutions. My identity as the wounded child
disappeared, and what was revealed? That I could be happy, be peaceful, move forward and create a differ-
ent type of life.

The story of what happened in my past didn’t change. But what I gave power to totally changed. I stopped
dwelling on the past. I stopped justifying the anger, and now, 15 years later, I have trouble even remember-
ing the details of events that used to agitate me to no end. I am so much more drawn to ease and simplicity.
Yes, my relationship with my parents has improved beautifully, but that has been a side effect and not the
primary driver. What I wanted more than anything was to be free of the past and happy in the now. And, yes,
I am free of the past and so deeply happy in the timeless now.
This story is about a young girl named Aisha in the village who was set on working hard and going to college and making a different life. Unfortunately, one afternoon, as Aisha walked home a man suddenly jumped on her and raped her. When he was finished, he got up, looked at her, laughed and left. Aisha was in shock, unbearable pain, and nearly out of her mind. She did not know what to do. As Aisha slowly picked herself up and she was horrified at what would happen to her. Because she was a smart girl, she decided to go straight to the Women’s clinic. There Aisha found a very compassionate nurse Mama Nancy who helped her wash herself, took tests and calmed her down. She advised her to tell her family and not to be afraid as it was not her fault. Mama Nancy also gave her some treatment to ensure she would not be pregnant or infected with a sexually transmitted disease.

This story is very important as another girl may have not done this, got pregnant, left school, not explained to her parents, been blamed for being loose and would have ended up on the streets or at home with no future. It is time to stop behaving like we used to in the past. Things that happen which are not in our control cannot be blamed on us. Aisha ended up becoming a doctor because of this experience and changed her life because she was intelligent enough not to do what most girls do when they are scared and shocked.

**ACTIVITY – Art paper, paints, paint brushes – 1 hour to paint and 1 hour to share**

Art Paper – Colors or Paint – Ask each student to draw a picture of their Past and then a picture of their new envisioned Future. Let it be as graphic as one wants and as colorful adding all that they would like to become. Once they have completed ask a few if they would like to share and explain their art. The Future Art Pieces should be put up on the walls as a daily reminder of the changes they need to make. The painting should incorporate a belief, which becomes part of the thinking and manifests as a behavior/attitude and how limiting it is. The new vision and future ought to diminish this so a new behavior/attitude comes through by changing the belief and in turn the thought. These can be combined with what students did at home for

**QUESTIONS**

1. Self-blame is highly disruptive
2. Things can happen beyond our control and we cannot hide or hold this as something that was our fault.

**LESSON LEARNT**

It is possible to understand that our past can harm us and stop our progress. It is also a greater possibility to move forward and leave our past behind and create a better present and a fantastic future.

**QUOTE**

“The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.” Mahatma Gandhi
CHAPTER 5
1st set of SWOT/PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT and GOAL SETTING

Students are now ready to write their first set of personal Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats and a list of their near future goals. The purpose of this chapter is to get each participant to define areas that are their strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities. This will help them set their immediate goals and define where they need to focus to make things happen.

9 Personal Development Goals to a More Fulfilling and Healthier YOU

Everyone has a desire to get ahead, to set goals for themselves and seek personal growth for their life. Challenges will be thrown your way and then survival mode kicks in if you don’t know how to keep a healthy balance in the midst of chaos – you will allow further challenges and limitations to set you OFF COURSE. Furthermore competition, work pressure and responsibilities have to be dealt with. Faced with this scenario, sometimes self-improvement and personal growth can be pushed into the background. One way to approach the need for growth is to develop and plan your personal development goals. If you do not have FAITH in yourself and your potential how do you expect anyone else to?

Personal Development Goals Overview

Personal development is one of the most important aspects of an individual’s life. Personal development is a life long journey of learning and growing. Cultures all over the world, since ancient times, have added a lot of value on personal development in order to bring children and youth into the society to fulfill and assume meaningful roles. Spirituality, philosophy, and ethics all encompass methods for personal development and self-improvement. Below please find a list of a few areas where one can set personal development goals. Though this list is not everything it includes areas which constitute a core part of our lives.

1. Self-Improvement: This is an area where consistent growth and improvements are possible. You can enhance your skill set, take up something new, or you could finally get into doing the projects that will enhance your life. A personal self-development goal example could be to stop procrastinating about what you want to do and create a plan on how to get to where you want to go.

2. Career: Career growth is an area most people spend a great part of their lives working on. Working towards finding the right type of employment, taking responsibility of one’s own life to create a better future.

3. Health: Working on aspects of your health such as eating healthy, increasing your stamina, or clearing the mind clutter. The right thing to do would be to select one as a starting personal goal and act on it to completion before you start on the next thing.

4. Lifestyle: Many people are looking for ways to enhance their lifestyles, and you can easily do so by setting a personal goal, such as enrollment with a group that will provide you with support. For example exercising, joining an IT group, Poetry Group etc. Other ways that include a lifestyle goal are taking a class for music/art appreciation, attending a writing or reading group, or taking up any new sport. These have no cost attached and can support where you are and where you want to reach in terms of your personal growth.

5. Family: Personal goals regarding family could be, setting a day to spend with loved ones, organizing a family get together, discussing how the family can move forward and do better as a whole. Here is where there is opportunity to discuss issues that may have happened in the past and require healing without confrontation or blame. It is incredible how this can change relationships within a family.
6. Relationships: Setting up personal goals for relationships is a good way to approach them and helps you to monitor your progress. Goals could include finding that special someone, considering how to make your relationships healthy, focusing on what is important and leaving behind what is not. It is not as simple as it used to be to meet a person that would be parallel in ways of life that compliment oneself. So writing down a list of values and qualities you are looking for can be helpful in ensuring it is not just physical attraction.

7. Education: Education a key area of personal development in two ways. It often describes where you work. Continuing and enhancing your education for a career is always a good goal for development. You could finally take that cookery or IT class you have been thinking of, or take some time to study a subject you have optimal interest in via vocational courses.

8. Art: Art is an important aspect of human life which has the potential to give a lot of satisfaction and personal growth. Attending art lessons, taking up a musical instrument, or attending an acting workshop could get you started. Art is a wonderful way to express one’s innermost feelings. This could be a path of life or a hobby.

9. Culture: Culture is a vast area to explore and you could do this by learning a new cuisine, learning a traditional dance form, learning about your own culture or figuring out your ancestry heritage. Culture can be so ingrained within us that we could also consider looking at what our personal culture is and redefine areas that are no longer relevant.

As seen in the above paragraphs, setting personal goals require a few basic steps. One is to set up the goal by identifying an area and setting up a sample personal development goal within it. The next step is to put a time frame on the activity, when to start, how long it will take and set a specific date for completion. The next step is to set up the personal development plans. Once the goal is decided and the time boundaries are set, it is simply a matter of putting the plans into action. Timeframes for start and finish are extremely important in making goals come alive and manifest into reality.

HOW TO DO A PERSONAL SWOT

You are most likely to succeed in life if you use your talents to their fullest extent. Similarly, you’ll suffer fewer problems if you know what your weaknesses are, and if you manage these weaknesses so that they don’t matter in the work you do.

So how you go about identifying these strengths and weaknesses, and analyzing the opportunities and threats that flow from them? SWOT Analysis is a useful technique that helps you do this.

What makes SWOT especially powerful is that, with a little thought, it can help you uncover opportunities that you would not otherwise have spotted. And by understanding your weaknesses, you can manage and eliminate threats that might otherwise hurt your ability to move forward.

If you look at yourself using the SWOT framework, you can start to separate yourself from your peers, and further develop the specialized talents and abilities you need to advance your career and help you achieve your personal goals.

**Strengths**

- What advantages do you have that others don’t have (for example, skills, certifications, education, or connections)?
- What do you do better than anyone else?
• What personal resources can you access?
• What do other people see as your strengths?
• Which of your achievements are you most proud of?
• What values do you believe in that others fail to exhibit?
• Are you part of a network that no one else is involved in? If so, what connections do you have with influential people?

Consider this from your own perspective, and from the point of view of the people around you. And don’t be modest or shy – be as objective as you can. Knowing and using your strengths can make you happier and more fulfilled at work.

And if you still have any difficulty identifying your strengths, write down a list of your personal characteristics. Some of these will hopefully be strengths!

**Weaknesses**

• What tasks do you usually avoid because you don’t feel confident doing them?
• What will the people around you see as your weaknesses?
• Are you completely confident in your education and skills training? If not, where are you weakest?
• What are your negative work habits (for example, are you often late, are you disorganized, do you have a short temper, or are you poor at handling stress)?
• Do you have personality traits that hold you back in your field? For instance, if you have to conduct meetings on a regular basis, a fear of public speaking would be a major weakness.

Again, consider this from a personal/internal perspective and an external perspective. Do other people see weaknesses that you don’t see? Do co-workers consistently outperform you in key areas? Be realistic – it’s best to face any unpleasant truths as soon as possible.

**Opportunities**

• What new technology can help you? Or can you get help from others or from people via the Internet?
• Is your industry growing? If so, how can you take advantage of the current market?
• Do you have a network of strategic contacts to help you, or offer good advice?
• What trends (management or otherwise) do you see in your company, and how can you take advantage of them?
• Are any of your competitors failing to do something important? If so, can you take advantage of their mistakes?
• Is there a need in your company or industry that no one is filling?
• Do your customers or vendors complain about something in your company? If so, could you create an opportunity by offering a solution?

You might find useful opportunities in the following:
• Networking events, educational classes, or conferences.

• A colleague going on an extended leave. Could you take on some of this person’s projects to gain experience?

• A new role or project that forces you to learn new skills, like public speaking or international relations.

• A company expansion or acquisition. Do you have specific skills (like a second language) that could help with the process?

Also, importantly, look at your strengths, and ask yourself whether these open up any opportunities – and look at your weaknesses, and ask yourself whether you could open up opportunities by eliminating those weaknesses.

**Threats**

• What obstacles do you currently face?

• Are any of your colleagues competing with you for projects or roles?

• Does changing technology threaten your position or the current environment?

• Could any of your weaknesses lead to threats?

Performing this analysis will often provide key information – it can point out what needs to be done and put problems into perspective.

**A Personal SWOT Example**

What would a personal SWOT assessment look like? Review this SWOT analysis for Carol, an advertising manager.

**Strengths**

• I’m very creative. I often impress people with a new perspective on life.

• I communicate well with my colleagues and family.

• I have the ability to ask key questions to find just the right angle in solving problems.

• I’m completely committed to becoming a better person and excelling in what I choose to do

**Weaknesses**

• I do not believe in myself and I feel I am slow at understanding new information

• I procrastinate and do not complete my tasks

• I get nervous when presenting ideas in groups, and this fear of public speaking often takes the passion out of my presentations.

**Opportunities**

• I know how to communicate well however I feel uneasy in groups

• I love history and I am very good at remembering dates and details

I am very good at advising my friends but I do not take that same advice for myself.
Threats

- I feel other people are better than me
- I am creative and do not know how to use this creativity
- The current economic climate has resulted in my feeling that I cannot go far.

These threats can hold a person back from fully exploring their creativity and using their intelligence to go forward.

Quote
*Build your weaknesses until they become your strengths…*Knute Rockne – A Norwegian/American football Player
CHAPTER 6 - EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION – THE LIFE SOURCE OF ALL RELATIONSHIPS AND LIFE ITSELF!

The objective of this chapter is to clearly understand what a big part communication plays in our lives. Communication is twofold. To listen and to speak and to ensure that the person receives your message as intended without misinterpretation.

It sounds so simple: say what you mean and mean what you say. But all too often, what we try to communicate gets lost in translation despite our best intentions. We say one thing, the other person hears something else, and misunderstandings, frustration, and conflicts ensue.

Fortunately, you can learn how to communicate more clearly and effectively. Whether you’re trying to improve communication with your spouse, kids, boss, or coworkers, you can improve the communication skills that enable you to effectively connect with others, build trust and respect, and feel heard and understood.

What is effective communication?

Communication is about more than just exchanging information. It’s about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information. Effective communication is also a two-way street. It’s not only how you convey a message so that it is received and understood by someone in exactly the way you intended, it’s also how you listen to gain the full meaning of what’s being said and to make the other person feel heard and understood.

More than just the words you use, effective communication combines a set of skills including nonverbal
communication, engaged listening, managing stress in the moment, the ability to communicate assertively, and the capacity to recognize and understand your own emotions and those of the person you’re communicating with.

Effective communication is the glue that helps you deepen your connections to others and improve teamwork, decision making, and problem solving. It enables you to communicate even negative or difficult messages without creating conflict or destroying trust.

While effective communication is a learned skill, it is more effective when it’s spontaneous rather than mechanical. A speech that is read, for example, rarely has the same impact as a speech that’s delivered (or appears to be delivered) spontaneously. Of course, it takes time and effort to develop these skills and become an effective communicator. The more effort and practice you put in, the more instinctive and spontaneous your communication skills will become.

**Barriers to effective communication**

- **Stress and out-of-control emotion.** When you’re stressed or emotionally overwhelmed, you’re more likely to misread other people, send confusing or off-putting nonverbal signals, and lapse into unhealthy knee-jerk patterns of behavior. Take a moment to calm down before continuing a conversation.

- **Lack of focus.** You can’t communicate effectively when you’re multitasking. If you’re planning what you’re going to say next, daydreaming, checking text messages, or thinking about something else, you’re almost certain to miss nonverbal cues in the conversation. You need to stay focused on the moment-to-moment experience.

- **Inconsistent body language.** Nonverbal communication should reinforce what is being said, not contradict it. If you say one thing, but your body language says something else, your listener will likely feel you’re being dishonest. For example, you can’t say “yes” while shaking your head no.

- **Negative body language.** If you disagree with or dislike what’s being said, you may use negative body language to rebuff the other person’s message, such as crossing your arms, avoiding eye contact, or tapping your feet. You don’t have to agree, or even like what’s being said, but to communicate effectively without making the other person defensive, it’s important to avoid sending negative signals.

Let us try and classify the barriers to communication into internal and external barriers.

1. **Internal** would include stuff like stress, perceptions, biases, negative thought patterns, interpretations, etc.

2. **External** would include stuff like external noise (Sirens, vehicles moving) inaudibility of the speaker, tone of the speaker, accent etc.

**ACTIVITY – 1 to 1.5 hours**

Give them ONLY 10 minutes for this exercise. Divide the group into 3’s. Let one share a simple Short experience, the 2nd one listens and the 3rd one observes. The 2nd one listening and the 3rd observer are not allowed to ask any questions. Then request each group of 3 to come to the front. The 2nd Listener will say what he heard, then the 3rd Observer will say what he observed and then the 1st Story teller will say what he said and whether he was heard correctly or not.

**Becoming an engaged Listener**

People often focus on what they should say, but effective communication is less about talking and more about listening. Listening well means not just understanding the words or the information being communicated, but also under-
standing the emotions the speaker is trying to communicate.

There’s a big difference between engaged listening and simply hearing. When you really listen—when you’re engaged with what’s being said—you’ll hear the subtle intonations in someone’s voice that tell you how that person is feeling and the emotions they’re trying to communicate. When you’re an engaged listener, not only will you better understand the other person, you’ll also make that person feel heard and understood, which can help build a stronger, deeper connection between you.

By communicating in this way, you’ll also experience a process that lowers stress and supports physical and emotional well-being. If the person you’re talking to is calm, for example, listening in an engaged way will help to calm you, too. Similarly, if the person is agitated, you can help calm them by listening in an attentive way and making the person feel understood.

**Pay attention to non-verbal signals**

When we communicate things that we care about, we do so mainly using nonverbal signals. Nonverbal communication, or body language, includes facial expressions, body movement and gestures, eye contact, posture, the tone of your voice, and even your muscle tension and breathing. The way you look, listen, move, and react to another person tells them more about how you’re feeling than words alone ever can.

Developing the ability to understand and use nonverbal communication can help you connect with others, express what you really mean, navigate challenging situations, and build better relationships at home and work.

- You can enhance effective communication by using open body language—arms uncrossed, standing with an open stance or sitting on the edge of your seat, and maintaining eye contact with the person you’re talking to. This can be better explained through SOLER
  
  S- Sit squarely or at an angle
  
  O- Maintain an Open posture (avoid crossing legs, arms, barriers like tables etc.)
  
  L-Lean forward appropriately when in the conversation
  
  E-Maintain Eye contact; but do not stare
  
  R-Be Relaxed during the conversation

- You can also use body language to emphasize or enhance your verbal message—patting a friend on the back while complimenting him on his success, for example, or pounding your fists to underline your message.

**Assert Yourself**

Direct, assertive expression makes for clear communication and can help boost self-esteem and decision-making. Being assertive means expressing your thoughts, feelings, and needs in an open and honest way, while standing up for yourself and respecting others. It does NOT mean being hostile, aggressive, or demanding. Effective communication is always about understanding the other person, not about winning an argument or forcing your opinions on others.

To improve assertiveness:

- **Value yourself and your opinions.** They are as important as anyone else’s.

- **Know your needs and wants.** Learn to express them without infringing on the rights of others.

- **Express negative thoughts** in a positive way. It’s OK to be angry, but you must be respectful as well.

- **Receive feedback positively.** Accept compliments graciously, learn from your mistakes, and ask for
help when needed. There is no pride in asking for help as we have been made to feel.

- **Learn to say “no.”** Know your limits and don’t let others take advantage of you. Look for alternatives so everyone feels good about the outcome.

**ILLUSTRATION**

There were 3 friends, Makau, Njau and Amadi having a conversation about a beautiful girl they had seen. Each one wanted to date her but since they were friends they decided that this would interfere with their friendship. They decided to invite the girl to have lunch with all 3 of them and decide who she liked the most and choose rather than they all make a go for her. This was the best decision they made as when she came for lunch she actually said she could not decide and would like to meet each one separately to make her decision. She also said she would not like to interfere in their friendship. This is what effective communication is about. To discuss, listen and come to agreements for the good of all in this case. This is not the norm. Mostly men and women will sneak behind a friend’s back or be vague and contact the person privately to get what they want. To have such a great friendship as these 3 gents shows us it is possible to be honest and upfront and more importantly communicate this amongst themselves.

**Questions**

1. What did you learn from this story?
2. How would you behave if you were in a similar situation or another situation where you had to be honest?
3. How would you communicate what you feel?
4. Would you listen to what the others had to say and be able to change a decision if it was going to harm yourself and them?

**ACTIVITY – 1.5 hours**

Breakout groups of 3 – Ask them to each tell a quick story in 2 minutes and come back to the classroom. Each person will tell the story of another. It will be evident that the story teller and listener will have gaps. That is the point of this exercise.

**LESSON LEARNT**

Communication is about speaking effectively, using simple and appropriate language to ensure one’s message goes through and is well understood. Communication second role is to listen carefully and understand the message someone is parsing across. This avoids all the misunderstandings, arguments and also one person talking all the time while the other only listens. Ensure all your communication is always twofold.

**Quote**

“When you give yourself permission to communicate what matters to you in every situation you will have peace despite rejection or disapproval. Putting a voice to your soul helps you to let go of the negative energy of fear and regret.” Shannon L. Alder - is an inspirational author
CHAPTER 7 - Time Management and prioritization

The objective of this chapter is to ensure that every participant understands the importance of time-management and prioritization. Without this clear understanding, one can mess up their lives as they will not respect time for themselves and others. WE all have the same time 24 hours and unless we use it properly, time is like water—it runs away without our knowledge.

Chances are good that, at some time in your life, you’ve taken a time management class, read about it in books, and tried to use an electronic or paper-based day planner to organize, prioritize and schedule your day. “Why, with this knowledge and these gadgets,” you may ask, “do I still feel like I can't get everything done I need to?”

The answer is simple. Before you can even begin to manage time, you must learn what time is. A dictionary defines time as “the point or period at which things occur.” Put simply, time is when stuff happens. There are two types of time: clock time and real time. In clock time, there are 60 seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour, 24 hours in a day and 365 days in a year. All time passes equally. When someone turns 50, they are exactly 50 years old, no more or no less.

In real time, all time is relative. Time flies or drags depending on what you’re doing. Two hours queuing at the bank or paying you electricity bill can feel like 12 years. And yet our 12-year-old children seem to have grown up in only two hours.

Which time describes the world in which you really live, real time or clock time?

The reason time management gadgets and systems don’t work is that these systems are designed to manage clock time. Clock time is irrelevant. You don’t live in or even have access to clock time. You live in real time, a world in which all time flies when you are having fun or drags when you are doing your taxes.

The good news is that real time is mental. It exists between your ears. You create it. Anything you create, you can manage. It’s time to remove any self-sabotage or self-limitation you have around “not having enough time,” or today not being “the right time” to start a business or manage your current business properly.

There are only three ways to spend time: thoughts, conversations and actions. Regardless of the type of business you own, your work will be composed of those three items.

As you enter the world as a young adult, you may be frequently interrupted or pulled in different directions. While you cannot eliminate interruptions, you do get a say on how much time you will spend on them and how much time you will spend on the thoughts, conversations and actions that will lead you to success.
Practice the following techniques to become the master of your own time:

1. Carry a schedule and record all your thoughts, conversations and activities for a week. This will help you understand how much you can get done during the course of a day and where your precious moments are going. You’ll see how much time is actually spent producing results and how much time is wasted on unproductive thoughts, conversations and actions.

2. Any activity or conversation that’s important to your success should have a time assigned to it. To-do lists get longer and longer to the point where they’re unworkable. Appointment books work. Schedule appointments with yourself and create time blocks for high-priority thoughts, conversations, and actions. Schedule when they will begin and end. Have the discipline to keep these appointments.

3. Plan to spend at least 50 percent of your time engaged in the thoughts, activities and conversations that produce most of your results.

4. Schedule time for interruptions. Plan time to be pulled away from what you’re doing. Take, for instance, the concept of having “office hours.” Isn’t “office hours” another way of saying “planned interruptions?”

5. Take the first 30 minutes of every day to plan your day. Don’t start your day until you complete your time plan. The most important time of your day is the time you schedule to schedule time.

6. Take five minutes before every call and task to decide what result you want to attain. This will help you know what success looks like before you start. And it will also slow time down. Take five minutes after each call and activity to determine whether your desired result was achieved. If not, what was missing? How do you put what’s missing in your next call or activity?

7. Put up a “Do not disturb” sign when you absolutely have to get work done.

8. Practice not answering the phone just because it’s ringing and e-mails just because they show up. Disconnect instant messaging. Don’t instantly give people your attention unless it’s absolutely crucial in your business to offer an immediate human response. Instead, schedule a time to answer email and return phone calls.

9. Block out other distractions like Facebook and other forms of social media unless you use these tools to generate business. They are time wasters and the worst of all is ‘chatting’ endlessly with various people when you are saying ‘nothing’

10. Remember that it’s impossible to get everything done. Also remember that odds are good that 20 percent of your thoughts, conversations and activities produce 80 percent of your results.
The difference between time managing you or you managing time!
One can get overwhelmed and allow minutes to tick by unnoticed or manage time like it’s the most expensive commodity you have. Prioritizing and sticking to timeframes is the ultimate way to manage time!

Illustration
In a factory where 100 people worked in producing milk cartons, one of the biggest challenges was time keeping. Although they had a time card, no-one really respected time. One fine day a new Manager was employed and he decided that things needed to change where time management was concerned. He called a meeting and asked the employees why they were late and did not keep time. Many reasons and excuses were mentioned. The manager than told them that they were all good workers but that they were losing, on average, 25-40 hours a month per employee. When translated into money – that was Kenya shillings 3000-10000/= per month per employee. He said he would start deducting this amount from their wages if they did not keep time. This was the beginning of change as everyone started coming on time and respected the Manager for showing them what they had been doing. Instead of losing 25-40 hours a week per employee they started gaining 5-10 hours per staff which increased production, which in turn increased profits. At the end of the year each staff got a huge unexpected bonus.
When one translates money to time one realizes how much money we lose then we can quantify the meaning of time in one way.

Questions
1. What have you learnt about time?
2. Why is time so important and why must we respect time?
3. Would you agree to wait for someone who was supposed to meet you at 10am and had not arrived till 11am?
4. How do you think your Facilitator would feel if she/he was there at 7.30am to start an 8am class and you arrived at
9am?

**ACTIVITY as homework**

Request all students to create a weekly schedule, prioritize, and bring it to class the following day for further discussion. Ask them to plan what time they need to wake up to be on time to school and the same for all activities the whole week. Net day, put them in groups of 5/6 and ask them to share and help each other refine their schedules. After an hour, ask if anyone had any questions and ensure they have clearly understood.

**LESSON LEARNT**

Time governs our lives whether we like it or not. If we do not manage time we will not manage our lives. If we do not prioritize we will not know how to define what is more important than the next thing.

*Quote*

“Time is what we want most, but what we spend worst.” – William Penn - William Penn was an English real estate entrepreneur, philosopher,
CHAPTER 8 - Gender, Sexuality, HIV, Early Pregnancy, Rape and Violence, Biases, Drugs and the addictions caused due to extreme dysfunctional life experiences!

The objective of this chapter is to address aspects that occur in our society that are not always spoken about openly. This chapter will help some to really express, release and share some of their painful experiences. Others will learn from the experiences of their peers and others will learn to feel empathy and also how they can change their sphere. All the above topics are pain filled experiences that cause one to substance abuse, self-harm or become very dysfunctional. This can be healed and a person is capable of leading a different life.

For some reason or other, Kenyans depict a wide range of abuse and violence that shows up in so many different ways. It is displayed via various outlets and given our history; the causes cannot be pinned to any particular reason except that of major oppression due to dysfunctional life experiences. Violence shows up in rape, amongst peers, spouses, partners, gangs, children, women and the list is endless.

Rape is one of the ugliest violent acts that can be done to another. Previously there were more cases of girl child rapes however in the last 2 decades there seem to be not as many but enough evidence that the boy child is also suffering from this horrific act of violence.

A big part of the continuing of these continuous rapes is due to the fact that the perpetrators threaten the victim with death, shame, or harm to their families apart from the fact that the victim mostly feels that they are to blame. Most rape victims are under the age of 14 and so the innocent mind is terrified and cannot express. The most important aspect is for people to understand this and the need for sex education, candid conversations and getting out of the ‘silence’ mode as this has been the status quo for far too many decades.

There are now many Youth organizations where victims are speaking out and asking others to do the same. Both the victim and perpetrator need help as more often than not, the perpetrator was abused as a child. It is essential for us to understand that both the abuser and abused need help.

EARLY PREGNANCY

Early pregnancies are caused through rape or because of the lack of awareness of this have to most likely leave school and try to look after herself and the child. Families are not always supportive as they live below or at poverty lines and to feed another mouth is just too much to bear apart from the stigma that society renders on these matters.

How can we look at ways to aid kids that have gone through these experiences and help them heal? There are many ways of helping them through organizations that support victims, which support children born to young mothers. It is essential to aid each one to understand that they need to get help and heal so as to ensure this pattern is not repeated for the next generation.
Activity – 1.5 Hours

Breakout groups of 4. Ask each person to discuss what pain means to them individually and for them to share. Once they have shared ask them to discuss how it felt to hear what each one had to share. What were the shared conclusions from this exercise? Each group to return to class and share their view of life through this exercise.

Questions
1. What did you learn from this topic?
2. How can you help yourself from these kinds of situations?
3. Do you understand that everyone has had some experience or other that is challenging?

LESSON LEARNT

One learns to hide one’s experiences as though one needs to be ashamed when it is generally the other person who has caused pain, hurt and damage. There is no need for that as it is not one’s fault when another causes harm and distortion.

QUOTE

The leading cause of death for girls 15 to 19 worldwide is not accident or violence or disease; it is complications from pregnancy. Girls under 15 are up to five times as likely to die while having children than are women in their 20s, and their babies are more likely to die as well. Nancy Gibbs - is an American essayist and managing editor for Time magazine

SEXUALITY

Sexuality is a Gender related major issue. Different aspects of our society play a huge part in the misunderstanding of sexuality, the language around it and the permissions allowed or disallowed on appropriate and acceptable behavior. Sexuality is not discussed openly however everyone is aware that this is something that happens and is not acceptable. This must change as we engage more Youth and discussing sexuality is essential for their wellbeing. There are so many mistranslated and misunderstood aspects that for the future of relationships, couples and family units this aspect must be demystified and shared. It is not a shame, nor is it something that needs to be hidden. It is part of life.
Understanding Sexuality

Everyone’s sexuality is different, and it’s not necessarily as simple as ‘gay’ or ‘straight’. Some people are attracted to only one sex, and others are attracted to a diversity of people regardless of sex or gender, with a lot of different preferences in between. Some gay, lesbian or bisexual people say from an early age that they “felt different”, and had crushes on friends of people of the same sex, only associating these feelings with being gay or bisexual later on. Many people don’t discover their sexual attractions until much later into adulthood and it can be just as confusing then.

Sexuality can be confusing. Don’t worry if you aren’t sure. Being young is a time of figuring out what works for you and strong feelings and exploration are often part of that. In time, you’ll find that you’re drawn mostly to men or to women or to both or to neither, and you’ll know then.

Types of Sexuality

There are a few common labels people use to identify their sexuality. Your sexuality is not defined by who you have sex with – it’s about how you feel and how you choose to identify yourself.

- **Straight.** Attracted mostly to people of the opposite sex or gender.
- **Gay.** Attracted mostly to people of the same sex or gender (used by guys, and often girls too).
- **Lesbian.** Attracted mostly to people of the same sex or gender (used by women).
- **Bisexual.** Attracted to both men and women. Some people use terms like pan or pansexual to say they’re attracted to different kinds of people, regardless of their gender.
- **Asexual.** Not really sexually attracted to anyone.

What you call yourself is up to you – some people choose labels like queer, pansexual, fluid – whatever. The important thing is that you choose what feels comfortable.

You don’t have to label yourself today or ever. For many people this might change over time too.

Questions

1. What have you learnt that you did not know about sexuality?
2. Are you ashamed or embarrassed to discuss sexuality or anything to do with it?
3. How do you feel about yourself now that we have had an open discussion?
4. There is no shame as it is part of our lives and we need to understand how to make this a healthier aspect of discussion.

**Quote**

“The behavior of a human being in sexual matters is often a prototype for the whole of his other modes of reaction in life.” — Sigmund Freud, Sexuality and the Psychology of Love
DRUGS, ADDICTIONS and the negative effects

Body Systems Affected

- **Nervous System**
  - Drugs affect the spinal cord and brain. It slows down regular body functions.
- **Cardiovascular System**
  - Drugs slow down the heart rate and causes low blood pressure.
- **Digestive System**
  - Drugs can make your liver work incorrectly.
- **Respiratory System**
  - It can can affect how easily you get sick. You may be more prone to getting ill.

Drugs are chemicals. Different drugs, because of their chemical structures, can affect the body in different ways. In fact, some drugs can even change a person’s body and brain in ways that last long after the person has stopped taking drugs, maybe even permanently.

Depending on the drug, it can enter the human body in a number of ways, including injection, inhalation, and ingestion. The method of how it enters the body impacts on how the drug affects the person. For example: injection takes the drug directly into the blood stream, providing more immediate effects; while ingestion requires the drug to pass through the digestive system, delaying the effects.

Most abused drugs directly or indirectly target the brain’s reward system by flooding the circuit with dopamine. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter present in regions of the brain that regulate movement, emotion, cognition, motivation, and feelings of pleasure. When drugs enter the brain, they can actually change how the brain performs its jobs. These changes are what lead to compulsive drug use, the hallmark of addiction.

**INJURIES**

More deaths, illnesses and disabilities stem from substance abuse than from any other preventable health condition. Today, one in four deaths is attributable to illicit drug use. People who live with substance dependence have a higher risk of all bad outcomes including unintentional injuries, accidents, risk of domestic violence, medical problems, and death.

**HEALTH PROBLEMS**

The impact of drug abuse and dependence can be far-reaching, affecting almost every organ in the human body. Drug use can:

- Weaken the immune system, increasing susceptibility to infections.
- Cause cardiovascular conditions ranging from abnormal heart rate to heart attacks. Injected drugs can
also lead to collapsed veins and infections of the blood vessels and heart valves.

- Cause nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain.
- Cause the liver to have to work harder, possibly causing significant damage or liver failure.
- Cause seizures, stroke and widespread brain damage that can impact all aspects of daily life by causing problems with memory, attention and decision-making, including sustained mental confusion and permanent brain damage.
- Produce global body changes such as breast development in men, dramatic fluctuations in appetite and increases in body temperature, which may impact a variety of health conditions.

**EFFECTS ON BRAIN**

Although initial drug use may be voluntary, drugs have been shown to alter brain chemistry, which interferes with an individual’s ability to make decisions and can lead to compulsive craving, seeking and use. This then becomes a substance dependency.

- All drugs of abuse - nicotine, cocaine, marijuana, and others - effect the brain’s “reward” circuit, which is part of the limbic system.
- Drugs hijack this “reward” system, causing unusually large amounts of dopamine to flood the system.
- This flood of dopamine is what causes the “high” or euphoria associated with drug abuse.

**BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS**

- Paranoia
- Aggressiveness
- Hallucinations
- Addiction
- Impaired Judgment
- Impulsiveness
- Loss of Self-Control
Gender Issues

Gender issues have challenged the world over. In Kenya, we seem to still experience a very high volume of gender based violence. The past generational, cultural and traditional outlook on the woman’s role versus the male role is not based on equality.

We are now in the 21st Century and what was acceptable 50/100 years ago is not acceptable today. Educating communities on this is highly necessary to move with the times and change the perception of the woman as the 2nd class citizen. Youth are the future and they need to change these old patterns to ensure that the next generation is educated on equality, equity, integrity – some of the new constitutional values and way of life.

Illustration

Kipchoge had an arranged marriage to Chebet. Their families arranged this as they seemed to think it was an excellent match for the families. They had neighbouring farmland and this would ensure the heritage safety. What they had not considered was whether their kids felt the same way. In these 2 families everything was
‘dictated’ by the fathers so there was a strong patriarchal dynasty> once the couple were married, really against their consent and especially because Kip had been in love with another – Cheptoo, for 5 years, his displeasure was intense. He could not go against his fathers wishes or he would be excommunicated. So Kip started drinking heavily to hide his pain. He would get home late and beat his wife when she questioned him. Finally, Chebet decided to return home as she was unable to take this kind of life. Her father, although upset was more concerned about what people would say. Chebet was clear, that if he forced her to go back she would leave town and find a life elsewhere. Finally both families had to sit together and work out a solution. Kip came clean about his love, apologized and soon a resolution was found. The two were allowed to divorce and find their own partners.

Questions

1. How many in the class would have the courage Chebet have to leave an abusive relationship and challenge your parents?
2. What did you learn from Kipchoge’s behavior?
3. Why is it important to not allow others to decide for your life? Only when you can take responsibility for your own life.

LESSON LEARNT

Every single human being goes through some pain or the other. We do not need to judge others as each person’s pain is deep and painful for them. Learn to be empathetic, understand that we each have a journey, experiences that have been disruptive and dysfunctional. It is now time to understand and leave these behind.

Quote

“If someone puts their hands on you make sure they never put their hands on anybody else again.”
— Malcolm X
Chapter 9 - Self-Motivation, forgiveness and acceptance

This chapter is about learning to motivate oneself. Once one accepts what was and forgives then one can move on. Do not wait for someone else to motivate you. It is your life and you are totally responsible to self-motivate and take responsibility of your life.

Self-motivation is the force that keeps pushing us going – it’s our internal drive to achieve, produce, develop, and keep moving forward. When you think you’re ready to quit something, or you just don’t know how to start, your self-motivation is what pushes you to go on.

~ Are you motivated to achieve what you really want in life?
~ And how hard do you push yourself to get things done?
~ Wanting to do something and motivating yourself to actually do it are two different things.
~ So, what’s the difference between those who never reach their goals, year after year, and those who achieve one goal after another? Often, it’s their self-motivation.

~ With self-motivation, you learn to teach yourself to grow – regardless of the specific situation. That’s why it’s such a fundamental tool for reaching your goals, achieving your dreams, and succeeding, in this journey we call life. It is the ONLY way to live this life without depending on outside forces and support to take you where you want to go. No-one can do that for you as it’s the internal mechanism of each human being that propels them forward or keeps them stuck.
~ So, how self-motivated are you?

Factors in Self-Motivation

Self-motivation is complex. It’s linked to your level of initiative in setting challenging goals for yourself; your belief that you have the skills and abilities needed to achieve those goals; and your expectation that if you put in enough hard work, you will succeed (or at least be in the running, if it’s a competitive situation).

Four factors that are necessary to build the strongest levels of self-motivation:

Self-confidence and self-esteem

Positive thinking in the present and for the future

Focus and strong goals

A motivating environment and if that is not there you need to create one for your life

By working on all of these together, you should quickly improve your self-motivation. Let’s look at each of these factors individually.

1. Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem

Part of being self-motivated is having good levels of self-assurance, self-confidence, and self-efficacy. More on these below!

Being highly self-assured means you will set challenging goals for yourself, and it’s also a resiliency factor for when you encounter setbacks. If you don’t believe in yourself you’ll be much more likely to think, “I knew I couldn’t do this” instead of, “This one failure isn’t going to stop me!”

By developing a general level of self-confidence in yourself, you will not only believe you can succeed, but you’ll also recognize and enjoy the successes you’ve already had. That, in turn, will inspire you to build on those successes. The momentum created by self-confidence is hard to beat.

2. Positive Thinking in the present and future

Your life today is the result of your attitudes and choices in the past. Your life tomorrow will be the result of your at-
Attitudes and the choices you make today.

Positive thinking is closely related to self-confidence as a factor in self-motivation. It’s important to look at things positively, especially when things aren’t going as planned and you’re ready to give up.

If you think that things are going to go wrong or that you won’t succeed, this may influence things in such a way that your predictions will come true. This is particularly the case if you need to work hard to achieve success, or if you need to persuade others to support you in order to succeed. Your thoughts can have a major influence on whether you succeed or fail, so make sure those thoughts are “on your side.”

Positive thinking also helps you think about an attractive future that you want to realize. When you expect positive results, your choices will be more positive, and you’ll be less likely to leave outcomes to fate or chance. Having a vivid picture of success, combined with positive thinking, helps you bridge the gap between wanting something and going out to get it.

To apply “the power of positive thinking”, do the following:

A) Become aware of your thoughts. Write down these down throughout the day.

B) Challenge your negative thoughts, and replace them with positive ones.

C) Create a strong and vivid picture of what it will be like to achieve your goals.

D) Develop affirmations or statements that you can repeat to yourself throughout the day. These statements should remind you of what you want to achieve, and why you will achieve it.

Practice positive thinking until you automatically think about yourself and the world in a positive way, every day.

**Illustration**

Kimathi was a shy boy who was always hiding in corners and under the bed. When visitors would come to the house Kimathi would run and hide. This had become the norm. As Kimathi started school he would be too shy to speak in front of the class or make friends. This went on until Kimathi was in high school. His parents and teachers had tried everything from shouting to beating to locking him up to threatening him. Nothing worked. Until one fine day when he moved to Form 2 he met Otieno.

The two boys seemed to have a similar way of being and they befriended each other. Soon they started sharing their dilemmas and how they had been punished all their lives. They both decided it was really time to change. There was an essay reading competition in school. Without anyone’s knowledge both Kimathi and Otieno started to work on their essays by encouraging and challenging each other to see who would win.

When the day arrived, the entire school, teachers and parents were shocked at the performance of Kimathi and Otieno. They both won as they had done an amazing display and presentation. This is possible for anyone at any time in life! Learn to self-motivate and you will not depend on others to achieve your goals or dreams.
Forgiveness and Acceptance

Two sides of the same coin. What does forgiveness mean?

Forgiveness is the intentional and voluntary process by which the hurt person undergoes a change in feelings and attitude regarding an offense, letting go of negative emotions such as vengefulness, with an increased ability to wish the offender well. This aspect is based on not being able to change what happened or control the other party as neither one of these are possible. Holding on to pain, anger, hatred and drama makes one’s life miserable while the perpetrator generally is getting on with their life. Forgiveness opens a door to a different life for you as you remove the emotions related to a negative experience and move on with YOUR LIFE!
Acceptance – what does it mean?

Acceptance in human psychology is a person’s assent to the reality of a situation, recognizing a process or condition (often a negative or uncomfortable situation) without attempting to change it, protest. When one accepts a situation that means they can walk away and leave the negative emotions behind or dissolve them. This is a conscious decision and helps you set yourself free and take your life back in to your own hands instead of blame.

**ILLUSTRATION**

When Mwende was born the entire family celebrated her arrival. Her birth was unique as this family had had only boys being born for the last 3 generations in their family. The had been living in Kibera for the last 20 years. Mwende was the 5th child and she had 4 brothers born before her aged between 13 and 3. When Mwende was 9 years old, her parents had to go to the village as the grandfather had fallen very ill. The older siblings took responsibility of looking after the younger ones as is the case in most families. Unfortunately, the matatu the parents were traveling in had an accident and both parents died. When the information was received by the kids they were devastated. Mwende would not eat for weeks no matter how hard they tried. Finally, her oldest brother told her she had nothing to worry about as he would always be like her dad and would make sure he took care of her. Slowly life began to take a new shape and Mwende started to eat and get back to life as did her other siblings. When Mwende turned 21 there was a great celebration as she had managed to get a scholarship at a well-known college to pursue business studies. When she graduated 4 years later she worked hard and managed to move herself and her siblings out of Kibera into a home. This story proves anything is possible. Where there is a will there is a way and with support from her siblings she grew up to aspire and change her life and those around her. Pain
is ultimately felt and experienced by every human being on the planet regardless. Keeping this in mind this story shows us how one can change their life if they so choose and believe in themselves.

QUESTIONS
1. What stood out for you in this story?
2. How does it relate to your life?
3. What can you change so that you change the course and direction of your life?

ACTIVITY
Write down the answers to the above questions adding how you can change and make this a daily affirmation that you stick on your mirror that you repeat each morning and evening. Affirmation examples are:
~ I believe in myself and my capabilities
~ I am now capable of fulfilling any goal I set my heart on
~ I am strong, resilient and intelligent
~ My past does not have power over me and I now move on

LESSON LEARNT
Nothing in life is static. Everything is transient so holding on to that which keeps changing does not help one move forward in life. Time moves, life moves, age moves, days move, hair grows, new cells are born and old ones die. Nothing in life is static so why make memories or life static. Let it flow and move towards the best it can be.

QUOTE
Accept what is, let go of what was and have faith in what will be…anonymous
CHAPTER 10 - Decision-making, problem-solving and creative thinking

The objective of this chapter is to understand the importance of the 3 listed above. If one cannot make decisions in life, then one will always sit on the fence or depend on others to make their decisions for them. This is okay when one is a child not as an adult. If one cannot solve problems, one will keep getting stuck in life and if one cannot be creative, it will be a dull life. All these 3 aspects are so important for a person to become a reliable, responsible adult.

The most important bridge connecting us to the outside world is the power to make decisions, solve our problems and be creative while undergoing these processes. If we keep doing the same thing, we will get the same results hence the need to be a creative and out of the box thinker. To make big decisions ensure you have enough information, that you have looked at options and you are objective. Sitting on the fence instead of making decisions is one of the most common self-sabotaging aspects that many experience. Making decisions relates to taking responsibility as well as dealing with the outcome whether good, bad or ugly. Many would prefer not to take a decision so that they avoid having to take the responsibility of the outcome as well as the consequences. This is not how life is meant to be. We make decisions every moment of the day from what to wear, who to talk to, what to eat to what we want to study and who we want to be with.

Making decisions is a part of the primary process of life. Anyone running away from making decisions is only delaying the inevitable, allowing life or someone else to make the decision for you which actually diminishes and reduces your hold on your own life.

Making decisions is a human right and look at it as a gift that you have not as a hindrance. It does not end there as once a decision is made you need to communicate it to those who will be affected by it followed by an implementation process.

When making a decision that requires a solution, be creative. Do not take the easy way out and do what has been done before or what others have done. Look at creative ways of finding a solution that will last. Quick fixes or temporary fixes do not work. Look for solutions that will have the best outcomes.

*** Keep one thing in mind; we cannot become too attached to outcomes as mostly they change. Outcomes are not always in our control as other people and situations could be the only way to live life without getting agitated and anxious wanting to control life beyond what we can.
Illustration

Decision-making, problem-solving and creative thinking are all linked. In order to use all 3 parts of your mind and achieve different results, you need to look at life through a different lens each time based on the context or situation. If you keep doing the same things and expect different results, it is insanity and stupidity. How do we get you to think creatively…open your mind and believe you can be different….because you are!

Let’s take the example of Jyoti who grew up in a typical Indian home with all its limitations. She was only allowed to speak with people from the same background, religion and color as her. She was not allowed to say anything that would disrupt the status quo of the home. As she went to secondary school, all the people in the family and community were upset as girls of that age ought to be married off as that was their way. Jyoti’s father decided that he would challenge the status quo and send his daughter to high school and college. Jyoti loved math and after high school went to learn to be an accountant. Just as Jyoti was finishing her last year in college, her father felt ill and he was unable to work. By this time her brother was married with 2 kids and had to pay his own bills, Jyoti decided to be creative. She spoke to the headmistress at her college and asked if she could do her last year part time due to their situation. The headmistress agreed and so Jyoti started to study part time and found a job part time. The money was still not enough. So she decided she would start doing additional work from home in the evenings and do monthly taxes. She advertised in a local newspaper and before she knew it she had found 15 new clients. It was not easy juggling school, homework, work and the additional work from home. Because her heart was set and she was young and full of energy she managed. After 1 year her father recovered and went back to work and Jyoti went back to full time college. She did not stop working in the evenings and now she has a full-fledged business servicing private clients as a consultant. Not only did she make quick and sharp decisions but she was creative and solved a major problem that needed immediate action.

QUESTIONS
1. Can anything change?
2. Can the impossible change?
3. What do you know you can change?

ACTIVITY

Breakout groups of 5. Each group to select a leader, 2 team players, 1 person who will play devil’s advocate’ and 1 observer. Ask each group to figure out what sort of problem they would like to tackle. It could be something that is actually happening in one of their lives and it’s substantial. Alternatively give them a problem from any of the following:
A) Your mother has been taken ill and you need to take care of 3 siblings, arrange their going to school, cooking, providing food and all the household chores etc. You have a job to get to and you have to make the best decisions and find solutions so that things run smoothly and that your mother is not worried so she can recover.

B) Your father just lost his job suddenly…what will happen now?

C) Your younger sister is 15 and the family just found out she is pregnant

Give the groups 30 minutes to do the exercise than come back to class>Each group to present their problem, a real life situation, and each person in the group to give input. 10 minutes for each group presentation. Then ask the rest of the groups if they have any feedback for each of the presenting groups and how they might have found a different solution. Ask each participant if they are clear on how important it is to make clearly thought through decisions, find creative solutions and implement.

**LESSON LEARNT**

WE do not know how life works. All we know is we can do the best we possible can and things can change. Through change, life changes and outcomes change. Life can become amazing – if we allow it and if we let change happen.

**Quote**

“Should you find yourself in a chronically leaking boat, energy devoted to changing vessels is likely to be more productive than energy devoted to patching leaks.” – Warren Buffett
CHAPTER 11 - Universal Values, understanding what essential Values mean and implementing them as the foundational pillars of life!

The objective of this chapter is to understand what values really mean. Values are Universal and somewhere along the line we have damaged these by bringing in localized aspects that fragment the values we live by. Unless one has a solid and clear understanding of one’s own value system, it is easy to be misled, get corrupted, be dishonest, lack integrity or be irresponsible as examples. This chapter defines values and a deep understanding of how to live an authentic life.

What is a value system?

A value system is set of preferable values that a person chooses to live by. A value system is extremely necessary and important for every human being. There is a general misunderstanding that traditional, cultural, environmental and other factors affect the universal values. This is actually what messes up the actual meaning of the value. Universal Values are exactly what they are – Universal meaning they mean the same thing no matter where you are. Integrity means being truthful whether you are in Nairobi, Mombasa or Kisumu. If a traditional belief crosses the value of integrity, it diminishes its fullest meaning and reduces it to a partial value. This fragments the understanding and way of life.

What is your personal ‘Value System’? The compass of life!

- Without clear definition of a value system one lives life aimlessly
- Values impact your life in every aspect
- Values impact how you make decisions
Your relationships are reliant on your values
How you perform revolves around your value system
Your behaviour revolves around your values
Your attitude rides on your values
YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON YOUR VALUES!!!!

Are your values yours or borrowed?

Curious
Creative
Intuitive
Innovative
Visionary

Competent
Confident
Responsible
Resourceful
Respectful

Caring
Sensitive
Sincere
Empathic
Tolerant
Supportive

Listening
Flexible
Spontaneous
Open
Honest
Concerned

Empowering
Dynamic
Humorous
Enthusiastic
Inspirational
Leader

Watching
Knowledgeable
Enhancer
Learner
Informed
Resourceful

The Teacher

Understand the importance of what outcomes occur without a proper value system

Lack of values result in:

- Masses being controlled by a few
- Corruption
- Inequality at all levels
- Separation - division
- Fragmentation
- Lies and more lies
- The many evils of greed and lack – poverty
- Suppression
- Destruction, rape, violence, pain
How do we learn or teach values?

What does it mean to have values?
- One lives within their ‘value code’
- To uphold oneself and one’s fellow people
- To live a wholesome life within the parameters of ‘what really matters’
- To take responsibility of the direction of one’s life and not ‘wait’ for someone to do it/fix it/save you/or solve your problems
- Be reliable/resilient/supported/supportive
- Deliver results and quantifiable outcomes
- Live in trust/truth/freedom and all its companions
- Live life from an ‘ACTION – SOLUTION ORIENTATED’ space
- Find the many ‘REAL’ Freedoms in life

Why Values become compromised and fragmented

Although Values are Universal, some localised circumstances that impact the order of choice are listed below:
- Economy
- Religion
- Culture
- Tradition
- Gender
- Wealth or Poverty
- Socialisation
- Tribal/Caste System
- Racial and other prejudices
**Most important Daily Values and their opposites**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Opposite of the value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Dishonesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Irresponsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Distrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truth</td>
<td>Lies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Disrespect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Confinement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compassion</td>
<td>Indifference</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Apathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>Chaos-Confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Defeatism-Rigidity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Miscommunication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Uniformity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Disbelief</td>
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<td>Coherence</td>
<td>Chaos</td>
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<td>Appreciation</td>
<td>Criticism</td>
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<td>Justice</td>
<td>Injustice</td>
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<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Indifference</td>
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<td>Balance</td>
<td>Imbalance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td>Disharmony</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**ILLUSTRATION**

Amadi had learnt to lie since he was a little boy. He had heard his parents and siblings lie and he thought this is how life was supposed to be lived. Initially Amadi only lied to get out of trouble however as he grew up he became a liar about most things. It became a way of life and as Amadi became a man he lost his friends and relationships due to lying. The crunch came when he lost his job due to lies and that’s when he was sent
for counselling. The counsellor he saw was someone kind and patient who took time to show Amadi how much he had lost in life and how his life would become miserable and lonely unless he changed. It took time but Amadi finally learnt to tell the truth and from then on his life started to change for the better. He started to create new friendships and met a lovely woman who he married and had children with. His ultimate lesson helped him teach his children to always tell the truth. This is how powerful the lesson of honesty is. He took responsibility to change and his life changed.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What are your 3 most important values?
2. How do you live them?
3. What have you learnt from this chapter?

**ACTIVITY – 1 hour**

Write down 3 main important values that you will now live by after understanding how they impact your life. Write down the reason why against each value. Let each student share their values with the class. Pair up the students as ‘buddies’ for the rest of the 3 months as they will responsible to keep their partner in check on the use of their 3 main values and vice versa.

For example, if one said that honesty would be a value and came late to class and made an excuse this would affect 4 main values. Honesty, trust, respect for the teacher and their peers and discipline. What would the facilitator consider as an appropriate consequence?

This is how each buddy will keep their buddy in check.

**LESSON LEARNT**

We must remember that all decision making comes down to our own values clarification, therefore when you are clear of your personal values and you are living congruently with your values, decision making become easy and effortless. Unless you understand and create a solid value system your life will not be lived authentically.

**QUOTE**

“It is impossible to escape the impression that people commonly use false standards of measurement — that they seek power, success and wealth for themselves and admire them in others, and that they underestimate what is of true value in life.” Sigmund Feud
CHAPTER 12 - Conflict Resolution and becoming confrontationally friendly

The objective of this chapter is to realise that confrontation is part of life and cannot be avoided. Therefore getting to be confrontationally friendly will help you understand that looking at a confrontation as an opportunity to resolve an issue is healthier than sweeping it under the carpet. If you keep sweeping it under the carpet it will keep recurring and create more issues. Deal with confrontation, do not hide it.

Conflict is a normal part of any healthy relationship. After all, two people can't be expected to agree on everything, all the time. Learning how to deal with conflict—rather than avoiding it—is crucial. When conflict is mismanaged, it can cause great harm to a relationship, but when handled in a respectful, positive way, conflict provides an opportunity to strengthen the bond between two people. By learning these skills for conflict resolution you will make your personal and professional relationships grow and get stronger.

Types of conflict

- Conflict of facts
- Conflict of aims - different goals
- Conflict of ideas - different interpretations
- Conflict of attitudes - different opinions
- Conflict of behavior - different behaviors are unacceptable

The above list gives us clarity on the areas that create conflict.

The list above shows us the various types of conflict between woman/man and others. However internal self-conflict has become one of the most debilitating aspects of life. As we explore and learn more about how we function as human beings, our motivators, influencers and what defines us, we realize our complexities as human beings. It shows us that we must begin by addressing our inner conflict first as we learn to deal with outer conflict as well.

Understanding conflict in relationships

Everyone needs to feel understood, nurtured, and supported, but the ways in which these needs are met vary widely. Differing needs for feeling comfortable and safe create some of the most severe challenges in our personal and professional relationships.

Think about the conflicting need for safety and continuity versus the need to explore and take risks. You frequently see this conflict between children and their parents. The child’s need is to explore, so the street or the cliff meets a need. But the parents’ need is to protect the child’s safety, so limiting exploration becomes a bone of contention between them.

The needs of both parties play important roles in the long-term success of most relationships, and each deserves respect and consideration. In personal relationships, a lack of understanding about differing needs can result in distance, arguments, and break-ups. In workplace conflicts, differing needs are often at the heart of bitter disputes, sometimes resulting in broken deals, fewer profits and lost jobs. When you can recognize the legitimacy of conflicting needs and become willing to examine them in an environment of compassionate understanding, it opens pathways to creative problem solving, relationship building, and improved relationships.

- A conflict is more than just a disagreement. It is a situation in which one or both parties perceive a threat (whether or not the threat is real).

- Conflicts continue to fester when ignored. Because conflicts involve perceived threats to our well-being and survival, they stay with us until we face and resolve them.

- We respond to conflicts based on our perceptions of the situation, not necessarily to an objective review of the facts. Our
- **Conflicts trigger strong emotions.** If you aren’t comfortable with your emotions or able to manage them in times of stress, you won’t be able to resolve conflict successfully.

- **Conflicts are an opportunity for growth.** When you’re able to resolve conflict in a relationship, it builds trust. You can feel secure knowing your relationship can survive challenges and disagreements.

**How do you view conflict?**

Do you fear conflict or avoid it at all costs? If your perception of conflict comes from frightening or painful memories from previous unhealthy relationships or early childhood, you may expect all present-day disagreements to end badly. You may view conflict in relationships as demoralizing, humiliating, dangerous, and something to fear. If your early life experiences also left you feeling out of control and powerless, conflict may even be traumatizing for you.

If you view conflict as dangerous, it tends to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. When you go into a conflict situation already feeling extremely threatened, it’s tough to deal with the problem at hand in a healthy way. Instead, you are more likely to shut down or blow up in anger.

**Conflict resolution, stress and emotion**

Conflict triggers strong emotions and can lead to hurt feelings, disappointment, and discomfort. When handled in an unhealthy manner, it can cause irreparable rifts, resentments, and break-ups. But when conflict is resolved in a healthy way, it increases our understanding of one another, builds trust, and strengthens our relationship bonds.

If you are out of touch with your feelings or so stressed that you can only pay attention to a limited number of emotions, you won’t be able to understand your own needs. And, if you don’t understand your own needs, you will have a hard time communicating with others and staying in touch with what’s really troubling you. For example, couples often argue about petty differences—the way she hangs the towels, the way he slurps his soup—rather than what is really bothering you.

To successfully resolve a conflict, you will need to learn and practice two core skills: the ability to quickly reduce stress in the moment and the ability to remain comfortable enough with your emotions to react in constructive ways even in the midst of an argument or a perceived attack. Once you have balanced your emotions, the way to deal with any situation is to look at what best solutions you can think of to resolve the conflict. You may have one or two or possibly three solutions. Enable yourself to see which would be the best and go for it. It is better to confront an issue rather than bury it, sweep it under a carpet or pretend it does not exist. It will come back again and again if it is not resolved. The ultimate aim is to look at the conflict, acknowledge it, address and resolve it and its over.

**Becoming confrontationally friendly which ultimately frees you and others from you and you from others**

Managing and resolving conflict requires the ability to quickly reduce stress and bring your emotions into balance. You can ensure that the process is as positive as possible by sticking to the following guidelines:

- **Listen for what is felt as well as said.** When we listen we connect more deeply to our own needs and emotions, and to those of other people. Listening also strengthens us, informs us, and makes it easier for others to hear us when it’s our turn to speak.
• Make conflict resolution the priority rather than winning or «being right.» Maintaining and strengthening the relationship, rather than “winning” the argument, should always be your first priority. Be respectful of the other person and his or her viewpoint.

• Focus on the present. If you’re holding on to grudges based on past resentments, your ability to see the reality of the current situation will be impaired. Rather than looking to the past and assigning blame, focus on what you can do in the here-and-now to solve the problem.

• Pick your battles. Conflicts can be draining, so it’s important to consider whether the issue is really worthy of your time and energy. Maybe you don’t want to surrender a parking space if you’ve been circling for 15 minutes, but if there are dozens of empty spots, arguing over a single space isn’t worth it.

• Be willing to forgive. Resolving conflict is impossible if you’re unwilling or unable to forgive. Resolution lies in releasing the urge to punish, which can never compensate for our losses and only adds to our injury by further depleting and draining our lives.

• Know when to let something go. If you can’t come to an agreement, agree to disagree. It takes two people to keep an argument going. If a conflict is going nowhere, you can choose to disengage and move on.

**ILLUSTRATION**

A Manager at Bata called in an employee – Mutegi and told him he was fired. This was a very tough and unfriendly Manager who bullied the people who worked under him. Mutegi had the courage to ask why he was being fired. The boss said he did not need to give him an explanation. Rumor had it that he wanted to bring his girlfriend in to take that position. Mutegi decided that he had to do something. Everyone else had been scared to go to the Human Resource office and even when they did try to report it, the HR turned a deaf ear. When this happened, Mutegi decided to seek an appointment with the CEO. When Mutegi met with the CEO after 3 days of waiting outside his office, he made it clear that he was seeking justice and fairness and explained the situation. The CEO was most impressed, called the Manager in and confronted him in front of Mutegi. It turned out that the Manager had to be fired as the CEO was a fair gentleman. This changed the entire company and from then on all employees felt they could address issues as they arose. The HR was also fired as they had been in cahoots with the Manager. It took one man’s courage and strength to change an entire company. Do not underestimate the power of resolving conflict and confronting issues.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What have you learnt from this chapter?
2. How will this change your life and affect you and those around you?
3. What will you do the next time you are caught up in a conflict?

**ACTIVITY – 1.5 hours**

Breakout groups of 6 and ask them to pick a speaker. Ask them to create a conflict, resolve it and end a saga. Give them only 15 minutes to do this. Then each group’s speaker has to come to the front of the room and relate the group’s activity in 5 minutes each. This way they start managing time as well as the activity.

**LESSON LEARNT**

When one addresses conflict, finds a solution and resolves it – it is done. Why allow it to fester and damage then? Get confrontationally friendly and your life will be easier to manage.

**Quote**

“Conflict can and should be handled constructively; when it is, relationships benefit. Conflict avoidance is *not* the hallmark of a good relationship. On the contrary, it is a symptom of serious problems and of poor communication.” Harriet B. Blaker - Author
CHAPTER 13 - Money Management/The Abundance factor – How to stop thinking/feeling like it will never be enough!

The objective of this chapter is to understand the abundance factor and the relationship to money. Many have a poverty mentality and this is a vicious cycle generation after generation. It is now time to change our relationship to abundance and money is only 1 part of it so we can all live better lives.

Money! This is the most controversial, challenging and under-estimated topic. People either have too much which is a niche 5-10% of a society or hardly any which is the majority 70%. The rest float in between. Why is it that money has become so important and dictates life in the 20th and 21st Centuries? Capitalism and all its tentacles have made money seem like a God. Everything we seem to look at is somehow or the other connected to ‘how much’? When did we become slaves to money? The whole equation is pretty messed up as money is supposed to be our slave not the master.

Our perception of money is very warped and has been for generations. Poverty is a way of controlling the masses so any country that has 20% and more of their population living in poverty means there is a huge issue. This shows that having a progressive population is not a priority and corruption is rife.

Let’s break this down further. Money is not wealth, money is only a part of wealth. Wealth is so much larger and bigger than just money. Wealth is holistic and the better word for it is Abundance.

Abundance is something that is not well explained or understood and since we want the next generations to change the way they think it is essential we each start by learning about this concept. Poverty or abundance are not just words but states of mind and living. To get out of poverty and to start thinking abundantly one has to break down the beliefs that make one feel poor, helpless, hungry, disempowered and inferior. Abundance is about giving and receiving.

The reason we have corruption is because those who have money are still so poor in their minds that no matter how much they have, it is not enough. Apart from that, greed takes over and they function from a place where they will take and take and take and never really give.

Therefore, talking about money management would be wasteful if we did not address the poverty mentality and the beliefs surrounding the lack. Not only is it generational, it is also fixated in the colonial mentality where racially Africans are portrayed as less than others. Let’s take another look at all 3rd world countries, the most visible defining factor is poverty which is directly connected to corruption and which then creates a complete divided society so that there is no equality. This creates various breeds of people and various behavior of superiority and inferiority.

The most important factor here is to start from the beginning and with the mindset of ‘Every human being is equal regardless of religion, race, tribe, status, education, environment or gender.’ This is what we need to teach the next generations of children and youth for them to claim their gift of life regardless of where they were born. To know they can change their destiny, their future and create livelihoods and a different way of life.
Poverty is about a lack of money, but also about a lack of hope. People living in poverty often feel powerless to change their situation. They can feel isolated from their community. If you want to overcome poverty, you need a combination of financial planning, a positive attitude, and a willingness to ask for help.

Now let’s get into money and what we need to do to change the cycles of the past.

a. Educate yourself in a proper technical skill
b. Life skills will enhance your life and help expand your understanding
c. Learn about managing money
d. Learn how to negotiate and get the best salary possible
e. Do not be a slave to money, make it work for you
f. Do not live beyond or above your means
g. Open a bank account and save at least 10-20% every month
h. Look at how to stretch every shilling to the maximum
i. Think and feel abundant
j. Prioritize, plan and organize your life
k. Avoid alcohol, drugs and that sort of lifestyle
l. If in a relationship, be careful about getting pregnant until you can afford to look after a child
m. Believe in yourself

Illustration

It was that time of the year when bills would come pouring in after Christmas in January. Why was it that it was the same story each year? No matter how much money was saved, at the start of the year the account would get empty. The Mwole’s had worked so hard to save at least 15% each month never got to enjoy it or do something concrete with it each year. So the couple decided to watch their spending’s and started a list each month. At the end of that year the list of presents and Christmas shopping came up and they realized how they overspent to make others happy. In return they hardly got the same value of gifts and their bills piled up. They decided to stop buying Christmas gifts that year and celebrating as though they had to do what others were doing. The Mwole’s instead took an amount and bought food and groceries for a children’s orphanage. They informed all their relatives of this decision and were surprised that no-one really got upset and applauded them instead. That January the Mwole’s still had 10% savings and no big bills to pay. Do not do things because others expect you to and because they have been done for so long. Change some of the aspects as it is a waste of money. The lesson learn was that when someone tries to do what others do you
could cause yourself a big gap and unnecessary hardships. Do things that you can afford to do and be who you want to become not what you are expected to be.

Questions
1. How do you manage your money?
2. Do you buy clothes/shoes etc to show your friends how good you look?
3. What does money mean to you?
4. What does abundance mean to you?

ACTIVITY – 1.5 hours

Breakout groups of 6. Ask each group to quickly make paper money of Kshs 1000/= 500/= 200/= and 100/= totaling Kshs 10,000/= Now ask each group to define how best they would use this 10K. Give them 20 minutes to come up with the best method of spending this money. After 20 minutes give each group 10 minutes to share their idea. Then ask the class to choose the best idea and let the group give them a round of applause.

LESSON LEARNT

No matter where you come from and what your background, you have the potential to make your life abundant. It is possible to have healthy relationships, have a healthy body and mind and create more money in your life.

Quote
“Money, like emotions, is something you must control to keep your life on the right track.” Natasha Munson -is a best-selling author, inspirational speaker, writing coach and CEO of Be Magic, Inc,
CHAPTER 14 - 2nd SWOT – Resetting goals and objectives after learning more life skills. Comparison to the 1st SWOT done at the beginning of this process.

Students are now ready to write their second set of PERSONAL Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats and a list of their near future goals.

9 Personal Development Goals to a More Fulfilling and Healthier YOU

Everyone has a desire to get ahead, to set goals for themselves and seek personal growth for their life. Challenges will be thrown your way and then survival mode kicks in if you don’t know how to keep a healthy balance in the midst of chaos – you will allow further challenges and limitations to set you OFF COURSE. Furthermore competition, work pressure and responsibilities have to be dealt with. Faced with this scenario, sometimes self-improvement and personal growth can be pushed into the background. One way to approach the need for growth is to develop and plan your personal development goals. If you do not have FAITH in yourself and your potential how do you expect anyone else to?

Personal Development Goals Overview

Personal development is one of the most important aspects of an individual’s life. Personal development is a life long journey of learning and growing. Cultures all over the world, since ancient times, have added a lot of value on personal development in order to bring children and youth into the society to fulfill and assume meaningful roles. Spirituality, philosophy, and ethics all encompass methods for personal development and self-improvement. Below please find a list of a few areas where one can set personal development goals. Though this list is not everything it includes areas which constitute a core part of our lives.

Self-Improvement: This is an area where consistent growth and improvements are possible. You can enhance your skill set, take up something new, or you could finally get into doing the projects that will enhance your life. A personal self-development goal example could be to stop procrastinating about what you want to do and create a plan on how to get to where you want to go.

Career: Career growth is an area most people spend a great part of their lives working on. Working towards finding the right type of employment and taking responsibility of one’s own life to create a better future.

Health: Working on aspects of your health such as eating healthy, increasing your stamina, or clearing the mind clutter. The right thing to do would be to select one as a starting personal goal and act on it to completion before you start on the next thing.

Lifestyle: Many people are looking for ways to enhance their lifestyles, and you can easily do so by setting a personal goal, such as enrollment with a group that will provide you with support. For example exercising, joining an IT group, Poetry Group etc. Other ways that include a lifestyle goal are taking a class for music/art appreciation, attending a writing or reading group, or taking up any new sport.

Family: Personal goals regarding family could be, setting a day to spend with loved ones, organizing a family get together, discussing how the family can move forward and do better as a whole.

Relationships: Setting up personal goals for relationships is a good way to approach them and helps you to monitor your progress. Goals could include finding that special someone, considering how to make your relationships healthy, focusing on what is important and leaving behind what is not.
**Education:** Education is a key area of personal development in two ways. It often describes where you work. Continuing and enhancing your education for a career is always a good goal for development. You could finally take that cookery or IT class you have been thinking of, or take some time to study a subject you have optimal interest in via vocational courses.

**Art:** Art is an important aspect of human life which has the potential to give a lot of satisfaction and personal growth. Attending art lessons, taking up a musical instrument, or attending an acting workshop could get you started.

**Culture:** Culture is a vast area to explore and you could do this by learning a new cuisine, learning a traditional dance form, learning about your own culture or figuring out your ancestry heritage.

As seen in the above paragraphs, setting personal goals require a few basic steps. One is to set up the goal by identifying an area and setting up a sample personal development goal within it. The next step is to put a time frame on the activity, when to start, how long it will take and set a specific date for completion. The next step is to set up the personal development plans. Once the goal is decided and the time boundaries are set, it is simply a matter of putting the plans into action.

Now let us compare the 1st SWOT to this 2nd SWOT – what changed? Why? An interesting way to gauge how Life Skills change a life!
CHAPTER 15 - Work preparedness – Sample CV, dressing, Grooming, and interview know-how.

It is essential to understand what employers are looking for in new employees. There are various attributes, behavior and attitudes that this chapter addresses so you can be prepared to win an interviewer over. This chapter covers those areas that will define whether you get selected or not for a 2nd interview or get the job.

Once you have acquired your technical skill in a particular field added to this rich and abundant life skills program you are now ready to go the next step.

Preparing yourself to get out into the world with the tools you have means that you are ready to reboot your life, find a job and start to consider a career.

What are the most important aspects to be aware of as you start the next leg of this journey?

1. **Prepare your CV.** Ensure that there are no spelling mistakes. That you use a proper layout and you have an impressive CV that is truthful. Google offers a range of templates that are effective. A CV is the first introduction to you and how would you like a potential employer to see you.

2. **CV Writing. Learn From This Sample CV Format.**

   If you don’t have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?

   This CV is tailored for an Administration candidate. Study each section and see what you can incorporate in your own. Obviously the sample CV is limited when it comes to layout.

   **1. Personal Details:**
   - Name: Thomas Smith
   - P.O Box 123, 00100 Nairobi
   - Email: thomassmith@yahoo.XX.XX
   - Tel: 07XX XXX XXX
   - Date of Birth: XX/XX/19XX
   - Marital Status: Single

   In this section leave out details like ID number, religion, Languages (unless it is requested in the job advert)

2. **Education & Professional Qualifications To Put In Your CV:**

   List your qualifications here. If you are pursuing a course and you are not yet done, you can include it with the line…Pursuing an MBA University of Nairobi. Some candidates give a breakdown of the course undertaken per unit which ends up using a lot of space. The employer and maybe all of us know what a B.com Finance course entails. There is no need to break it down. This is also not the section to include all those trainings you’ve gone through. Put it under a separate header as outlined below. Ideally, put those professional qualifications, diplomas, degrees and high school education, here.

3. **Career Profile:**

   (Gives a summary of your skills, knowledge and experience. Let’s look at an admin candidate career profile)

   An administrative support professional with over five years office management experience. I am adept at working in fast-paced environments that demand strong organizational and office management skills. Am committed to exceptional customer service and driven by challenges, with ability to independently plan and manage diverse customer relationships. More so, I am accustomed to fast-paced, high-pressured positions, demonstrated ability to set priorities deliver qualitative output, prioritize multiple tasks, meet deadlines, and provide quality service.

   (Career objective or profile should be specific to your career. Most of us have ‘vague’ or ‘general statements.’)
4. CV Professional Strengths/Skills:

(Look at any job advert and you will find these listed after education requirements. Try to match what the employer is looking for but don’t duplicate. Again, we have listed skills for an admin person.)

• Possess seven years of professional experience as Executive Assistant
• Possess excellent organization and management skills
• Goal oriented and ability to handle multiple tasks
• Proven track record in customer service like managing front desk operations, processing sales order and communicating reliable information to customers
• Ability to resolve complex departmental problems
• Proficient in basic operating systems like Microsoft Word Press, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook and the Internet
• Possess excellent written and verbal communication skills
• Possess extensive administrative and customer service skills
• Ability to maintain good relationship with customers

5. Work Experience:

• When it comes to experience list from the most recent to your earliest job
• Include work achievements. Achievements Example: Implemented a more effective system for the management of meetings
• Even if you won’t specific months, list the year you worked
• When you have worked in more than ten jobs/companies, the important thing is to break down your duties in the three most recent. You don’t have to expound on every job that you’ve had.

6. Training and seminar Section In Your CV: 

7. Professional Membership and Associations:

8. Hobbies & Interests:

(In this section only indicate character building/business related hobbies. A 40 year old listing: making friends and watching movies plus socializing (What is socializing?) Doesn’t look like a professional on paper)

8. Referees When Writing A CV:

Provide at least three referees. Two from your previous and / or current work place; preferable the HR or immediate boss, if that is not possible a client or customers you serve. On the other hand, if you have just left campus a lecturer may vouch for you. Third one is usually personal; someone that has known you for a long period of time that can vouch for your character and will be able to recommend you for the job. For effective referees, put only those people who know you well and let them know to expect a call from recruiters about you.

2. Create a cover letter that goes with your CV. Keep in mind that a cover letter changes for different companies and positions. You cannot use the same letter for every job application. Google has templates for cover letters as well.)
Cover letter template (must change for every job application and must be customized carefully)
19th February 2016
Paul the job seeker
P.O. Boxxxxxxx
Nairobi,

The Human Resources Manager
Pyd Group Of Companies
Nairobi

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Application For The Customer Service Officer Position
Your advertisement for the Customer Relations Officer seems to perfectly match my background and experience. I am a professional customer service executive with hands on experience, exceptional communication and ethical skills with proficiency in documentation, record keeping, and problem solving.

My expertise in communication encompasses the many facets of customer relations and communications. My working experience at PYZ Company has helped me improve my skills in leadership, allowed me to gain organizational skills, and has provided me with extensive knowledge of how to sell services and goods to potential clients.

I have always banked on delivering high quality service to all calling customers, educating customers on services and processes, and I have ensured that high customer satisfaction is achieved throughout the first point of contact.

With my keen observation and analysis skills, I have been able to offer first rate client service.

I intend to bring these skills to ensure that your company succeeds in delivering its mandate. I welcome the chance to be invited for an interview and I appreciate your time and consideration.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Signature

Paul The Job seeker

3. Research, research and research on the type of job you are looking for and what types of companies offer these positions.

4. Look at the various options of how to find a job. Online websites where you can post your CV and apply for positions. Talk to people you know and let the word out that you are looking for a position. Be specific about the type of position you are looking for so that people know what you want to do. Be earnest about yourself and know that you will find what you want. Believe in yourself. Let me clarify this one right here. YOU are unique, beautiful and lovely just as you are and NO-ONE is or can be like you. That is a fact of life! Embrace that and know it inside you. There are always things to learn, even when you are 90 however the fact you do not know something or are
not as rich, thin, tall or whatever your gremlin is… you are always good enough. Do not be lazy, blameful, a victim, complaining, brattish and take responsibility of your life.

5. **Prior to an interview make sure you have done research on the company** and possibly on the person you are meeting with. Being informed is your responsibility. Look at websites with interview questions so you are prepared on what sorts of questions will be asked. Research on salary scales so you know what your value is. Most companies will pay you less if they can get away with it. Be prepared, ready and confident with the knowledge that whether you get this job or not, you are going to get stronger with each experience. People consider NO to be a rejection and in actual fact it is not. When someone says NO that means someone else will be waiting to say a YES which will be more suitable for you. BE confident and trust that the right thing is out there for you. If you do not believe in yourself how so you expect anyone else to?

6. **Ensure you have a picked a professional outfit for the interview.** Do not wear jeans, shorts, halter-necks, revealing, extra tight, shiny, mini skirt, gym outfits, slippers, tennis shoes or sandals. Consider what you would expect if you were the interviewer? What type of person would you employ and how would you expect them to look, behave and be.

7. **Arrive 15 minutes early for the interview and breathe.** Switch off your cell phone or put it on silent. Communicate well during the interview. Answer questions directly. Do not lie or circumnavigate the truth. Be clear, precise and direct. Ask for what you think you deserve. Be open as there is always a point for negotiation. The biggest unknown is that interviewees do not interview their employer. This is extremely necessary in this day and age. You need to ask the interviewer what type of culture the company has, what is the learning and development program, what are the perks and what is the learning curve as well as promotions and merit recognition. If you don’t ask these questions and then complain after, it is your beef not anyone else’s. Be polite and respectful. Lastly, if they offer you a position, let them know you would like all the details and that you will get them back to them in 3 days or whatever timeframe is suitable. Thank the interviewer for their time and for giving you the opportunity to meet. Follow up with an email of thanks when you get home or to a computer.

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**Road to success**

Now it is entirely up to you how you create success from here. You have all the life skills you need to become a success and excel in your position. Use all the skills from time management, communication to decision making and problem solving. Your technical skills will be enhanced with the life skills. It is now totally up to you how diligent, perseverant, reliable and honest you are. Working smart, meeting deadlines and delivering on time as a high performer will get you to the next place!

Great employees are reliable, dependable, proactive, diligent, great leaders, and great followers. They possess a wide range of easily defined—but hard-to-find—qualities.

A few hit the next level. Some employees are remarkable, possessing qualities that may not appear on performance appraisals but nonetheless make a major impact on performance.
Here are eight qualities of remarkable employees:

1. They ignore job descriptions. The smaller the company, the more important it is that employees can think on their feet, adapt quickly to shifting priorities, and do whatever it takes, regardless of role or position, to get things done.

When a key customer’s project is in jeopardy, remarkable employees know without being told there’s a problem and they jump in without being asked—even if it’s not their job.

2. They’re eccentric... The best employees are often a little different: quirky, sometimes irreverent, even delighted to be unusual. They seem slightly odd, but in a really good way. Unusual personalities shake things up, make work more fun, and transform a plain-vanilla group into a team with flair and flavor.

People who aren’t afraid to be different naturally stretch boundaries and challenge the status quo, and they often come up with the best ideas.

3. But they know when to dial it back. An unusual personality is a lot of fun ... until it isn’t. When a major challenge pops up or a situation gets stressful, the best employees stop expressing their individuality and fit seamlessly into the team.

Remarkable employees know when to play and when to be serious; when to be irreverent and when to conform; and when to challenge and when to back off. It’s a tough balance to strike, but a rare few can walk that fine line with ease.

4. They publicly praise... Praise from a boss feels good. Praise from a peer feels awesome, especially when you look up to that person.

Remarkable employees recognize the contributions of others, especially in group settings where the impact of their words is even greater.

5. And they privately complain and gossip

We all want employees to bring issues forward, but some problems are better handled in private. Great employees often get more latitude to bring up controversial subjects in a group setting because their performance allows greater freedom.

Remarkable employees come to you before or after a meeting to discuss a sensitive issue, knowing that bringing it up in a group setting could set off a firestorm.

6. They speak when others won’t. Some employees are hesitant to speak up in meetings. Some are even hesitant to speak up privately.

An employee once asked me a question about potential layoffs. After the meeting I said to him, “Why did you ask about that? You already know what’s going on.” He said, “I do, but a lot of other people don’t, and they’re afraid to ask. I thought it would help if they heard the answer from you.”

Remarkable employees have an innate feel for the issues and concerns of those around them, and step up to ask questions or raise important issues when others hesitate.

7. They like to prove others wrong. Self-motivation often springs from a desire to show that doubters are
wrong. The kid without a college degree or the woman who was told she didn’t have leadership potential often possesses a burning desire to prove other people wrong.

Education, intelligence, talent, and skill are important, but drive is critical. Remarkable employees are driven by something deeper and more personal than just the desire to do a good job.

8. They’re always fiddling. Some people are rarely satisfied (I mean that in a good way) and are constantly tinkering with something: Reworking a timeline, adjusting a process, tweaking a workflow.

9. Delivering before a deadline.

Great employees follow processes. Remarkable employees find ways to make those processes even better, not only because they are expected to, but because they just can’t help it.

**HOMEWORK and ACTIVITY the following day – 2 hours**

Create your CV and a cover letter template and bring to the class the next day. Breakout groups of 6 and they each share their CV and cover letter and correct, enhance and polish for each other. 1 hour for this exercise. In the 2nd hour they share what they learnt from the exercise and share with the class as a group. This will help every single student to be on top of their game.

**LESSON LEARNT**

Unless you are properly prepared with the correct documents, attitude, behavior, confidence, self-esteem and self belief that you deserve to get selected, you will be challenged. How you dress, communicate, your values, all that you have learnt up to this point will help you be a more suited candidate. You can do it!

**QUOTES**

“Fall seven times, stand up eight.” – *Japanese proverb*

“Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.” – *Thomas Jefferson*

“Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” – *George Santayana*

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.” – *Eleanor Roosevelt*

“People who are unable to motivate themselves must be content with mediocrity, no matter how impressive their other talents.” – *Andrew Carnegie*

“The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.” – *Benjamin Franklin*
CHAPTER 16 - I Y L D P Overview – To be administered every 3 to 4 weeks as a stand-alone program

Individual Youth Learning Development Plan

What is IYLDP?

This program essentially addresses the individual needs of the youth, as the heading indicates. IYLDP is a process by which we understand quantitatively, the levels of the students both emotionally and psychologically.

Why IYLDP?

This tool helps the facilitators to identify the levels of their students to be able to fill in the gaps. It quantitatively indicates the levels in the different parameters of the behavior patterns of the youth. With the help of this data the facilitator facilitates in their realization and then empowering the students to overcome the gaps. The IYLDP is the only tool which gives clarity to the levels of development of the soft skills among the youth.

- To build basic social and employable skills
- To prevent job dropout
- To work and gel with professionals in the work world
- To accept Leadership in their work
- To build confidence
- To be able to find joy in whatever they do
- To build and develop the self-esteem in an individual
- To develop effective communication skills
- Enable to work in Teams and accept commitments
- To manage time effectively
- To develop mutual respect for each other.
- To develop a healthy attitude to life and keep up the spirit
- To accept challenges
- Readiness to learn and move ahead
- Develop appropriate etiquette
- Dressing & Grooming skills
- Presentation skills
- Develop work ready skills

These are vital soft skills which are desired by any employer in the new economy jobs. Students possessing these skills would have an edge over the other prospective candidate(s) in the job market. This is the key component for
IYLDP assessment can either make or break your student so be sincere and honest in administering the IYLDP inventory.

How to administer the IYLDP?

In order to use the IYLDP effectively, the facilitators should develop keen observational skills, so that every interaction gives an insight into the behavior patterns of the student. These observations have to be quantitatively recorded.

The predetermined parameters (e.g. Time Management, Interpersonal relations, Communication Skills, Leadership Skills etc.) are individually addressed for each student. For each parameter the facilitator rates the student in a scale of 1 to 4.

4 being for excellent
3 being for good
2 being for average
1 being for poor

When to administer IYLDP?

It is mandatory for every student at the BEST Centre to undergo three IYLDP assessments. This provides an opportunity for the facilitators to not only get a clearer picture of the level of the student but also plan the reinforcement inputs to be able to fill in the gaps.

Step-1: IYLDP to be filled in on the third week of the every month during three months of the course.

Step-2: The IYLDP has to be filled in by the Technical facilitator and the Entrepreneurship facilitator separately.

Step-3: After every IYLDP of the student, facilitator should use the information to facilitate the student to improve on a given parameter. This is done by one to one counseling and by planned group activity.

Step-4: Facilitators should constantly monitor and assist in improving where student show some gaps. The process eventually helps the student to adjust oneself appropriately in the work environment.