

THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE

BOOK DIGEST

PUBLIC VICTORY

PARADIGMS OF INTERDEPENDENCE

“There can be no friendship without confidence, and no confidence without integrity—Samuel Johnson”

Independence is the foundation of effective interdependence, and this is why private victories precede the public ones.

“As we look back and survey the terrain to determine where we’ve been and where we are in relationship to where we’re going, we clearly see that we could not have gotten where we are without coming the way we came.”

That’s the only way to build and maintain the **maturity** and **strength of character** we need to build effective relationships. There’s no shortcut available.

And as the author puts it:

“You can’t talk your way out of problems you behave yourself into”.

And he reminds us that **the fruits come after the roots...** The sequence is of the essence and this is why he writes that:

“Self-mastery and self-discipline are the foundation of good relationships with others.”

We can only truly like ourselves once we’ve met ourselves and proven that we are in control and committed to our own mastery. This is why we learn **independence** first, to build a healthy sense of **self-respect**, through the first three habits. We achieve independence, and **then** we can choose **interdependence**.

“The most important ingredient we put into any relationship is not what we say or what we do, but what we are.”

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Our relationships with others starts within our relationship with ourselves, and within our circle of influence and character.

Interdependence serves our growth and our productivity, while allowing us to contribute, serve and experience deep and meaningful mutually beneficial associations. It also confronts us acutely to the roots of our greatest frustrations and roadblocks to both success and happiness. Those roots and roadblocks have always been there, but we get numb to the chronic pain caused by our lack of personal leadership, management and vision. However, when highlighted by our interactions with others, they become impossible to overlook. We tend to start looking for quick fixes and ready-made techniques at this point! But we must focus on the problem rooted in our misguided behaviors and paradigms, not on its symptoms that relationships with others do not create but reveal. And to get the golden eggs that open communication and positive interactions bring into our experience, we must take care of the goose, which is the relationship itself! And this is what brings us to the idea of protecting the relationship's emotional bank account (EBA).

The emotional bank account

It is a metaphor for the amount of trust that has been built into a relationship. That's how safety between two people is created. Courtesy, kindness, keeping our commitments to the other constitute deposits which allow for trust to grow and even for mistakes to happen without complete rupture. It allows for easeful and effective communication. Discourtesy, disrespect, cutting the other off or ignoring them, betrayals, threats and arbitrary behaviors will, on the other end, overdraw from the EBA and crush any trust and therefore flexibility in the relationship.

"It's tension city, memo haven. It's protecting my backside, politicking.

And many organizations are filled with it.

Many families are filled with it. Many marriages are filled with it."

We must stay aware of this, especially with the people we interact with the most, as daily withdrawals will inevitably happen, sometimes rooted only in the other person's perceptions of us. We must invest in those relationships very regularly to compensate, and make sure that there is abundance of trust to sustain both of us.

"Probably the most important deposit you could make would be just to listen, without judging or preaching or reading your own autobiography into what [the other] says."

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Six major deposits

- Understanding the individual: It is the **key to every other deposit**, since it is the only way to know **what will constitute a deposit or a withdrawal** for the other person in the first place. Those can differ greatly from one person to the next, and we must override our human tendency to project our wants, needs and intentions on others and their behaviors. We feel rejected when someone doesn't welcome one of our deposits... without checking how THEY perceived it--and how we might have completely missed the mark. The same action can be seen as a withdrawal or a deposit depending who we're interacting with. Interestingly, it is **also the most important** deposit on its own. We must remember to seek to understand others the way we need and wish to be understood.
- Attending the little things: Here's why...

*"The little kindnesses and courtesies are so important.
Small discourtesies, little unkindnesses, little forms of disrespect make large withdrawals.
In relationships, the little things are the big things."*

Indeed, Stephen Coveys reminds us that:

*"People are very tender, very sensitive inside.
I don't believe age or experience makes much of a difference.
Inside, even within the most toughened and calloused exteriors,
are the feelings and emotions of the heart."*

- Keeping commitments: this is a MAJOR deposit... and breaking a commitment is a major withdrawal. People logically have a hard time believing our promises if we've ever broken one.
- Clarifying expectations: Conflicting and/or ambiguous expectations on goals and roles lie at the root of almost all relationships' problems. What hasn't been explicitly stated between two people tends to be replaced by unconscious assumptions, projected on every situation. **Our reserve of trust decreases every time we feel like our basic expectations have been violated**, and **thinking that our expectations are self-evident** creates many negative situations. We must learn to invest our time and efforts up front, and to build clear expectations for all parties involved. That's what saves time and efforts down the road, and more importantly that's what protects our trust. Clarifying expectations **takes a lot of courage!** And it avoids the risk to see any small simple misunderstanding turn into what the author calls personality clashes and communication breakdowns.

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- Showing personal integrity: A lack of integrity will greatly undermine all other efforts to build trust.

Here's how the author defines integrity:

“Integrity includes but goes beyond honesty. Honesty is telling the truth—in other words, conforming our words to reality. Integrity is conforming our reality to our words. (...) This requires an integrated character, a oneness, primarily with self but also with life.”

And one of the best proofs we can give of our integrity is to **stay loyal to those who are absent**. If I betray someone to get close to you, I'm not showing my commitment to you; I'm demonstrating that I cannot be trusted to not THEN betray you, in order to gain someone else's approval.

Integrity therefore **requires the courage for us to have honest confrontational experiences**, conversations that folks might not appreciate at first.

However, in the long run, as the author put it:

*“People will trust and respect you if you are honest and open and kind with them.
You CARE enough to confront.”*

- Apologizing sincerely when you make a withdrawal: It takes a lot of internal security to be able to do that. Apologizing is vulnerable. Some people believe it will make them look soft and weak, and that others will take advantage of that weakness. Others rationalize their own wrongs, using other people's wrongs. And this is why a lot of people never apologize or only do it superficially.

Here's a helpful quote on that subject:

“It is the weak who are cruel. Gentleness can only be expected from the strong—Leo Roshkin”.

And here are some potent words from Stephen Covey:

*“Sincere apologies make deposits;
repeated apologies interpreted as insincere make withdrawals.*

And the quality of the relationship reflects it.”

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The laws of Love and the laws of Life

“When we make deposits of unconditional love, when we live the primary laws of love, we encourage others to live the primary laws of life. In other words, when we truly love others without condition, without strings, we help them feel secure, and safe, and validated and affirmed in their essential worth, identity, and integrity. Their natural growth process is encouraged. We make it easier for them to live the laws of life—cooperation, contribution, self-discipline, integrity—and to discover and live true to the highest and best within them.

We give them the freedom to act on their own inner imperatives rather than react to our conditions and limitations. This does not mean we become permissive or soft. That itself is a MASSIVE withdrawal. We counsel, we plead, we set limits and consequences. But we love, regardless.”

Stepping out of unconditional love with others drives them into a reactive mode, where they feel compelled to defend their sense of independence.

Stephen Covey explains that:

*“In reality they aren’t independent. They are **counterdependent**, which is another form of dependency and is at the lowest end of the Maturity Continuum. (...) Rebellion is a knot of the heart, not of the mind.”*

Our role is to once again remember how important it is to make regular deposits: **deposits of unconditional love**.

Stephen Covey quotes the former secretary-general of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjöld, who wrote that **“It is more noble to give yourself completely to one individual than to labor diligently for the salvation of the masses.”**

We must be careful to not devote all of our time on projects meant to serve “the world”, while forgetting to build a deep and meaningful relationship with our partner, kid or closest working associate. The author adds that:

“It would take more nobility of character—more humility, courage and strength—to rebuild that one relationship than it would to continue putting in all those hours for all those people and causes.”

Once again it takes a lot of courage and high mutual respect to choose to work on the deeper issues and confront what is not working. AND it is how we create the unity needed for effective interdependence.

“It is at a very essential, one-on-one level that we live the primary laws of love and life.”

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P problems are PC opportunities

We can get very **stuck looking at a problem** in a relationship and looking for ways to avoid it or spend our energy complaining about the irritation and blocks it creates.

However, if we're willing, those problems can **end up creating great opportunities**, for us to strengthen and deepen the relationship—fostering the very effectiveness we were afraid would always be lacking.

This is why SC believes that **every P (production) problem is a PC (production capacity) opportunity**—because it **builds** and **fills** the relevant **EBA**.

When we shift from transactional exchange to transformational interactions, we strengthen the bonds of love and trust uniting us to those we live and work with.

“By recognizing that the P/PC Balance is necessary to effectiveness in an interdependent reality, we can value our problems as opportunities to increase PC.”

The habits of interdependence

Those will be:

Habit 4 (think win/win),

Habit 5 (seek first to understand THEN to be understood)

and Habit 6 (synergize).

So stay tuned.

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BOOK CLUB DISCUSSIONS

SAVE THE DATE

You're invited

Tuesday, October 24th

from 7pm-8pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting

OR

Friday, October 27th

from 12pm-1pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting