

Change from within

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p. 10

August 26,
2005

HOW many of us want to change and grow for the better? I believe all of us are exceptional people who want to continually change and grow for the better. In our bid to change, there were times when we succeeded and there times when we failed.

Did we ever ask ourselves why we failed to change? Why is it so difficult for us to change successfully? Could we have failed because the change we wanted to achieve happened only for a short while or the change never took place at all? Recently, a primary school teacher who was in my class asked me a question about Behaviourism — a theory that suggests the importance of managing learners' behaviours through the use of rewards and punishments.

He asked me, "Why do I have pupils who scored straight As in my moral class and obtained correct answers when asked about their actions on throwing rubbish, yet litter outside the school compound? Just outside the boundaries of the school? They get the right answers and yet their actions tell us a different story. It seems that applying this Behaviourist theory in my teaching and learning process does not work at all."

This scenario applies not only to kids but also to adults like us. Adults know the right answers too but sometimes our thoughts do not match our actions.

Successful change depends not only on what we know. Successful change requires us to change from within. Our inner landscape comprising the mind landscape and the emotional landscape must change for us to change successfully. The first inner landscape comprising the mind landscape is an important driving force in how successfully we will change. In order to change successfully from within we have to put our cognition to the task.

We can do so by thinking about our own thinking through question asking. For example: ask questions that help us identify what we mean by success, questions that help us plan, monitor, and evaluate our own thoughts and actions. Questions such as: Who are we? Where are we heading? What am I doing what I am doing? When our thinking has truly changed, we shall see true changes happening in our lives. Let us take a look at me as an example. I consider myself to be more of an introvert than an extrovert. However, I have always wanted to become an accomplished public speaker, one who would someday no longer have bats flying in her stomach.

So in order to change, I asked myself a few questions: If others can do it, why can't I? Do I have the persistence and the tenacity to succeed? Will I quit half way through when the going gets tough?

Once I was able to ask several important questions such as these and answered them sincerely, I was able to change from within and I was able to embrace the new goal of becoming an accomplished public speaker.

By continually questioning our own thinking about the kinds of success we want to achieve, change from within can happen a lot faster because we are driven by clear intentions and goals. The second inner landscape comprising the emotional landscape is another driving force in how successfully we will change. We must ensure that we have a healthy emotional landscape.

We must tune in to our emotions, get in touch with our feelings, and acknowledge them. Daniel Goleman who wrote, "Why Emotional Intelligence can matter more than IQ," suggests that we are our own best motivators.

We must motivate ourselves daily with **emotional vitamins** to be positive and to stay positive. As we all know, plant lovers water their plants daily, feed them with fertilisers, and may even talk to their plants. Like plants, we need **emotional vitamins** in the form of positive words and mental visualisations, for only then slowly but surely **change from within** can happen.

Each morning, let us feed ourselves with **emotional vitamins** to sustain **change from within**. Let us tell ourselves, we are on our way towards that mountain of ours. Changing the inner landscape — the mind landscape and the emotional landscape is an important step to ensuring that change happens successfully. Our inner landscape must be positively activated to help us **change from within**. If there is anything that you so desire to change today, pay attention to your mind landscape and emotional landscape so that you can **change from within** to change successfully.

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