

**Mark Murphy**, Chairman & CEO

**HOW TO TAKE, AND LEARN  
FROM, TOUGH CRITICISM**

# DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES

## Slides:



### JOIN WEBINAR

Join us on Tuesday, Sep 18, 2012 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM EDT

Dear Kim,

Thank you for registering for:

**Speak the Truth Without Making People Angry**  
Tuesday, Sep 18, 2012 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM EDT

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YOU'LL WANT TO READ THIS:

You will receive the slides that accompany this webinar on September 17, 2012 in a reminder email.

- Please direct any questions to Sarah at [sarah@leadershipiq.com](mailto:sarah@leadershipiq.com) or call 1-800-814-7859

#### System Requirements

PC-based attendees

Required: Windows® 7, Vista, XP or 2003 Server

Macintosh®-based attendees

Required: Mac OS® X 10.5 or newer

## Talking Points:



**Why we care:** Keeping tough conversations free from emotional distraction allows people to listen, take accountability and respond with the desired behavioral changes. Take the four-question Speak the Truth quiz (found in the webinar slides) to determine how successful you are at Speaking the Truth without Making People Angry.

#### Avoid:

- Conversations that are attacking, pleading, disintegrating, shirking, soft pedaling, or that include "compliment sandwiches" (a criticism sandwiched between two compliments).
- "Trigger words" that instantly make people defensive ("you" language that attacks, adverbs and absolutes that exaggerate the facts, and negations and negative emotions).
- Interpretations ("Sally ignores everything I say"), emotional Reactions ("I'm really irritated at Sally"), and desired Ends ("Everything Sally writes has to be edited"). The F.I.R.E. model eliminates the IRE and keeps conversations focused on the Facts.

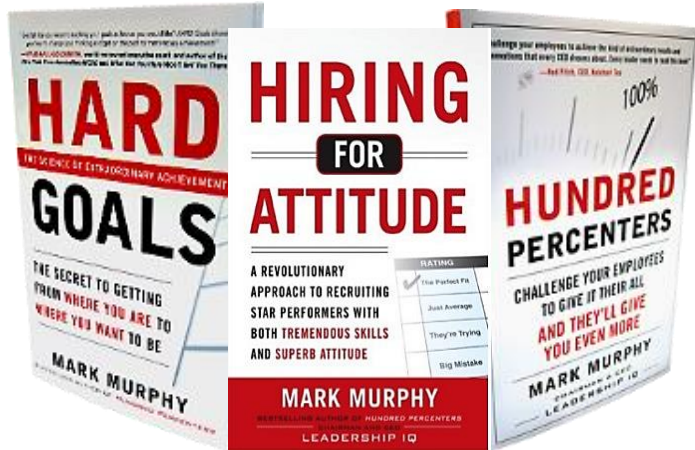
**Instead:** stick to fact-based communications that are candid, objective, specific, timely and unemotional ("Yesterday there were two typos in Sally's memo") by using one of three scripts:

**I.D.E.A.I.S.:** the foundation script used in most tough conversations with employees who have moderate self awareness, this conversation (which takes seconds to have) focuses on the facts, establishes accountability, and quickly moves on to finding solutions:

<b>Step 1:</b> Invite them to partner: "Would you be willing to have a conversation with me about (insert the facts)?"
<b>Step 2:</b> Disarm yourself: "I'd like to review the situation to make sure I'm on the same page as you."
<b>Step 3:</b> Eliminate blame: "And if we have different perspectives, we can discuss those and develop a plan for moving forward."
<b>Step 4:</b> Affirm their choices: "Does that sound OK? I can talk now, or if necessary, I have time later today."
<b>Step 5:</b> List corrective feedback: list the facts and then listen to determine whether or not they've made a corrective leap.
<b>Step 6:</b> Synchronize your understanding: "Tell me how you think we can work together to build on this and make things even more effective next time."

# EVERYTHING BASED ON RESEARCH

3



# Forbes

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Contributor

## Mark Murphy

I solve the "people pain points" that keep leaders awake at night. [Full Bio »](#)

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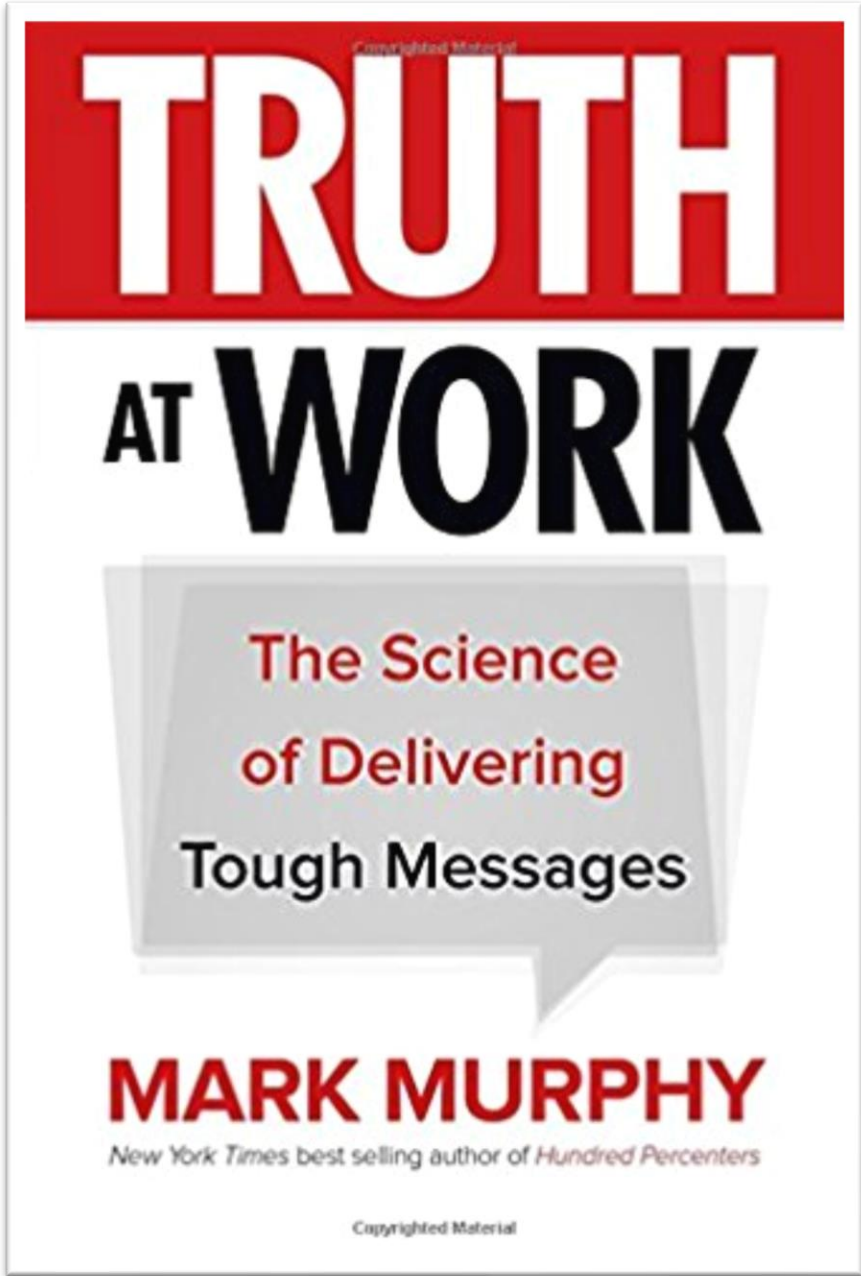
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# AGENDA



- 1 HARDINESS
- 2 FIRE MODEL
- 3 STRUCTURED LISTENING
- 4 REFRAMING
- 5 SELF-AWARENESS
- 6 TEMPORAL DISTANCING



# **HARDINESS**

# Assessing Your Psychological Hardiness

Never

Always

1. Despite setbacks, I remain committed to accomplishing job tasks. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I am in control of things that happen to me at work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I am able to cope with unexpected problems at work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I am willing to take a chance to get something I really want. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I see opportunities that others don't see. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I look for better ways to do things. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. People can significantly change their intelligence. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I can handle pressures better than most people. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. I enjoy the challenge of leaving my "comfort zone." 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. Problems have at least one solution. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

# Your Score

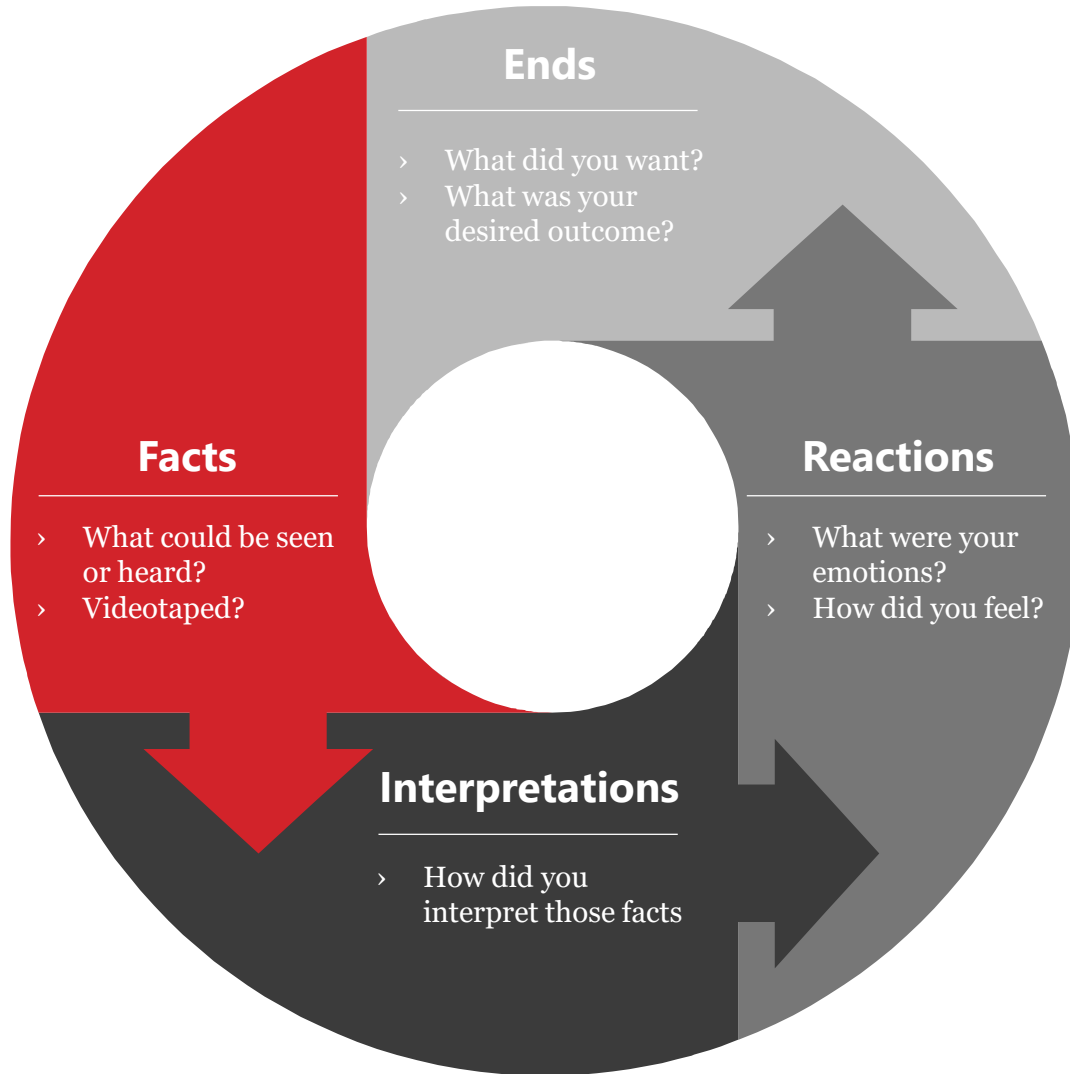
- 65-70 Psychologically Hardy
- 50-64 Moderately Hardy
- 1-49 Psychologically Fragile  
(Situationally or Constitutionally)





# **FIRE MODEL**

# FOCUS ON THE FACTS



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**F.I.R.E.**

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# THE F.I.R.E. MODEL

## FACTS

Facts are realities that are objectively and independently verifiable. You can videotape and audiotape the facts. The facts are candid, specific, and unemotional.



# THE F.I.R.E. MODEL

## INTERPRETATIONS

The human brain is an interpretation machine. It doesn't show us the world as it is, but rather as it's useful for us. This is why we all have different perceptions of the world, sometimes radically so. The brain perceives a fact, and then, almost instantaneously, it sifts through all our personal past experiences and knowledge to assign meaning, or intent, to that fact.



# THE F.I.R.E. MODEL

## REACTIONS

Once the brain makes the leap from facts to interpretation, and we settle in on a particular interpretation, we then have an emotional reaction.



# THE F.I.R.E. MODEL

## ENDS

Once we have that emotional reaction, we're then going to have some desired end. We've gone from fact to interpretation to emotional reaction, and now we want something to happen.



# EXAMPLE

## Boss offering feedback on a memo written by employee

“Pat, I asked you to work on the tone of this yesterday, did I not? And look at this, I caught two typos. Look, I count on you to get these things right. I don’t have time to worry about them myself. And it’s like everything I said yesterday was just ignored, which makes me wonder what else you’re missing. Not to mention I’m getting pretty irritated by all this. For the next 2 months, even for small things, I want to proofread everything before you send it out.”

# USING F.I.R.E. TO HANDLE CRITICISM

## FACTS

*2 typos*

## ENDS

*Boss wants to proofread everything I write, even small things*

## INTERPRETATIONS

*Boss thinks I ignored everything boss said, probably missing even more*

## REACTIONS

*Boss is angry anxious*



# USING F.I.R.E. TO HANDLE CRITICISM

## FACTS

*2 typos*

## ENDS

*Boss wants to proofread everything I write, even small things*

## INTERPRETATIONS

*Boss thinks I ignored everything boss said, probably missing even more*

## REACTIONS

*Boss is angry, anxious*

# WHAT IS PAT THINKING ABOUT IN THIS CASE?

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“Pat, I asked you to work on the tone of this yesterday, did I not? And look at this, I caught two typos. Look, I count on you to get these things right. I don’t have time to worry about them myself. And it’s like everything I said yesterday was just ignored, which makes me wonder what else you’re missing. Not to mention I’m getting pretty irritated by all this. For the next 2 months, even for small things, I want to proofread everything before you send it out.”

# WHAT ABOUT NOW?

**“Pat,** I asked you to work on the tone of this yesterday, did I not? And look at this, I caught **two typos**. Look, I count on you to get these things right. I don’t have time to worry about them myself. And it’s like everything I said yesterday was just ignored, which makes me wonder what else you’re missing. Not to mention I’m getting pretty irritated by all this. For the next 2 months, even for small things, I want to proofread everything before you send it out.”



# STRUCTURED LISTENING

# STRUCTURED LISTENING



ELICITING: “I’d really like to understand your perspective. Can we review the situation so I can get on the same page as you?”

---



LISTENING: “Do you mind if I take notes, because I want to make sure I don’t miss anything?”

---



CONFIRMING: “I want to make sure I really understand what you’re saying.”

# AN EXAMPLE WHERE WE NEED STRUCTURED LISTENING

Imagine that one of your coworkers, Pat, storms into your office and accuses you of not giving her credit for her work during a recent team meeting:

*“I missed the team meeting last week, but Emerson was there, and she told me that when you were updating everyone about the report, you kept saying ‘I did this’ and ‘I did that,’ like how you decided to run the cool statistics. She said that you never mentioned me, well, she said you listed all the people on the team, but that no one would remember my name. I worked just as hard as you did on that report, and I feel like you really threw me under the bus. And if you really wanted all the credit, you should have just told me. And honestly, I wouldn’t have put so much time and energy into the stupid report. Maybe I should just request to be off the team.”*

# COMPLETE THE CONFIRMING STEP

<p><b>FACTS</b></p> <p>???</p>	<p><b>ENDS</b></p> <p>???</p>
<p><b>INTERPRETATIONS</b></p> <p>???</p>	<p><b>REACTIONS</b></p> <p>???</p>

# STRUCTURED LISTENING

## FACTS

*“You had a conversation with Emerson. Emerson said that I mentioned everyone on the team equally and did not single out any one person for additional recognition.”*

## ENDS

*“And as a result you’re now thinking that maybe you should just request to be off the team.”*

## INTERPRETATIONS

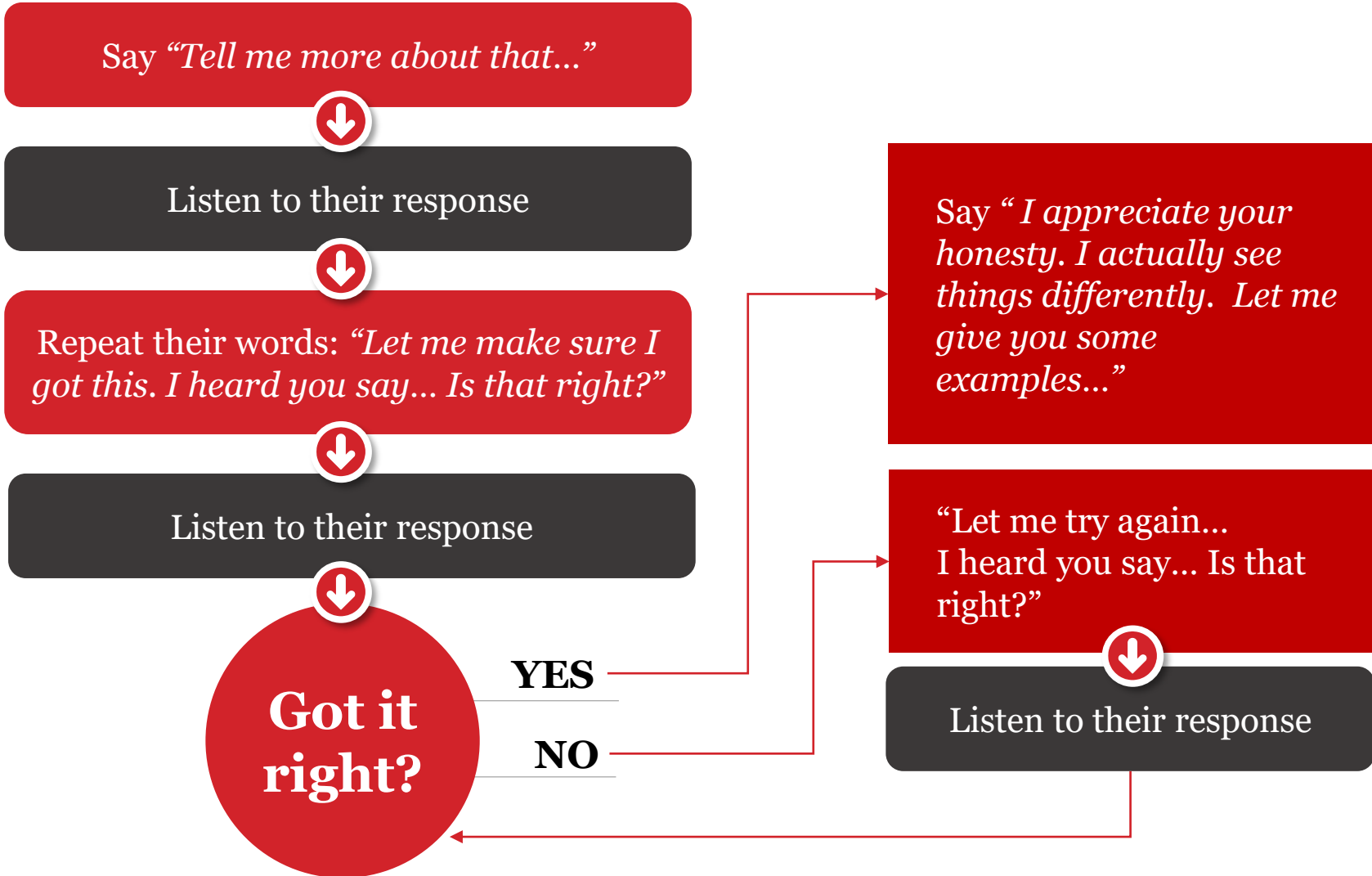
*“You took this to mean that I was diminishing your particular contributions and throwing you under the bus. You also took this to mean that I was grabbing all the credit for the team’s and your work.”*

## REACTIONS

*“Based on that interpretation, you’re feeling like I threw you under the bus and maybe even angry and betrayed.”*



# WHEN YOU DISAGREE





## OPENING SALVO

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- 1 5-count & HALT (hungry, angry, lonely, tired)
- 2 Assess appropriateness of surroundings
- 3 OK. I need a second to take this all in. I'm not sure we see this issue the same, but I hear your seriousness/intensity.

[Appropriate] So I just want to listen to your thoughts and feelings before I react or comment.

[Inappropriate] However, this is not an appropriate time/place for us to have this conversation, so let's do this <later, outside, etc.> [Repeat if necessary]



# REFRAMING

# HOW WE SEE THE WORLD



**FACTS**

What could be seen or heard?  
Videotaped?  
Validated?

**INTERPRETATIONS**

How did you interpret those facts?

**REACTIONS**

What were your emotions? How did you feel?

# HOW OUR VIEWS TURN NEGATIVE



**Irrational Beliefs**

# REWRITE OUR BELIEFS



What supposedly negative event is happening right now?

What are your underlying assumptions about this?

01

02

05

04

03

Write new rational replacements for the assumptions you made in Step 2.

Answer these questions and assess whether your underlying assumptions are rational.

Given your underlying assumptions, what is going to happen to you and how will that make you feel?

# REWRITE OUR BELIEFS

01

What supposedly negative event is happening right now?



**My career progress is going to stop because I'm going to have a new boss.**

# REWRITE OUR BELIEFS

02

What are your underlying assumptions about this?



- **I'm going to have a new boss.**
- **The new boss will be worse than the one I have.**
- **I can't adapt to a new boss.**
- **The new boss won't recognize my talents.**
- **I can't learn new skills.**
- **There won't be any more opportunities than there have been.**
- **Only my boss is responsible for my happiness.**
- **Only my boss is responsible for my growth opportunities.**
- **This is bad.**



# REWRITE OUR BELIEFS

03

Given your underlying assumptions, what is going to happen to you, what are the consequences, and how will that make you feel?



**I'll be unhappy,  
frustrated, stifled  
in my professional  
growth, and hate  
my career.**

# REWRITE OUR BELIEFS

04

Answer these questions and assess whether your underlying assumptions are rational?



- 1. Is my thinking based on obvious facts?**
- 2. What are the counterarguments to these beliefs?**
- 3. Will my thinking here help me achieve my short-term and long-term goals?**

# REWRITE OUR BELIEFS

05

Write new rational replacements for the assumptions you made in Step 2.

**If my belief that I can't adapt to a new boss is wrong, then my new belief must be that I can adapt to a new boss.**

---

**If my belief that only my boss is responsible for my growth opportunities is wrong, then my new belief must be that I need to take personal responsibility for my growth opportunities.**

# REWRITE OUR BELIEFS



What supposedly negative event is happening right now?

What are your underlying assumptions about this?

01

02

05

04

03

Write new rational replacements for the assumptions you made in Step 2.

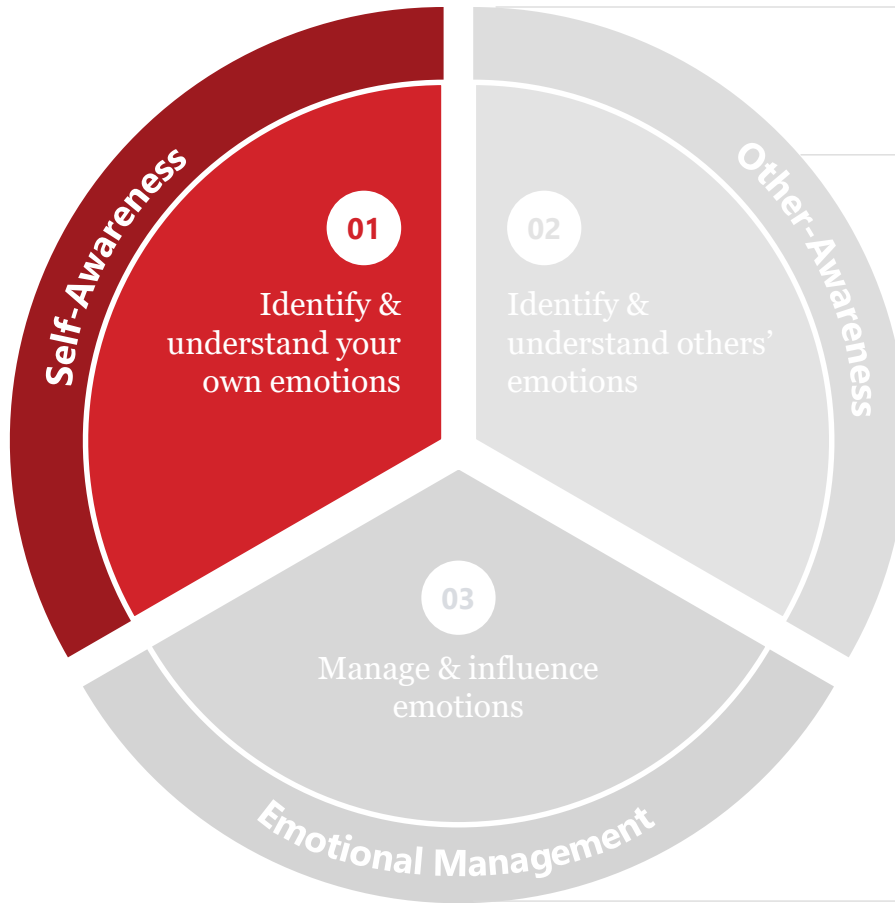
Answer these questions and assess whether your underlying assumptions are rational.

Given your underlying assumptions, what is going to happen to you and how will that make you feel?



# **SELF-AWARENESS**

# SKILL #1: SELF-AWARENESS



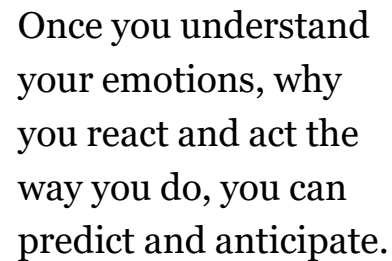
## What is it?

- › How you feel
- › How you react
- › Where you are likely to succeed or fail
- › Learning from past experiences
- › What gets to you, what you can let go of and what you need to hold on to

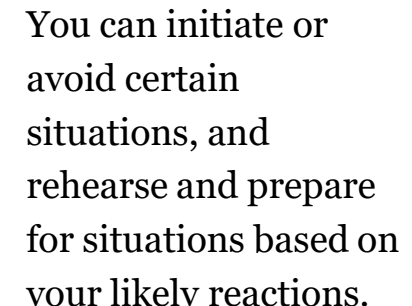
# DOES AWARENESS LEAD TO CONTROL?



**YES!**

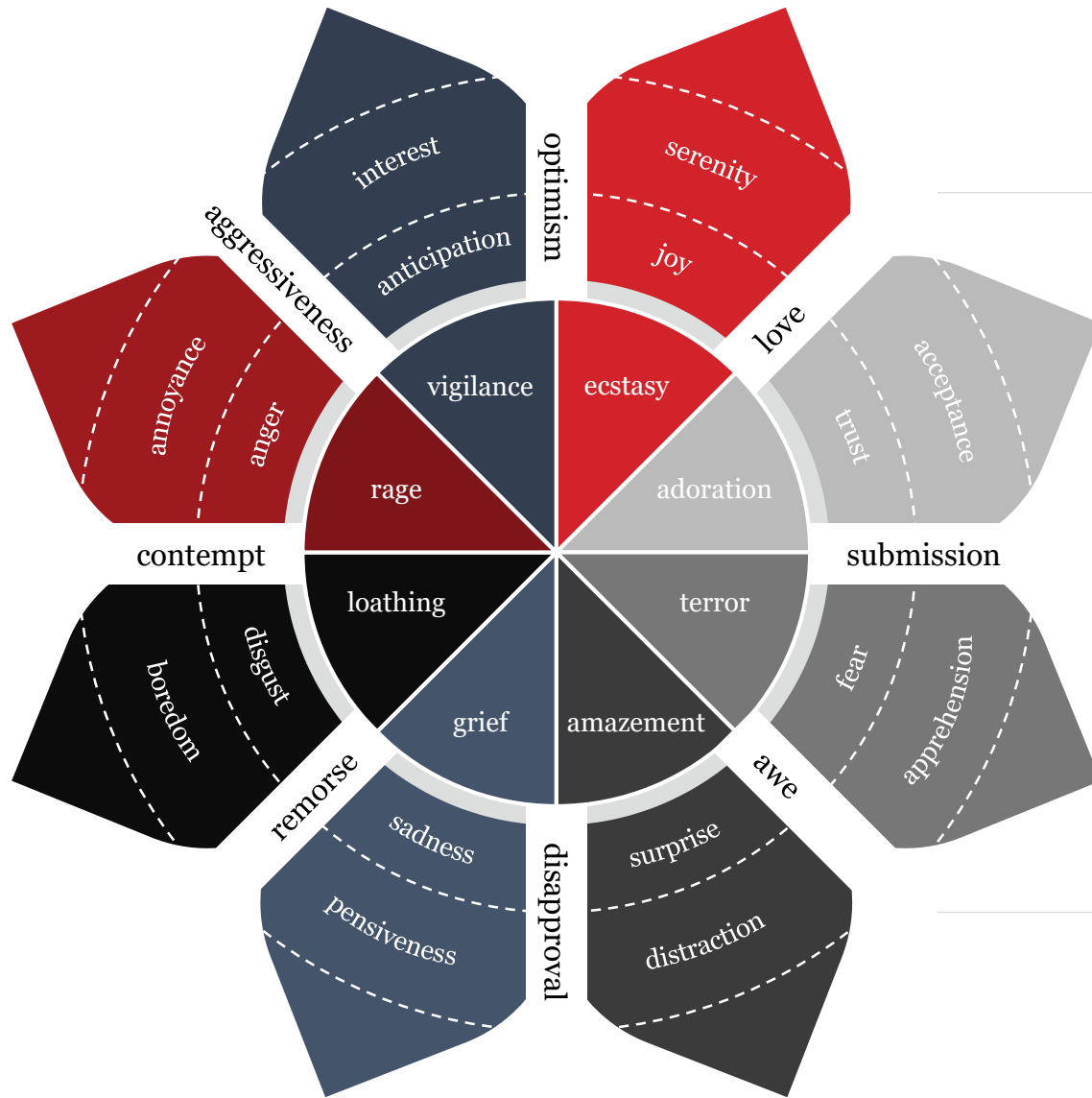


Once you understand your emotions, why you react and act the way you do, you can predict and anticipate.



You can initiate or avoid certain situations, and rehearse and prepare for situations based on your likely reactions.

# BUILDING AN EMOTIONAL VOCABULARY





# SELF-AWARENESS EXERCISE #1

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**PICK AN EMOTION AND REMEMBER A TIME AT  
WORK WHEN YOU FELT THIS EMOTION...**

---

**1** What was the setting?

**2** What caused you to feel this way?

**3** How did you handle this feeling?

**4** Say/write the following...

I felt \_\_\_\_\_

and because I felt that way,

I did \_\_\_\_\_.

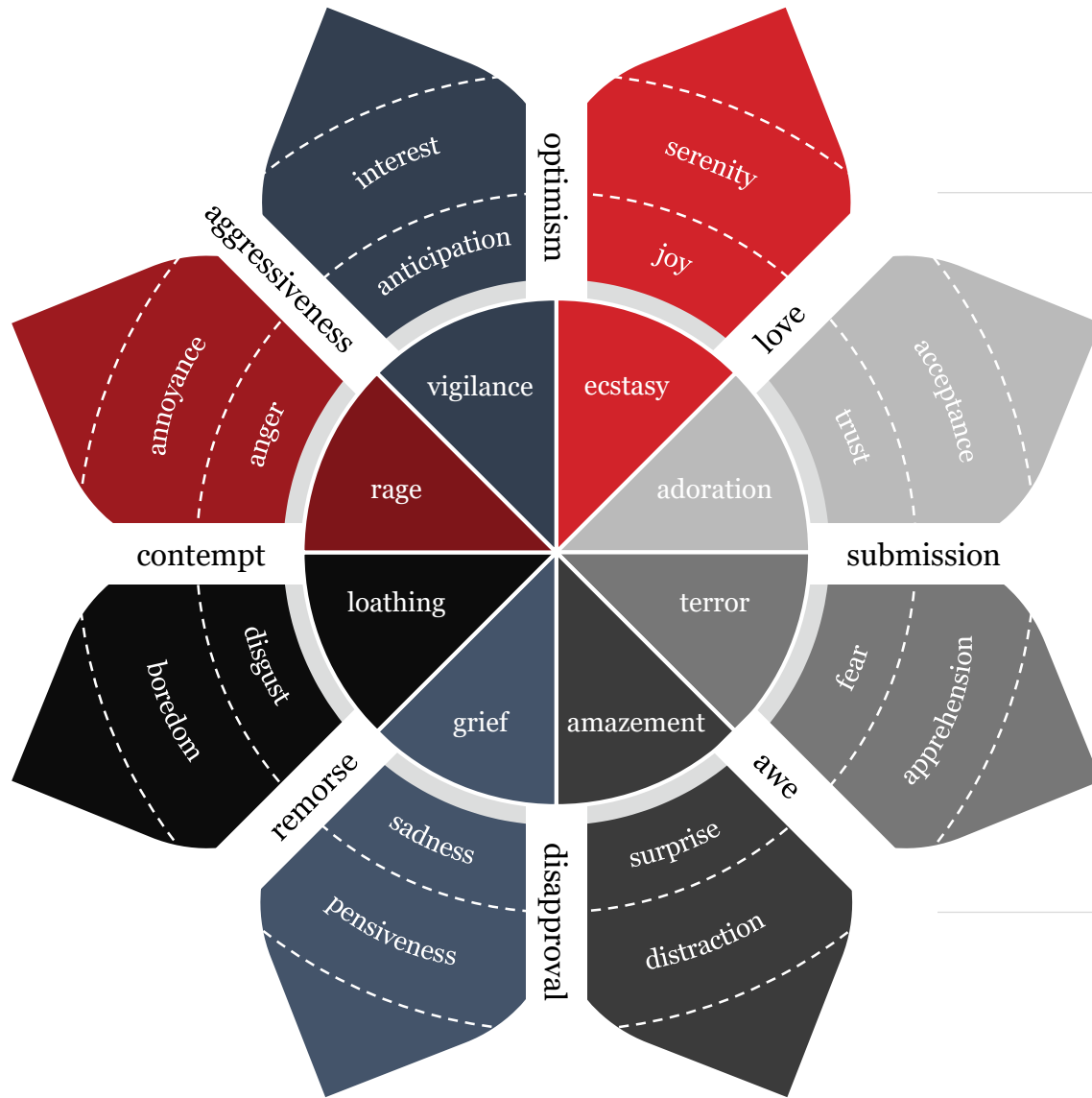
**5** What happened when you handled things this way?

**6** How did other people react?

**7** Could you have handled your feelings better?

**8** How?

# BUILDING AN EMOTIONAL VOCABULARY



# MAKING THE MOST OF THE EXERCISE

01

Spend enough time with the exercise

02

Work through (at least) 6-8 emotions

03

Repeat every few weeks

04

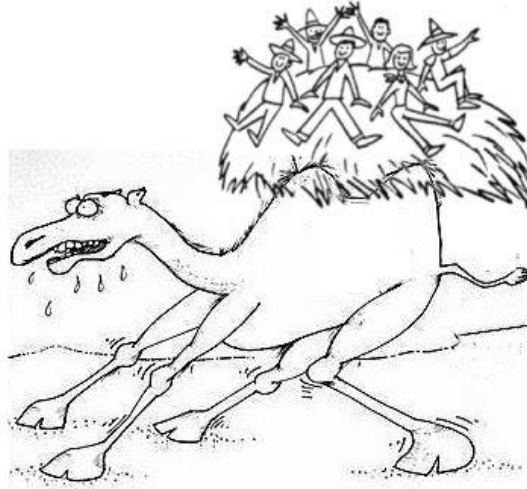
Look for progress on how you're becoming aware of your emotions "in the moment"

05

Look for progress on how you're handling emotions

# Ask for feedback

- Never wait until feedback is given, get it while the issues are small



- *If you were me, what would you choose to work on?*



# TEMPORAL DISTANCING

# 6 MONTHS LATER

---

Picture yourself and your truth partner interacting 6 months from now...

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- › *In 6 months, what do I want our relationship to be like?*
- › *In 6 months, what changes do I want to have occurred?*
- › *In 6 months, what do I want to be doing?*
- › *In 6 months, what do I want my truth partner to be doing?*

# TEMPORAL DISTANCING



Researchers at UC Berkeley conducted a series of experiments to prove this point. They asked the study subjects to identify the source of stress in their lives that was causing them the most distress at the present moment. Some of them were then asked to reflect on how they might feel about their stressor in the near future (i.e. in one week), while others were asked to imagine their feelings in the distant future. Following the reflection, all subjects were asked to rate their feelings, stress, and coping, etc.



The study participants who reflected on the event from the perspective of the distant future were **significantly less stressed and negative** than those who imagined themselves only one week in the future. The distant future thinkers felt that the current consequences of the problem would fade over time. In response, **they felt less worried, fearful, anxious, angry, disappointed, and guilty, etc.**

# REVIEW



- 1 HARDINESS
- 2 FIRE MODEL
- 3 STRUCTURED LISTENING
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**THANKS  
FOR  
WATCHING**



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