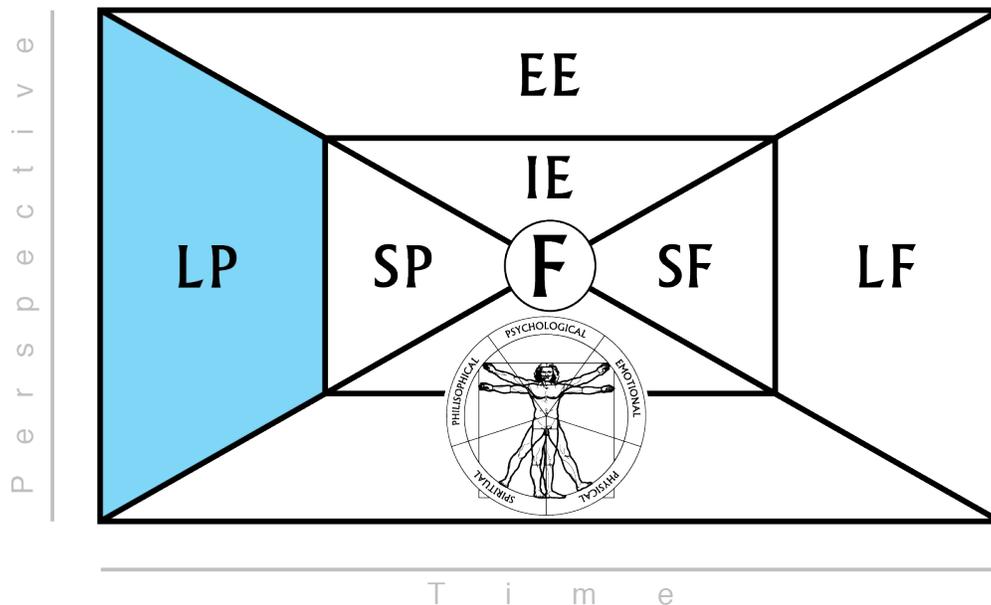




**FINDING YOUR FLOW TOOLKIT
VOL. 48
BUILDING SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SELF-IMAGE**

"I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that lamp is the lamp of experience."

-- Patrick Henry



I have yet to meet a person who did not want to improve and expand their self-confidence and image. By the same token, I have met very few that make this quest an active part of their daily agenda.

The unfortunate souls who believe that self-confidence is a genetic gift has what famed researcher Carol Dweck calls a “fixed mind-set”. These folks believe that they are victims of genetics and biology and they often fail to grow fully from their experiences. By contrast individuals with a “growth mind-set” see experiences as an opportunity to learn and improve—with each experience building upon the next. These people are not victims of their past but instead architects of their past, present, and future.

For this week’s topic, I’m here to say that you can take advantage of all three perspectives (past, present, and future) as you seek to grow your self-confidence and expand your self-image.

In the "Clarifying Beliefs" Flow Tool we spoke about how we create our self and world beliefs through laziness, ignorance, or rigorous self-awareness. I invited you to challenge disempowering beliefs and identify new empowering beliefs within any and all of your MLA’s. Your self-confidence and ultimately your self-image, is a composite of all of your remembered (past), current experiences (present) or generated (future) experiences within each MLA. You are neither completely confident nor completely unconfident in any arena. It all depends on the data you have tapped into, generated, and internalized.

Self-Efficacy

Let’s take a moment and thank Dr. Albert Bandura for his pioneering work in this area known as Self-Efficacy. Through more than five decades of research, teaching, and practice (mostly at Stanford University), he has shown that we all have the capacity to grow our self-efficacy and to expand our self-image as a result.

Understanding self-efficacy means recognizing that each of us has a certain level of self-confidence in many areas while lacking it in others. Through this theory, self-confidence isn’t something you are born with or gifted. Instead, it is the understanding that all self-confidence comes from gathering or generating specific data from our experiences and expanding our sense of self.

Bandura discusses six important sources of self-efficacy. Note that some of these strategies take place in the past, some in the present, and some in the future:

1. Performance Accomplishments (past)

- Essentially this means that success builds upon success. The more you succeed, or remember succeeding (today's assignment by the way), the more you will be able to improve your self-efficacy.

2. Vicarious Experience (present)

- Bandura notes that seeing others who are able to model a behavior gives other people a sense of self-confidence to do the same (note Bannister's breaking of the 4-minute mile and the dozen+ individuals who were able to break this record shortly thereafter)

3. Attention, Retention, Reproduction, Motivation (present)

- Bandura notes the power of mental focus and learning the most from every MOP.

4. Verbal Persuasion (present)

- Bandura references the power of your internal language and managing your emotional climate.

5. Imagined Experiences (future)

- Bandura is pointing out here the power of the mind and the importance of mental imagery and rehearsal. Repeating over and over again one's desired performance can have an impact on performance and self-efficacy.

6. Physiological States (present)

- Bandura references that feelings of anxiety, nervousness, fear, etc... promote feelings of inadequacy. Feelings of calm, peace

and relaxation prompt feelings of self-confidence.

Building Self-Efficacy

Building self-efficacy starts with becoming a good “self-scientist”, where you learn to identify and capture effective “Moments of Performance” (MOP’s).

Now, let’s get to work:

From the information above, you should know that confidence can be improved through multiple perspectives and methods. Because we will be covering more present moment/self-regulation as well as future strategies in upcoming Finding Your Flow newsletters, I’d like to take some time and focus on tapping the best of your past—because most of us are not very good at it. To help remedy this situation, I’m inviting you to participate in the following “Memories of Success” challenge (see attached exercise).

For the next 30 minutes, identify as many MOP as you can remember. Leave no stone unturned. Start from your Kindergarten year and work your way the present day. Using the “Memories of Success” exercise sheet summarize your most successful moments, then write as much detail about each event as you can recall.

As I reflect upon my own list, I highlight an experience I had in my Kindergarten year. Us 5 year olds were tasked with building a toothpick structure. I took it upon my self to build the largest one in the class. After several days, I was standing on chairs, then a ladder to cap it off. At nearly 7 feet, this experience taught me how much I enjoyed building things—big things! It also taught me that I was willing to take something farther and higher than anyone else.

Another highlight was a Boy’s 18 and under USTA sanctioned tennis tournament. It was 105 degrees and I was playing the top seed in the quarterfinals. Exhausted, depleted and 7 match points against me, I mustered and clawed my way into victory. My sense of personal satisfaction was without measure. It was during this

moment that I learned never to give up and the feeling of giving 100% towards a difficult task.

Fast forward 20 years and I found myself sharing the stage with Dr. Stephen R. Covey and speaking to a crowd of 4,000. After years of preparation for this day, it was something exceptional to take in as this experience taught me the value of having a personal vision with the energy and discipline to actualize it.

Over the years I have captured hundreds of these moments, and from each I draw physical, emotional, mental, philosophical, spiritual energies that I can use for future achievements. This technique is quite simple and extraordinarily powerful—but it takes some time and commitment on your part.

The first 25 to 50 are rather easy. The second 50 may challenge you a bit more. But make no mistake, you have hundreds, even thousands of experiences to draw from. Taking this time now to reflect on past successes, as well as keeping track of important successes in the future, will be an important source of self-confidence development. Doing this and sorting these MOP by MLA will give you situation-specific self-confidence that you can draw from as needed—for life!

Growing Self-Image/Self-Concept

It is the premise of this newsletter series and the full Principles of Personal Excellence course that your self-image/self-concept is derived from a collection of MOP's. By all accounts, then, your persistent development of self-efficacy in a variety of MLA's will allow you to modify and re-define your self-image/self-concept over time. Who you are and/or wish to become is, therefore, within your Locus of Control and up to you.

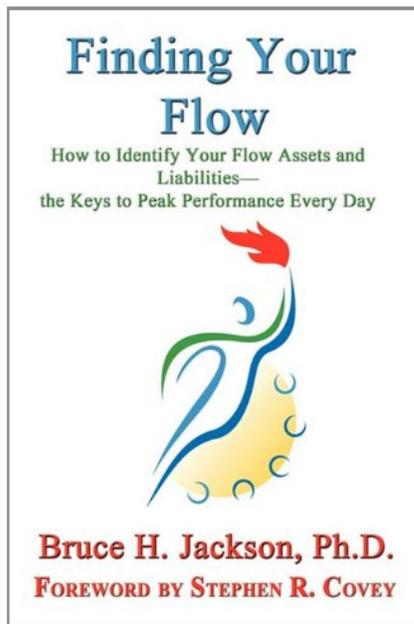
With the steering wheel firmly in hand, take some time each day to mark your successes, learn from them, and internalize them. When you have a significant success (often found in flow), capture it in writing and diligently build your "Memories of Success" list. You will

most certainly tap into levels of self-confidence you never knew you had.

In future Finding Your Flow newsletters, I will discuss other past, present, and future strategies you can use to grow your self-confidence and maximize your self-image.

EXERCISE AND PRACTICE:

- Memories of Success exercise (attached)
- Fill out the Memories of Success exercise. See if you can get to 100 this week. Keep this document with you (electronically if you can) and add to it when you have achieved a notable success that you want access to in the future.

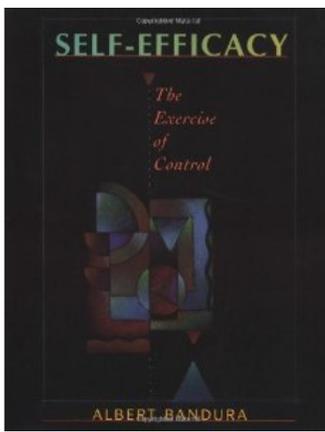


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- [Self-Efficacy by Albert Bandura](#)

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