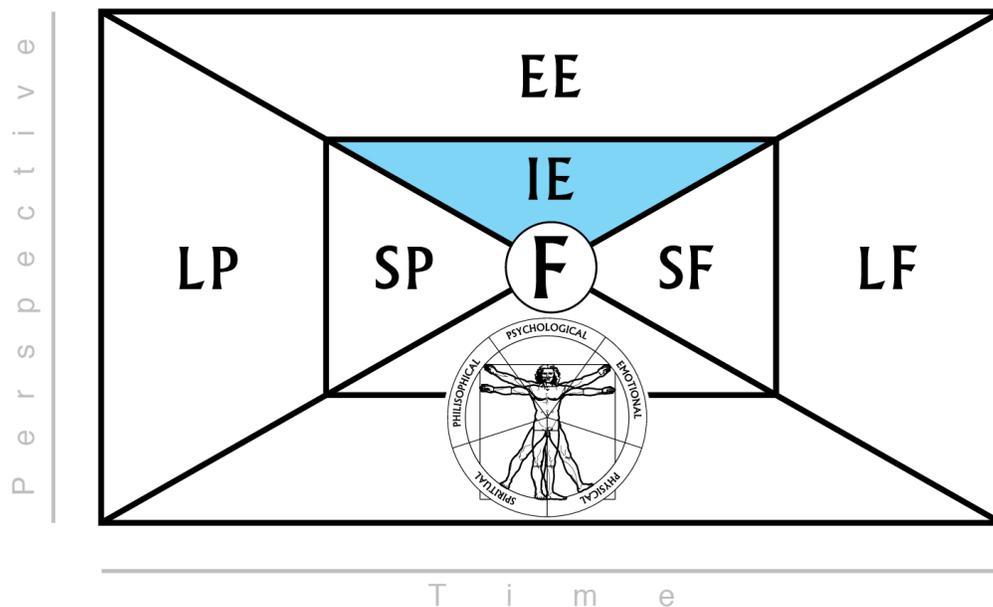




FINDING YOUR FLOW TOOLKIT VOL. 5 SETTING THE STAGE

"I always try to keep the circumstances in my life fresh. I like to change the physical environment I live in, change the people around me and try to experience things for the first time. I think that keeps one on their toes, creatively and spiritually."

-- Lenny Kravitz



In last week's newsletter we spoke of the importance of your Extended Environment (EE)—or your forest. And your Immediate

Environment (IE)—or your trees. Becoming aware of how these environments serve you (or hinder you) is an important step to finding your flow.

After some personal reflection I'm hopeful that your current city, town, organization, or neighborhood provides you with the environment you need to be at your best. If this is not the case, it will interfere with your focus and your ability to be fully engaged. This rings true with your immediate physical environments: your office, your home, any arena that you spend a lot of time in—that you need to perform well in.

If your big and small environments are set for a time, the question now is: what can you do within your immediate environments to make them more conducive to flow—to support your best work? Recognizing that you cannot change everything about an environment, what are some of the things you can change?

I once interviewed a very successful attorney who specialized in divorce mediation. I asked her what made her practice so successful. She said: my environment. Turns out she did all of her mediation in her own living room—not a stuffy and sterile office. She reminded me that the environment in such cases is everything. She explained how she would arrange the furniture to make the place more conducive to positive communication. In addition she softened the colors in this room to make them more relaxed. Other factors she modified were the lighting and the heat. Interesting.

With everything in perfect order, she was able to focus her clients and help them find their common ground within a truly comfortable and conducive environment—making the process more positive for both parties.

Through further research, I came to understand the value of inserting artwork, plants, music, inspirational messages, and other elements that help support a focused environment. Consider the opposite environment for a moment. Have you ever been in a dingy, poorly lit, hot or cold, unappealing physical space? Do you

remember what you thought and how you felt? Were any of your senses, thoughts or feelings inviting the best in you to come out?

Enough said, you get the picture. Consider for a moment your most important environments? Are they serving you? Are they distracting you? Is there anything that you can do to set this stage more adequately? If you could do anything to make this environment or place more conducive to you being at your best, what could you do?

Consider a few simple questions in this week's exercise and make those minor adjustments that can make a difference in your immediate physical environment. Notice the difference you can make with just a few simple changes.

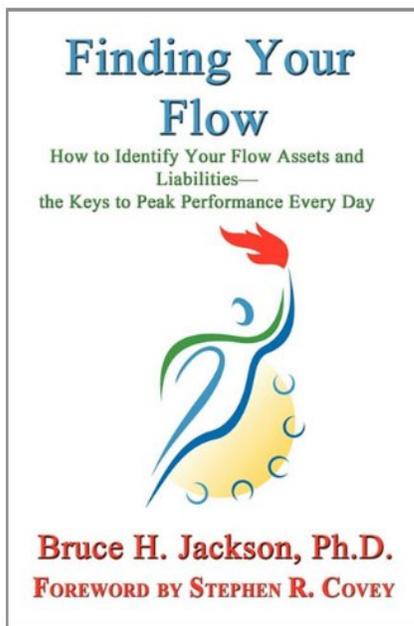
EXERCISE AND PRACTICE:

- Review the questions in: Setting Your Stage exercise sheet
- Consider the small things you can add to or take away from your environment. Try making at least one change each day (even if it is small) for the next week.

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