

Changing Mindsets

By Steve McKnight

Hi and welcome to your October Hot Topic.

It's natural for all of us to find that our motivation levels wane from time to time. But it is always a concern when we need artificial stimulants to perk us up or gives us the energy to get through the day.

There must be countless numbers of people around the world who need a morning coffee or cigarette in order to face the morning.

Let's start this month's hot topic by rating your own motivation level. Just click (or tick if you are reading a print out) on all the relevant statements that describe you in the morning:

- You struggle to get up without pressing the snooze button at least twice.
- You regularly skip breakfast - or just have coffee.
- You feel that you need a coffee or a cigarette to fire you up.
- You don't do at least 30 mins of exercise prior to beginning work.
- You leave for work with the bed unmade.
- You fantasise about the weekend when you can sleep in longer.
- It's always a rush and you regularly forget things that you meant to take to work with you.

I must confess that I was guilty of at least one of these crimes until recently.

In this Hot Topic I'd like to share with you some of the changes in mindset that I have worked through in order to achieve the winning edge that I currently enjoy. I'll share my comments and thoughts about a recent Anthony Robbins seminar that I attended too.

Managing Change

I didn't like working long hours as a chartered accountant. In fact, it was beginning to erode my health as I suffered frequent ulcers and quite bad stress attacks.

While I was lying in bed one morning and trying to muster the energy to get up, it struck me that I was living in my own worst case scenario. I mean, my life could always get worse, but I had stopped taking risks and had become addicted to being drip fed by going to work five days a week and only living for two days off.

The happiest time of the week was Friday night because it was the longest time before I had to go back to work.

But this is no way to live your life! In the cold light of morning I realised that I could always go back to what I was doing now (that is working as an accountant) and that I really didn't have anything to risk by trying something different.

Are you living in a similar world right now? If you took a leave of absence from your work for a year, what is the worst thing that could happen to you? Could you always find another job in a similar field and if so, what is stopping you from trying something new?

I'm not suggesting that you actually quit your job, but I do wonder if you live life to your full potential - or just what provides you with certainty. Do you always do your best at work, or do you just manage through?

My success today comes from regularly assessing my comfort zones and then shifting out of them. It's easy to do what's familiar, in fact that's what everyone does. The true learning comes from doing something that you don't really want to do but will enable you to learn new skills or forge an advantage in an area that's confusing.

For example, it would have been easy for Dave and I to concentrate on our accounting business and generate about \$80,000 a year each after all expenses. But if we did this then we'd have always been reliant on our clients to provide our means of living. This isn't control of our investment.

So we actively began investing in real estate. When we began we didn't know much about the process but nevertheless we forged ahead, sometimes making mistakes but always learning.

Spend five minutes now and list down three comfort zones that you are currently in. It may be work related, or relationship based. What is it you are doing that is preventing you from busting through the hurdles and achieving your goals?

1.
2.
3.

Now that you have done this, ask yourself 'What do I have to lose by attempting to bust through that comfort zone?'

1.
2.
3.

Next ask yourself what's stopping you from doing it?

1.
2.
3.

The difference between people who 'do' and people who 'don't' are excuses. It's easy to come up with excuses that keep us in comfort zones, but you'll never achieve extraordinary results and be comfortable.

Reward does not come with risk, yet this risk is perceived rather than real because in nearly all cases if you try and fail you can still regress to where you are now!

Comfort zones are the glass ceilings that prevent us from achieving what we rightfully deserve.

The Yardstick To Judge The Passing Of Time

We are all only blessed with a limited amount of time to live. The saying that there's always tomorrow is definitely incorrect because one day there will be no tomorrow in our life.

Try to avoid living in tomorrow when you can only exist today. There are two fundamental rules that I live by:

1. I must learn at least one new thing everyday
2. Each day I live must include a memory that I'll treasure for a lifetime

Regrets are anchors to retard our progress and keep us living in yesterday. Hopes and dreams are fantasies for tomorrow... actions are things we can do today.

I regard the ultimate yardstick of the passing of time to be 'What action have you taken today towards achieving your hopes and dreams?' Plan for tomorrow but live in today.

With this in mind, I recommend you start each day by stating one significant action that must be done today. That means that you'll complete seven significant actions a week, which will soon begin to yield massive results and push you beyond your comfort zones.

Leverage Your Action By Harnessing The Power Of OPE

You've probably heard of OPM (other people's money) before but there is a much more powerful resource that exists to assist you in achieving your goals.

It's called OPE, which stands for Other People's Experience and as an Inner Circle member, you're already taking advantage of it as you are leveraging off my knowledge and experience.

So how do I obtain OPE? Well, I pay big bucks to attend conferences around the world where I plug into the world's best entrepreneurs to learn their secrets of success.

That's why I signed up and attended a recent Anthony Robbins event that was luckily held here in Melbourne.

I thought it would be a good idea to share my thoughts and experience from the seminar and provide you with an insight to the topics discussed.

Event Details:

Event: Unleash The Power Within
Presenter: Anthony Robbins
Cost: \$795 (for a VIP seat)
Duration: Friday 5:30pm until about 11pm
Saturday 10am until about 9pm
Sunday 9am until about 1am
Monday 10am until 4pm

Event Lead-Up:

About a month ago I caught up with a close friend (Malcolm) who mentioned that he was attending an upcoming Anthony Robbins event.

Now to be honest I'd heard the name 'Anthony Robbins' before but I wasn't sure exactly what his *message* was. Malcolm was eager for me to come along and based on his recommendation and high regard for the speaker, I was happy to write a cheque and attend with an open mind.

Then I found out the seminar was being held at the Rod Laver Arena which seats about 10,000 people and I became immediately sceptical. I began to think that this was going to be another one of those American-hype seminars that promised much but ended up delivering little.

But by the time the event was due to begin I was looking forward to learning something new and was keen to get value for money for the price I paid to attend.

Who Is Anthony Robbins?

Anthony Robbins is a successful American aged in his early 40's who believes "there is a powerful driving force within you that, once unleashed, can make any vision, dream or desire a reality."

Here's a brief biography from a site selling his product:

"Since 1984, millions of people have enjoyed the warmth, humour, and dynamic presentation style of Anthony Robbins' corporate, sales, and personal development seminars. He has been a peak performance consultant to the executives of such organisations as IBM, AT&T, American Express, McDonnell-Douglas, and the United States Army, as well as professional sports teams, such as the Los Angeles Dodgers, Seattle Mariners, and gold medal-winning Olympic athletes develop their own personal power to achieve.

A millionaire by the age of twenty-four, Anthony Robbins is an entrepreneur--the founder of nine companies--and the best-selling author of many books and popular audio-learning programs. Considered the nation's leader in human development training, he is the founder and chairman of the board of Robbins Research International, Inc., the research and marketing arm of his personal development businesses.

Deeply committed to contribution and making a difference, he has established the Anthony Robbins Foundation as a philanthropic organisation dedicated to assisting those individuals who would not otherwise be reached. By enabling our nation's youth, elderly, homeless, and prison population to tap their own personal power, the Foundation empowers these often-forgotten members of our society to become valuable contributors as well."

He has written two successful books titled "Awaken The Giant Within" and "Unlimited Power".

Event Sign Up

I met Malcolm and another friend on the steps of the Rod Laver Arena and proceeded to the registration tables. There were people everywhere and quite honestly it was a shambles and generally a poor start.

After waiting for nearly an hour we eventually collected our tickets and entered the Arena. By the time the doors opened and we were showed to our seats I was experiencing some nervous anxiety about whether or not I had wasted my money.

This feeling was not alleviated when there were people on stage dancing and clapping to the music pumping from loud speakers. However before long the atmosphere became contagious and nearly everyone was swaying to the beat and clapping enthusiastically - except me who was now alarmed and wondering how I could get a refund!

The guy in front of me asked if I didn't feel like dancing, to which I replied "Don't worry, I'm dancing on the inside!"

Before long Anthony Robbins came on stage and to summarise him in a word... he's a GIANT! For someone in his mid-forties, he certainly has aged very well!

There was some more jumping and dancing which concluded with a ritual where we all clapped and shouted 'yes', which was to become a common practice throughout the event.

In fact, the ritual is quite a good idea to shock people out of a relaxed stupor that tends to occur after sitting for long periods of time.

The Beginning... Friday Night

Friday night was an interesting introduction to the world of Anthony Robbins. He outlined the concept of being in a 'State' (a frame of mind) and that the source of all emotion stems from three areas - physiology, language and focus/beliefs.

He believes that it is possible to change your 'State' instantly by affecting a change in one of physiology, language and/ or focus.

We completed an interesting exercise of trying to tell ourselves off in a sexy voice, which I have to tell you was nearly impossible to do without smiling. I made a mental note to try this next time Julie and I have a disagreement.

There was a lot of discussion about why people behave the way they do and completing the tasks necessary for us to achieve a focused 'State' of success. The goal was for us to be able to enter this State whenever necessary to achieve our goals.

The night concluded with a fire-walk over (very) hot coals. When I arrived at the seminar there was no way I planned to participate in this, but by the time it was my turn, I was eager to prove to myself that this was another opportunity to push through barriers in my mind.

I used the techniques given to enter a 'State' where I was focused on the task before me and was about to cross the hot coals when the supervisor held out his hand in front of me.

"Fresh coals" he yelled and out of nowhere many shovel loads of glowing amber coals were placed on top of the cooler ones.

Great! I get to walk over the really hot coals (apparently those coals are over 500 degrees)! Nevertheless I walked the short distance without any ill effects. Now that's one way to bust out of a comfort zone!

I left the venue that night wondering whether or not the madness of Anthony Robbins and his fire-walking torture might actually work.

Empowering... Saturday

Saturday began with the usual ritual of jumping, dancing and music - but more enthusiastic than the previous day.

I thought the best piece of advice delivered for the day was the difference between a 'should' and a 'must'.

We pretty much 'should' all over ourselves (say that with a US accent and the word comes out a bit different), but it's not until a 'should' becomes a 'must' that we are coaxed into taking action.

A secret to success therefore is to prioritise your shoulds into musts and then take action.

What are the shoulds in your life and what has to happen to make them a must? This is the essence of what is needed to make a permanent change.

During the day we were challenged to hug strangers, give them our best \$10m smile, mimic the physiology of others and 'feel' how they felt, decide what things we loved, hated and really wanted.

Occasionally Anthony Robbins would seek volunteers who had experienced problems in life and ask them probing psychoanalytical questions. Of the many people he selected over the weekend one was depressed and another had been sexually abused. I can't say that I'm convinced that it was appropriate to ask probing questions in front of 4,000 people.

But overall it was an empowering (and exhausting) day. I can't say that I agreed with everything that went on, but there were some very inspiring moments.

It concluded with the usual dancing and jumping ritual and I suspect people were happy to leave earlier than the expected 11pm finish.

I went shopping that night and applied some of the techniques on a checkout operator and was able to discover in less than three minutes some information that you wouldn't normally tell a complete stranger. The techniques involved a degree of mimicking her non-verbal behaviour and asking her how she felt about positive experiences (like how does she feel at the end of working an eight-hour shift).

I went to sleep wondering if the techniques I was learning could be as powerful as what were promised and concluded that they probably were.

Change... Sunday

The third day was promised to be life changing and indeed it was.

The morning contained an outline of the five human senses and how a combination of these five senses allows you to create a response. Vary the sense and you can manipulate the response.

As an example, is there a certain smell that brings back happy memories for you? Perhaps a kitchen smell or a perfume from certain plant? These are called triggers and are powerful tools that can transform your State in a second.

The day progressed with an outline of Neuro-Associative Conditioning, which is a subliminal messaging technique that draws upon the 'State' and five senses to illicit a certain response. For example, someone can become motivated by triggering positive emotions from an unrelated action (say winning a trophy) and then applying that experience to the area where motivation is lacking.

Of the most benefit though was the 'Dickens Process'.

Anthony Robbins used the story of Scrooge from Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* to change five limiting beliefs into five empowering beliefs.

Everyone has things that they would like to change and I am no different. I was a fat kid in high school and believe it or not, still have self-doubts about the way I look. Until the event I still harboured negative feelings about my body and I was able to use the Anthony Robbins approach to change my thought pattern.

It was actually quite emotional and I was surprised by the impact the day had on me and by the time the vent climaxed, four thousand people were shouting:

Now I am the Voice.
I will lead, not follow.
I will believe, not doubt.
I will create, not destroy.
I am a Force for Good.
I am a leader.
Defy the odds!
Set new standards!
Step Up!

Sadly the event was hijacked for a short time by a massive product sales pitch, which although very successful (it seemed that over 1,000 people signed up for a product that was priced at over \$10,000) detracted from the overall message of the seminar. But I don't want to dwell on the negative because it was only a very minor part to the event.

The night ended and I have to say that I was feeling like I was ready to take the next step forward and continue building upon the foundations I have already laid down. Surprisingly, I wasn't even tired despite the fact that I'd only had about 10 hours sleep in three days.

I walked out knowing that I had discovered new powerful techniques that would allow me to retain control of my emotions.

A New Beginning... Monday

The final day of the event was a video recording of an earlier Anthony Robbins event punctuated by regular appearances on stage of Anthony Robbins' Personal Trainer.

I was lucky enough to bring my wife Julie because one of the other people in my group had another appointment.

And it was a good thing Julie came along because the topic was nutrition. If we were going to make a change in that part of our life then it was going to have to be a joint decision.

On reflection, I probably gained the most out of the entire seminar on the Monday because nutrition was an area of my life that I was looking to change to create better results. Up until the seminar I had been finding it increasingly more difficult to get out of bed before 8am.

The theme of the day was diet as the cornerstone to health and that medicine treats the symptoms rather than addresses the problems.

For example, 1 in 3 people will die of cancer or heart disease. Medicine is geared up to try and find a cure for cancer and heart disease once the patient has the affliction, rather than a solution for preventing it all together.

We wouldn't need a cure for cancer if there weren't any cancer to begin with, right? The point was made that everything you ingest is either assimilated (ie. becomes a part of you) or excreted.

Perhaps the cause of most disease originates from the fuel we feed our body. If we eat poorly then bacteria or viruses which we would usually combat may be able to attack the weakened state of our body.

Anthony Robbins believes the major health problems of the world are caused from people who eat poorly and goes as far as implying that the nutritional pyramid is dictated by large organisations with an ulterior motive other than perfect health.

One of the most startling comments was that dairy products actually leech calcium from your bones, not make them stronger as is a popular belief after all. In his common sense corner he raised an interesting question... why do fully-grown humans drink cows milk when fully grown cows don't?

The nutritional information was unbiased, logical and well presented. It was sometimes shocking too, like when videos were shown of cows being slaughtered and chickens being processed. When I picture the beast I'm eating it's a cow or chicken on a farm, but in reality I'm probably eating an animal that is laden with chemicals and fattened artificially on a cocktail of antibiotics and hormones.

Of more immediate concern was an interview with a chubby American guy who was entering hospital for a heart by-pass. His doctor needed to take some blood before the operation and when analysing it in a test tube after it had been through a centrifuge, wondered what the milky substance in the top quarter of the test tube was.

The answer? It was fat in the blood because the last thing the guy had eaten before entering hospital was a burger, fries and a coke. Disgusting and unbelievable that this guy would eat this on the night before life saving surgery!

In fact the message was so powerful that Julie and I decided to take the ten-day, no-meat no dairy challenge. We left the seminar and went home, ransacked our fridge and pantry with the goal of eliminating all the bad foods from the fridge.

As I write this it is day nine of the challenge and I'm feeling great! I've lost 2 kilos, get out of bed at 6am and go for a walk, am less stressed and generally feel more alive.

We plan to reintroduce fish when the ten days are over, but I don't miss red meat, chicken or dairy foods at all.

Actually, when you take the time to go shopping and investigate healthier alternatives, there is a lot of variety. Nevertheless, I have no plans to become the diet police and I still miss chocolate a little bit!

Event Summary

It's hard to rationalise walking over hot coals, hugging complete strangers and telling them secret things that you'd be embarrassed to tell just about anyone else, watching four thousand people jumping up and down and making the Rod Laver Arena shake, shouting 'yes' until your voice gave out and punching the air to 'We Are The Champions', together with throwing away perfectly good food that just three days before you would have gladly eaten.

But then again, in order for things to change, first you must change.

I've implemented massive change once before in my life and the financial rewards are on the board to show it. I'm not afraid to try something new when I can always go back to what I am doing (eating) now. This is my philosophy for success.

Considering the money paid to attend I have to conclude that this seminar was one of the best value for money events that I had ever been to anywhere in the world. Anthony Robbins has amazing stamina and is an entertaining and authoritative presenter.

But what I couldn't understand is that in the midst of a perfectly good opportunity to cast off old bad habits, people left the seminar to go outside for a smoke. I kept shaking my head wondering if they were actually listening to what was being said.

Then again, not everyone wants change and Anthony Robbins believes people act the way they do to fulfil one of the six human needs: certainty, uncertainty, significance, love, growth, and contribution. When three or more of these needs are met then the act becomes an addiction.

The same 'Unleash The Power Within' event is scheduled for Sydney in October 2002 and I'm thinking about organising a block of tickets at a special price for Inner Circle members. I'll be going again with my wife, Dave and other close friends. Perhaps you'd like to join us too? If you would, then place a post on the Inner Circle and let me know as soon as possible.

Unleash The Power Within was time and money well spent and I'd encourage anyone looking to make permanent change in their lives to attend. At the very least, pick up a copy of the Anthony Robbins book 'Awaken The Giant Within' today as the information is worthy of further investigation.

I encourage other Inner Circle members who came up and said hello on the day to post their comments on the Reflections Forum Board.

Summary

The difference in my life between mediocre and massive success has been realising when I'm in a comfort zone and then breaking through the shackles that keep me there.

I seek motivation from many sources, one of which is a very popular poem by Robert Frost:

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Which road do you walk? What difference is it making? You deserve success in your life, but it will come at the expense of being comfortable.

Best regards,

Steve McKnight

Resources

Anthony Robbins Web Site:

<http://www.tonyrobins.com/>

Australian Promoter:

<http://www.visionpursuit.com.au/>

Good 'Shocking' Web Site About Meat:

<http://www.veganoutreach.org/whyvegan/animals.html>