

Peace of Mind Through Clear Communication
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“Happiness and the belief that we can experience our own happiness, anytime and anyplace, is the ultimate attitudinal advantage!”¹

“People can change at any age. Where there is life, there is possibility. Even ancient beliefs can be overturned or replaced in a matter of moments. We are the river!”²

“We are always doing the best we can, the best we know how.”³

Peace of mind is one of the top desired states of being in modern society, yet it cannot be bought or given. There are many paths leading to peace of mind and one of the most effective, easy, and direct methods involves the ability to communicate clearly. How does the experience of both ‘Happiness is a Choice’ and ‘Radical Authenticity’ at the Option institute lend to the discovery of simple, honest ways of communicating that lead to profound inner peace and joy? What is the Option process and how does it work to create peace? Why would this process be considered useful? And who can learn this process?

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¹ Page 119, Happiness is a Choice, by Barry Neil Kaufman

² Page 53, Happiness is a Choice, by Barry Neil Kaufman

³ Page 47, To Love is to be Happy with, by Barry Neil Kaufman

of communicating that lead to profound inner peace and joy? The ability to access happiness independent of stimuli and freedom and peace through congruent living and communication is the key theme or motivation for investigating the value of the Option process. This process is also called the Dialogue process and is the core of the teachings at the Option Institute. An integral part of each seminar, the Dialogue is accompanied by other complimentary concepts: Stimulus-Belief-Response, 51% principle & the 2 E's. All the tools are used to facilitate greater self-knowledge for the purpose of living a happier, more authentic life.

What is the Option process specifically and how does it work to create peace? "We are not our history; we constantly are recreating ourselves."⁴ The Option process, also called the Dialogue process, is an experience between two people. There is a 'mentor', the person who asks non-directive questions and who practices non-judgmental, fully present listening with an attitude of love and trust for the explorer. The 'explorer', the one to whom the dialogue belongs, directs the entire session, exploring an issue to uncover the underlying beliefs. Through this simple dialogue process, the explorer is free to be deeply honest and accepting of his/herself while simultaneously choosing to recreate the desired response by shifting the uncovered beliefs.

⁴ Quote from H.O.W. workshop lecture, May 6-8, 2005, Option Institute

“Be who you want to be, stand tall and share what you want with others.”⁵

Through exploring beliefs a natural desire to be more open, loving and authentic emerges. Once new beliefs are in place, beliefs that create the desired responses to any stimuli, a greater sense of inner peace begins to develop. Through having deeper self-awareness and acceptance, a greater sense of congruency emerges. Reactivation of previously ‘lost’ or ‘trap’ energy thus occurs and reenergizes the explorer. Having more energy, peace and understanding through being wholly responsible for ones own feelings creates a new sense of personal freedom and motivation to practice the art of clear, honest communication with everyone.

“All beliefs are make-believe.”⁶ Along with the Dialogue process comes the concept of “Stimulus-Belief-Response” which differs from the normal stimulus-response paradigm by inserting the ‘belief’ factor. By viewing the world through this concept, one can quickly see that it is their beliefs about life that lead to how they feel about life. Since responsibility for the creation of beliefs lies in the individual, the same individual is then capable to explore, analyze, drop or change their beliefs and therefore, ultimately shift how they respond to the world.

“We see the world how we see the world”⁷ Through understanding that beliefs and perceptions shape the experience of the world, one can cultivate personal

⁵ Quote from H.O.W. workshop lecture, May 6-8, 2005, Option Institute

⁶ Quote from H.O.W. workshop lecture, May 6-8, 2005, Option Institute

⁷ Quote from H.O.W. workshop lecture, May 6-8, 2005, Option Institute

power and self-love through accepting one's role in the creation of beliefs and of creating new one's that better serve the individual. A commonly shared belief is that of: "I am responsible for my loved ones' happiness and they are responsible for my happiness."⁸ By changing this simple belief to " Whether or not the other person does or doesn't do something, we are solely in charge of our happiness"⁹ allows individuals to experience new found peace through reclaiming their personal power and choice.

"We are always doing what we want to do."¹⁰ Another supporting concept within the Option process is the '51% principle'. This concept explores the idea that people always do what they want to do and the proof of this is in their actions, not in what they say. This principle investigates first what a person is doing/feeling that they feel they don't want to do or feel? – this is known as 'Find it' - for example: "I don't want to work at that corporation." Once found, the process then is transformed to 'Flip it' – for example: "I do want to work at that corporation." After acknowledgment, the process moves to 'Explain it' where the individual states why they want to do or feel that way – "Because I need the money to take care of my family." The entire process completes itself by either 'embrace it or change it' – "I do want to work there because I can take care of myself and my family". Here the person can choose to change what is happening or to get

⁸ Handout from H.O.W. workshop, Top beliefs of Unhappiness, by Barry Neil Kaufman

⁹ Quote from H.O.W. workshop lecture, May 6-8, 2005, Option Institute

¹⁰ Quote from H.O.W. workshop lecture, 51% principle, May 6-8, 2005, Option Institute

behind what they are doing which releases the struggle and replaces it with a sense of peace and clarity.

Another principle is the 'Two E's' – Emotional Emancipation. This principle is “a quick and easy way to free yourself from victim-hood by taking ownership of your response to stimuli”¹¹ This principle encourages people to be able to fully communicate their feelings without blame or judgment. This form of emotional responsibility and understanding frees a person to experience greater peace and happiness simply by creating the sense of personal control in a situation once viewed as being 'out of control'.

Why would this process be considered useful? “Being authentic has its consequences.”¹² When people learn to trust themselves fully and to have an authentic presence in both their relationship to themselves and to others, wonderful consequences occur. In-authenticity leads to the fear judgments from others and believing that an individual has the power to hurt us. Whereas authenticity leads to more health, more peace and safety as people will truly know who we are. By practicing the Option (dialogue) process, individuals quickly and continuously learn to be more authentic and to change the areas of their lives that deplete them and create unhappiness. If happiness is the result of exploring one's beliefs, then the value to the dialogue is priceless.

¹¹ Quote from H.O.W. workshop lecture, the 2 E's, May 6-8, 2005, Option Institute

¹² Quote from H.O.W. workshop lecture, May 6-8, 2005, Option Institute

Who can learn this process? “It’s never too late to see our history through new beliefs.”¹³ Anyone of any age can learn this process. It is quite simple, asking mostly that the person being the mentor exercise a non-judgmental, non-directive, loving and accepting listening presence. Being a mentor is immensely rewarding as it allows for the practice of unconditional love and for the remarkable renewal of trust in the strength of the explorer’s spirit. Being an explorer is also deeply rewarding. The greatest gift any person can give him/herself is the gift of self-knowledge, self-love and self-acceptance. This gift is the seed to living a vibrant, happy and fulfilling life.

“There are no ground rules except the ones we choose to live by.”¹⁴ The Option process and its complimentary principles teach individuals from all walks of life to more fully accept and love themselves by being willing to explore themselves on a deeper, more authentic level. As more and more people choose to create happiness in their lives through self-understanding and clear communication, the more peace is created within their lives and the lives of those around them. Anyone willing to take a few moments out of their lives and gently, yet thoroughly investigate of who they really are will be rewarded a peaceful life, free of judgment and misunderstanding; an immensely priceless and worthy pursuit.

¹³ Quote from H.O.W. workshop lecture, May 6-8, 2005, Option Institute

¹⁴ Page 252, To Love is to be Happy with, by Barry Neil Kaufman