

In this Issue

- »» Editor's Note
- »» Mentor's Musings
- »» Coaching Notes
- »» Readers Comments

Newsletter
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Editor's Note

By Raj Narayan, ISEC Editor

At the outset, allow me to share some happy news with you. **The International Association of Coaching (IAC)**, a leading independent global coach certifying body, will soon open a Bangalore Chapter in association with ISEC. Our Founder Coach Krishna Kumar will be President of the Chapter that will facilitate the functioning of [the IAC](#) in India to develop coaching to the highest standards of universal excellence. ISEC is already an IAC licensed coaching school.



Sticking to the theme of happiness, I'd like to thank readers for providing their valuable inputs to the discussion raised in our last newsletter on the Pursuit of Happiness. Coincidentally, around the same time, noted **Coach Marshall Goldsmith** asked a similar question in [his blog](#): "Are you living for the short term or the long term?"

Goldsmith lists out five modes of behavior that links us to any activity. These are (a) activities that stimulate, (b) activities that calls for sacrifice of short-term satisfaction, (c) those that encourage survival (d) others that sustains short-term satisfaction and (e) activities that provide success in both short term and lead to long term happiness.

"The point is two people could be engaged in the same activity but have completely different perceptions of what this activity means to them. It's because no one can define what short-term satisfaction or long-term benefit means for you but you," he says while underscoring that while activities themselves determine our happiness, our attitude towards them ensures quality in our life.

At ISEC, we believe that it is our privilege to generate discussion and share knowledge at every possible juncture and our newsletter is part of that movement. Therefore, we'd greatly appreciate if you could forward it to friends when you come across comments and articles that provoke thought. We will soon be launching a blog on our website and other social media engagements and look forward to your continued support to our activities via your feedback.

MENTOR'S MUSINGS

By Krishna Kumar, ISEC Founder-Director

Have you come across a scenario where during a conversation with a friend or colleague, the person starts complaining about something or someone at length? And how many times did it suddenly dawn on you that the nature of the complaint was quite peripheral to the issue that caused the rant?

During a recent such conversation a member of our tennis center approached me seeking help to ostensibly correct some of his ground strokes. The tennis player (let's call him GG) told me (KK) about some errors that, he felt, had crept into his game.

We headed out to the court where I watched him play for some time and realized that admittedly he could do with

some technical improvements. However, at some stage it occurred to me that the strokes may not be his real problem. Here is how our conversation proceeded:

KK - Hi GG, can you be a little more specific about the strokes that need correction.

GG - It is my backhand. I never seem to get it right. Plus I am almost always in the wrong position to hit my forehand and there is a complete lack of consistency while rallying with my opponent.

KK - There seems to be a lot of areas that you need to work on but having watched you play, I wonder if you can suggest a method to fix all these problems at one time rather than one at a time.

GG - (After a brief thought) You mean like a single solution to multiple problems? I actually find that hard to believe.

KK - Well, It depends on how you look at the problems and connect them to each other. Let me start by asking you a question? What do you think is happening to your backhand?

GG - Well, I seem to be getting to the ball late. So, it could be a problem with getting my footwork wrong. How does that sound?

KK - Okay! That sounds like a good cause. Now what about your forehand? Why do you think you're in the wrong position so often?

GG - Well, it seems to be my footwork again. Maybe, I am not positioning myself properly and am slow in getting to the ball.

KK - Fine. So, does it appear that you are once again slow in getting to the ball and thereby leading to faulty positioning and netting the ball?

GG - Yes, I must say that when you put it like that, I feel the only point that ties all the three problems together is my lack of fitness. If I were to improve my fitness, I guess my reactions would improve and lead to better strokes and consistency.

KK - And why do you think that your fitness levels have deteriorated and led you to mishit shots that used to come naturally in the past?

GG - Well... I hardly get to practice regularly. The pressures at work and long hours eat into the time that I had set aside for tennis. I think I need to set aside at least some hours each week to come to the courts and hit a few balls.

And so it was that coach and player went through a routine to improve overall physical fitness and ensured that the latter once again started visiting the courts as regularly as he had in the past.

If KK, the coach, had not followed his instincts, GG would have received stroke corrections and in all likelihood faced a repeat of the situation within a few days of the corrective procedures.

Applying this instance to the corporate context we often encounter issues brought to us by our peers and juniors and the immediate reaction is to rush in and "fix" things. Doubtless it would save time and work in the short term, but there is a strong chance that the peripheral situation remains simmering underneath. In medical parlance, they call it "treating the symptom and ignoring the disease".

If you have experienced such situations and wish to share with us, please mail me on kk@intradconsult.com .



COACHING NOTES:

Excerpt from an article by Sir John Whitmore

Individuals, tribes, cultures, nations and humanity all mature or evolve psychologically, psychosocially and psychospiritually over time in a broadly similar predictable sequence. Some individuals may mature rapidly triggered by a crisis, and others may choose to embark on a journey of conscious self-development by a variety of means including the use of psychological or spiritual practices. Thereby these individuals climb the evolutionary ladder through sequential stages in a decade or three, whereas collectives such as a culture may take several centuries to attain the same heights.

By understanding the pattern that individuals follow, the progress of a culture or a nation becomes predictable, and the stage that they have reached is identifiable by certain known characteristics. Those who study the evolutionary consciousness of humanity all over the world, have developed countless maps and models of the evolutionary journey, from simple easy to understand three stage models to complex ones of 15 or more stages. When they are superimposed over one another, they show a consistent sequential pattern.

One of these models, a four stage one devised by Kohlberg and Gilligan, labels **Egocentric** as the lowest level, followed by **Ethnocentric**, then **Worldcentric** and finally **Kosmocentric**. The other more complex models provide more detail, but I am intentionally keeping it simple here. This model can be described as showing the size of the person's consciousness or what the person includes in his or her field of care. A recent study suggested that some 77% of the world population is currently Ethnocentric or below.

This Ethnocentric stage is characterized by tribal orientation, nationalism, rivalries, adolescent behaviors, and the like. Let us consider now the responses made by the bankers and the politicians to media and public criticism. They were very similar.

- **The claim that "Everything I did was within the rules."**
- **An inability to recognize that what they did was ethically or morally wrong.**
- **The excuse that "I made a mistake", but the mistakes were all to their own benefit.**
- **An almost pathological inability to take responsibility, and to say "I am sorry".**

Anyone who has a teenage son will recognize these adolescent traits; however, when one is under 25 such behavior is to be expected as an acceptable phase in growing up. Above 30 or so, and especially if one is a banker or a politician with power over many, such behaviors are not only unattractive, unacceptable, and inexcusable, they are positively dangerous. Why have the media not picked this up and pointed it out?

Introducing tighter regulations for bankers or politicians does not raise their level of maturity, morality or their ethics; it just limits what they can get away with. No, it is the type of people, the Ethnocentrics themselves that have to go. Worldcentric people by definition and by their nature would not have abused the old regulations, let alone need new ones. Anyone below Worldcentric on the "chart" should not be selected or elected into positions of leadership in politics or big corporations, not just banks. Fewer people would fit the bill and that would limit our choice, and so it should.

(Sir John Whitmore is a pre-eminent thinker in leadership and organisational change and works globally with leading multinational corporations. He has written five books on leadership, coaching and sports, of which [Coaching for Performance](#) is the best known having sold 500,000 copies in 17 languages. Sir John Whitmore is widely acknowledged as one of the founders of the coaching movement. Read more articles by him at www.performanceconsultants.com)



READERS COMMENTS:

Kaushik Datta, NASA, San Francisco Bay Area:

Once again, I read your commentary with interest. You pose some interesting questions. I strongly believe that sports and life are not zero-sum games, i.e., if someone wins someone else loses. As you and I who have played many sports know that there is a certain joy/happiness in just participating. We have played numerous tournaments, but it is not the won-loss record that matters. What matters is the participants enjoy the process -- playing the games or matches, improving their skills, and yes there are won- loss records. For the participants it is a win-win situation, and that is why tournaments flourish even when there is no prize money.

In today's world there is a lot of focus on metrics. Unfortunately, it removes the emphasis from intuition and the qualitative. A lot of people, in both sports and life, depend on their intuition (short-circuiting the whole process of deciding on the right metrics, capturing data for those metrics and then making decisions based on those metrics) and some of them are very good at it. This cannot be taught, but is a result of immense amount of practice where appropriate responses to situations get hard-wired into your brain, and it appears to the casual onlooker as intuition.

By the way, enjoyed your picture with the Bhutanese. I did follow the links to read about GNH, but my two points above suggest that it will remain a purely academic exercise. Life is much more interesting and fulfilling than the sum total of any mathematical equation!

Sharada Rao, Bangalore

This issue on happiness set me thinking...all of us want to be happy, but do we really know what will make us happy in the long term? Happiness is usually transient - something that we want happens and then we are temporarily happy. To be happy throughout the day is a rare virtue, and perhaps found only in NIMHANS! There are so many irritants and major mishaps making individuals irritable and unhappy -sometimes one person's happiness can be a cause of bitterness/envy to another. For example if one employee gets a promotion the others may not share his happiness. Kudos!

Bethany Knight, Vermont (USA)

Wonderful reading! Need to share with youth. This is the website I hope you have a chance to read. <http://www.gnhusa.org/> It is an organization based in Vermont, about 50 miles from our home.

With warm regards,

Krishna Kumar

Executive Coach & Founder-Director, ISEC