

STRUCTURING THE INNER WORLD

by Stewart Blackburn

We know that we create aspects of our outer reality by first changing things in our inner reality. If we take this awareness a bit further and are mindful that we are always and constantly creating our reality, then we see that we perform this creation in the context of our rules of reality—the assumptions we make and the beliefs we hold—plus the desires we are willing to energize.

We can go beyond working to manifest certain desires to having a strategic vision for how we want to live our lives. This is a matter of first being aware of our likes and dislikes. We need to thoroughly explore our values for otherwise we are only playing with our whims, while the main functioning of our lives is on remote.

There seems to be a common tendency to notice that we like something and then we quickly move on to take care of the next problem. If we indeed do want to be happy and value feeling good, for example, then we need to take the time to maintain that feeling of appreciation when we encounter it or to intentionally create it instead of other less desirable feelings. We can be in charge of how we feel only if we are first willing to take *responsibility* for how we feel.

Developing a pleasure strategy takes us from the desire to an idea of what it will take to fulfill that desire. We factor in the effort that it will take, any possible pain associated with achieving that goal, delays in experiencing the results, and any other drawbacks from having the desire fulfilled. If the final result is deemed worth the costs, then we proceed.

But, there is a further step that is worth investigating. We have the ability to create visions in our inner world that we can live with on a daily basis. Using our imagination guided by our desires, our values, and our intuition, we can form inner realities that reflect the outer realities that we'd like to experience.

This goes beyond holding a dream until it becomes a reality. It is a matter of living in a new way. The inner reality becomes the primary reality; the outer reality reflects that inner reality as a way of evaluating the effectiveness of our inner vision. Does our inner vision in fact meet our needs? Is this inner vision one that allows us to grow, explore, and change as we develop our inner self?

It is in the inner world that we construct the situations and environments that would please us. The more detailed they are, the more anchored we become in this inner reality. This is not avoiding the “real world.” It is a necessary skill we must develop to live in both worlds simultaneously. We deal with the outer world on its own terms, but in the context of our inner vision.

Many successful people in all walks of life do this. An athlete might visualize the whole experience of winning a competition. A salesperson might live with a story of repeatedly making great sales. A mother might gently hold her

child's future happiness and pleasure in her inner world. It is a matter of clearly organizing the general details of what we desire.

The mechanics of structuring our Inner World lie in our rules of reality and our primary values. It's one thing to say that we want to live a life of great joy and abundance, and to be enthusiastic about it. But unless we make a point of holding a belief that that is possible and to value that idea of joy and abundance more than most other things, then we are only adding to our pile of unfulfilled dreams.

There are two parts to the discussion of values—the values we already hold and the ones we would like to embrace. The values we already hold show up in everything we do. They are the measuring instruments of our psyche; and we read these instruments on a scale of pleasure. Unfortunately, most of us have collected values from other people and from our various experiences, and many of the values are contradictory. For instance, we may value honesty highly, but also value not hurting others. Suppose we have violated our rules of relationship and are contemplating what to do next, which value takes precedence?

It's therefore incumbent on us to review our values, all of them, to see which ones genuinely work for us and which need to be replaced.

New values are like fresh worlds opening to us. We get to enjoy the excitement of something else that makes us a little happier. A new value may be anything from a new family pet to an innovative philosophy that better meets our experience. When our lives take us into new realms of existence, it is very useful to find what is most valuable in there and incorporate that value into our psyche.

Our rules of reality, how we think things work and what is possible for us are, of course, creations of the mind. We often think of these rules as “truth” and live by them accordingly. But, like everything else, someone made up these rules.

We say that something is red. What we mean is that our eyes register that something as emitting or reflecting electromagnetic waves of a certain range of wavelengths. We have, mostly, agreed on what we will call red, but we have no way of determining whether someone else's experience is exactly the same as ours. Certainly, societal rules are arbitrarily made up and we can obey them or not at our own risk.

Examining our own rules of reality might well be a very daunting task, perhaps best left to old age with lots of spare time. However, a rule that says that everything is made up gives us permission to look at individual rules as we encounter them and ask ourselves if this rule is worth keeping. We are free to change our rules of reality at any time, if we give ourselves permission to do so.

Restructuring our Inner World is like reviewing a computer program. We maintain an overarching question, does this really work for me? We're constantly changing. The trick, so far as I can tell, is to change in ways that please us even more than the old ways, to reconstruct our reality to our liking.