

CHANGE

MASTERY



Table of Contents

Introduction

Chapter 01 – The 1C: Confidence

A Radical Self-Assessment

Be Self-satisfied And You'll Stagnate

Realize The Need For Change

The Openness To Change

The Cost-benefit Analysis Of A Potential Change

The Need To Change Vs. The Need To Control

Change Can Either Be Self-induced Or Induced From The Outside

Change Should Be For The Better

Chapter 02 – The 2C: Competence

Make Use Of Visualization To Achieve The Change You Want To Manifest

Make A Thorough Assessment Of Your Assets And Talents

Clarify Your Motive And Goal For Change

Change Your Negative Mental Programming

Create A Mental Map For Change

Write Down Your Good And Bad Qualities

Reward Yourself For Every Goal Achieved

The Power Of Affirmation

Chapter 03 – The 3C: Communication

The Environment Is A Factor In Your Successful Change

Make Sure Your Significant Others Know That You Want To Change

Heightening Your Awareness Of The People Around You

Surround Yourself With Optimistic People

Optimistic People Can Challenge Us To Greater Achievements

Climb On The Bandwagon Of Optimistic People

Discovering Our Own Neurosis And Character Disorders

Chapter 04 – The 4C: Cooperation

The Usefulness Of Having A Support Group For Change

Cooperation As A Catalyst For Change

The Advantage Of Having A Common Goal And A Common Enemy

Resolving Conflicts

Listening To Criticisms

Always Seek The Opinion Of Wise Men In Important Matters

Take Criticisms Positively

Chapter 05 – The 5C: Creation

Action Is Better Than Inaction

The Need For Self-discipline

Divide Your Work into Parts So As Not To Be Overwhelmed By The Task

Unfreezing Your Old Habits

Never Give Up When Problems And Hurdles Arise

Delaying Gratification For Future Satisfaction—A Sign Of Maturity

Refreezing Of New Knowledge Or New Habit

Take The Responsibility For Change

Wrapping Up

Introduction

In this book, you will venture on the main five C's for change. As you discover the elements of change, you will learn how to become confident in your ability and capability to change. You will acknowledge that communication and cooperation contribute a massive amount to the aspect of change. You will gain the ability to take action by creating movements. You are currently at the bottom of your life-changing mountain. Please take a step forward and climb up. Your life changing experience awaits you.

If we look back at the history of the world in the last several centuries, we will discover the radical and abrupt changes in the knowledge and technology of humanity. A century ago, the Wright brothers were just trying to designing a scale model of their first airplane; yet a century after, men have been able to send spacecraft to the very edges of the solar system. These radical changes are so unprecedented in the history of humanity and the world, and we are always left in awe as to where these changes can lead us. It seems that “nothing on earth is impervious to these radical changes.”

In the ancient times, many wise men have seen the impermanence of everything and they came to the conclusion that the only phenomenon which is permanent is change. This idea is definitely true; likewise, it is apparent in the very nature of our existence. Each of us needs to face the fact that change is the only permanent thing in this world, and hence, each of us should be prepared for change. It is therefore wise to believe that change is inevitable and sooner or later each of us will undergo some forms of change. We can never avoid change for sooner or later, it will dawn on us, but we can somewhat delay it.

Faced with the prospect of its inevitability, we got no choice but to face the challenge of change. In this book, the concept of change is elaborated and guidelines on how to prepare oneself for the onset of changes are delineated.

You have heard how people are reactive to change and remain fixated to their old habits and customs. This reaction is natural considering the law of inertia which says that “everything tends to remain at rest or in a continuous motion unless acted upon by an outside force.” However, this resistance to change should be overcome to achieve something substantial in life for the only way to achieve progress is through change.

There are ways to reduce the resistance to change and one way of reducing this resistance is by preparing the inner self for change. Once the inner resistance to change has been overcome, the external transition would become possible and easy. The internal change, like a paradigm shift, is necessary to achieve external change, because the only true change always comes from within.

Chapter 01 - The 1C: Confidence

A Radical Self-Assessment

There is no better way to start change in one's being than to have a radical assessment of one's personality. Yes, the best place to begin changes in one's world is within oneself. The reason for this is the fact that the only organism in this world with which we have a total control is our very own self. If we still have the illusion that changing the outside world would radically change the inside, we are mistaken. Our very own self is the only platform of which we should have perfect control, and for this reason, the best possible change can only start from within.

Now, if we want to change something in ourselves we should know which aspect of ourselves need change. Henceforth, we need a radical self-assessment. What I mean is that we should discover the areas in our life which need to be changed. There are different aspects and areas of our life. I have learned from my college psychology class that there are five important aspects or areas in our life. First, there is the physical aspect which includes our very own body, our instincts, and our bones and muscles. Second, there is the emotional aspect of our life which includes the different emotions which we daily experience and the motivations which prod us to action. Third, there is the intellectual aspect of our life which includes our intellectual skills, our IQ, our logical perspective, and all the mental processes we indulge in every day. Fourth, there is the social aspect of our life which includes our interactions with our fellow human beings, our works, and even our relationship with our significant others, relatives, and friends. Lastly, there is the spiritual aspect of our life which includes our belief system and our relationship with the higher beings. If we want to make some substantial changes in our life, we need to make a thorough assessment of these five aspects and find out which are the dark and grey areas which need to be changed and developed. Only then could

we say that we've made a radical assessment of our personality if we were able to assess objectively these five aspects of our life. We can do this assessment of ourselves by listing down the different areas of our lives which are veering towards the positive and the negative sides. A realistic assessment of these five areas can give us an objective view of which areas of our life necessitate change.

Be Self-satisfied And You'll Stagnate

It is very easy to be smugly indulged in our present existence to a point that we resist change, thinking that there is no need for change because the present is definitely comfortable and working well. Yet, this kind of attitude may lead to self-stagnation while the rest of the world is making progress in great strides. We all know what happens if we stagnate, we fail to adapt to the ever-changing situation and we will be left out. A perfect example in nature of stagnation is the stagnant pond with no exit points. The water becomes full of silt that there comes a point that the pond exudes a fetid stench. Thus, if we want to revitalize a pond, we need to improvise an exit canal which will allow the water to move out of it, and new water to come in allowing the rejuvenation of the pond.

In the same way, our self is a like a pond which needs to be renewed and revitalized every once in a while. This need for change is very apparent not only in the grander scale of life but also in the minutiae of life. In the grander scale, a nation should improve its economy otherwise it will be left out by other economies. Likewise, superpowers should continue to improve their technologies so that other rising superpowers can never catch up with them in terms of weaponry. Empires sometimes implode from within because they become self-satisfied. In the smaller scale, a person should always recreate himself or herself by allowing some room for changes in one's life, otherwise, one will risk the prospect of stagnation which is the most pathetic thing that could ever happen to a person. When we allow the cobwebs of pessimisms and lack of vitality to encroach into the very fibers of our being and we become resistant to change and

development, we become defeated like a carcass left for the taking of the vultures.

Realize The Need For Change

Change and growth will not happen if a person is not open to change. How can the floods of innovation and creativity move into our very being if we shut off every exit point for change? Change can only happen if the seedbed for change is present. In psychology, there are developmental stages in our life which we got to undergo to achieve full maturity. Yet, there are instances wherein a person may get fixated at a certain stage, unable and unwilling to progress to the next stage. We call these disorders—psychological fixations. There are fully grown-up adults who are still so much fixated at the oral stage of their life. There are mothers who could never really let go of the image of their child as a kid and thus stunt the growth of their being and their child. There are also grown up adults who can't seem to let go of their umbilical cord and still manifest strong dependency on their parents. Unless these guys realize their need for change and maturity, they will never be able to move to the higher stages of life.

So the first demand for a positive change is to realize that there is a need for change. This realization may come to a person if he/she makes an objective assessment of the different areas of his/her own life. Moreover, sometimes, a good advice based on an observation of another person can make a person realize that there is a need for a change in a person's life. This realization may also come to us by allowing ourselves to make a paradigm shift. If we try to see things from a different perspective, we may be able to see the dark and grey areas of our life, and we may be inspired to change them. This realization is the beginning of our growth and progress and definitely the onset of maturity and improvement.

The Openness To Change

There are many hurdles which we have to overcome to achieve a substantial change in our life. First, there is the inertia—the force which drags us to remain in our present situation and to avoid the prospect of change. This is a powerful force which is akin to the force of gravity. We need another sizeable amount of force to get out of this inertia. Second, there is the internal resistance such as our mental programs of fear and phobias, emotional baggage, and lack of self-confidence. These internal forces are powerful emotional and mental habits which prevent us from opening ourselves to the necessary changes in our life. To overcome these hurdles in our progress, we need to take the initial step, and that first step is the desire to alter our negative subconscious programs. Let me give you a good example: many among us fear the prospect of speaking in front of a crowd. I know a friend of mine who is by nature very eloquent, yet whenever he is asked to speak in front of a crowd, he would shrink back and recoil. I asked him why he is always naively tongue-tied every time he is asked to speak in front of an anonymous crowd. His answer is that he always hears an inner voice that says he will be embarrassed if he makes mistake. The prospect of embarrassment is holding him back from making progress in his rhetorical skill. This inner program, which was probably infused into his subconscious mind, early on in his life, has been so strong and capable of preventing him from harnessing his skill. It is so powerful enough that he is hampered from achieving something substantial using his God-given talent for public speaking. He could overcome this snag by developing a strong desire to debunk the old program in his subconscious mind and replacing it with a confident and self-assured belief in his very own self.

We can become aware of these negative mental programs by listening to our self-talk. You may be wondering what self-talk is. It is not the kind of stuff which psychotic people do—talking to their very own selves. Well, self-talk is the process of talking to oneself when one is alone. This talk may not be expressed audibly, and all of us do this kind of talk. It is an inner conversation between our

subconscious mind and the conscious mind. In the case of the above-mentioned example, the guy has the natural flair for public speaking. Yet, there is an inner voice that tells him that he is not a good speaker. Though his conscious mind knows that he got the talent for public speaking, his subconscious mind argues with his conscious mind that he is not a good speaker. So every time he is about to climb the platform and render a thunderous speech, he would get involved in a self-talk wherein his subconscious mind would argue that he is indeed not a good speaker. He may be consciously aware of the fact that he has the making of a brilliant speaker, but his inner program is telling him he is not. This negative subconscious program may be so debilitating that many among us often shy away from success because of the instigation of these negative programs. So to debunk these negative programs and lay the ground for change, we need to prepare our inner self by being aware of these negative inner programs and slowly altering these negative programs with the opposite positive programs. Awareness of these negative programs can create an inner desire for change, and the creation of this inner desire for change can be the necessary impetus that can prod a person towards change.

The Cost-benefit Analysis Of A Potential Change

One way to convince oneself that there is a need for change is by doing a cost-benefit analysis of a potential change. There are payoffs if we open ourselves to change. If we understand the payoffs derivable from change, we can be encouraged to change, and we can unleash the impetus to open ourselves to change. People don't usually change because they don't realize what they could gain via change. Likewise, people are not moved to action if they don't realize the possible rewards they could gain from change. It is very difficult to convince a group of people to accept a new concept if they don't see the benefits they could derive from that concept. In the same way, it is difficult to opt for a change if one is not convinced of the benefits of change. For this reason, a person needs to make a cost-benefit analysis of a potential change to convince his/her mind of the

need for change. By doing a cost-benefit analysis of the prospect of change, one will become confident enough to take the plunge required to manifest change in our life. This knowledge of payoffs will give us the necessary drive to face the challenge of change. In the eleventh hour, when the force of inertia is pulling us back to our cocoon of comfort, and when progress and development for the better seem to be hard to come by, we can reassure ourselves to go on thinking that the rewards of change are just around the corner.

The Need To Change Vs. The Need To Control

There is another factor which hinders us from realizing the needed change in our life. This factor is due to the conflict between our need to change and the need to be always in control. There are many reasons why people won't accept a new concept or new technology. It is because they feel they are out of control with the new concept or technology. There is always that accompanying risk of losing control every time we want to change. To change an old habit, one has to let go of the old habit in favor of a new one. To become independent, one has to let go of one's dependency on other people. But most of us are control-freaks and don't want to get out of our comfort zones. Problem happens when parents seem to be incapable of letting go of the childhood perception of their children. Likewise, problem occurs whenever an adult person can't seem to let go of his/her dependency on her parents. In order to grow, one needs to let go of the old ways to pave the way for novel ways. Growth entails the ability to risk losing control. If one can't be at peace with the prospect of losing a bit of control, one often tends to avoid change.

There are many instances in nature wherein we are taught that the old forms should be given up to pave the way for newer beautiful forms. The caterpillar has to let go of its squirming worm-form in order to achieve its lovely butterfly form. Even in the spiritual realm, "one has to die to oneself to be born to eternal life," and this dying to oneself is the surest way to achieve spiritual nirvana according to the wise men such as Jesus and Buddha. If we don't let go of the old form in

favor of the novel form, we will never achieve substantial change. The concept of change always entails a certain loss of the old self in favor of a new self. Without understanding this risk, one will never become ready to open up to change.

Change Can Either Be Self-induced Or Induced From The Outside

We are always aware of the different changes happening around our very own world. This is because modern developments have imbued almost every aspect of our life. No one is so shielded from the onslaught of modern technological changes. Even the nurturing and development of human beings nowadays are conditioned by technology. The newer generations for example seem to live in the virtual world and seemed detached from the old idyllic way of life. In the span of hundred years, the human world has changed so much. Yet, with regards to personality development, there are still two basic kinds of changes which may take place: there is the changes instigated internally, and there are changes engendered externally. There are self-induced changes which trickle down to the external aspect of our life. There are also external changes which can condition and produce inner changes. When we were young, we were not aware of the different external changes in our life. We were not aware that the social milieu in which we were born have already acted on our personality, molding it in a certain way. Every significant external event in our youthful life has produced an inner change of which we may not be aware because it happened prior to our reaching adulthood. External conditions may leave a mark, a new program which may influence our life subconsciously in the future. External conditioning wrought about by the social milieu in which we find ourselves can definitely produce some marks and imprints on our personality. We have passively accepted these changes because we have not yet reached the necessary maturity to decide which external factor will influence us. Moreover, radical external changes may bring in abrupt changes in our lives. Say for instance, those who experienced the Holocaust of WWII came out of it scathed and bruised physically or emotionally.

Sometimes, we are unprepared for these external changes, but we have to adapt to them to simply survive.

On the other hand, as we mature, we become capable of changing the different old habits of our personality which have been brought about by the events of our childhood and youth. Likewise, we can change some of these old mental programs in our life. If we have already reached a certain level of independence and maturity, we could qualify this kind of changes as internally-induced. As we mature, we can become confident of choosing which habits are worth keeping and which habits are worth letting go. We grow in confidence as we make progress in our personal growth and development. Every small progress is worth the try and we can build on every small victory that we everyday accomplish towards a more substantial and holistic change in our life in the future.

Change Should Be For The Better

Old habits are really sometimes hard to dislodge from our system. Yet, if we want to make way for changes, we need to begin looking at some of the habits which we have imbibed in our growing-up process. Aristotle once said that “we are what we repeatedly do.” Our habits are the things that we repeatedly do, and these habits make up the very core and kernel of our personality. There are people whose negative habits far outweigh their positive habits, and we can say that they have a bad personality. Likewise, there are people who have more positive habits and we term them as good people. We also say that a person is virtuous if he or she has many virtues to be proud of.

We can overturn the imbalance of bad habits over good habits by tweaking our bad habits and developing the opposite good habits. We just need to confidently take the challenge of change. Moreover, change isn't good if it will make us worse. So always remember that if ever we decide to change, we should change for the better.

Chapter 02 - The 2C: Competence

Make Use Of Visualization To Achieve The Change You Want To Manifest

“Imagination is everything,” according to Albert Einstein—one of the greatest minds that ever graced the earth surface. Einstein had a valid point. We can never really understand the full power of imagination. In some of my readings, I have read some data about how to effectively manifest something in our life, and my readings tell something about the power of visualization. Einstein thought of his greatest theory of $E=mc^2$ using his imagination. Likewise, using his imagination, he was able to prove in his mind that light can bend if it passes gravity. Using imagination, one can redefine reality. In the book, *Being Happy*, by Andrew Matthews, he said that if we can set our mental waves to higher oscillation, we can definitely influence the physical world. We haven’t discovered yet the full power of our mind, yet many people have vouched to the fact that if we can visualize a certain happening beforehand, we are on our way to manifesting that event in reality. If we want to effectively achieve a certain change in our life, we must visualize it first in our mind every day. Let me give you an example: It is not unusual to see great golf players visualize the trajectory of the golf ball. Prior to hitting the ball, they would usually visualize the ball being hit by their club, flung high into the air and hitting the desirable point in the green. They do this visualization because they believe in its power. Visualization allows a person to perfect something in his or her mind before it happens in reality. Hence, if you want to develop a certain competence on a job, it would be good to visualize yourself doing and perfecting that competence in your mind beforehand.

We may never really totally understand how visualization can effectively manifest what we want to achieve. Yet, it is believed that visualization operates on the subconscious level and that the subconscious level is not limited by time and space. This means that if we want to operate in the future, we can indulge

ourselves in visualization to control the future. Some experts in visualization advised us that the best times to visualize are just fifteen minutes before we sleep and fifteen minutes after we have awoken. The reason is that our brain is operating on the alpha frequency during these moments of half-sleep. Alpha frequency is the relaxed state of our mind and many experts in visualization believe that this is the ideal time for visualizing what we want to manifest in our life. Hence, the alpha state is also the best time to imagine the change that we would like to achieve in our life.

Make A Thorough Assessment Of Your Assets And Talents

Together with the visualization, we should make a thorough assessment of our personal assets and talents. When I was in my first year of college, I was once embarrassed in front of my class because I made a guffaw about a mispronunciation of a certain difficult word. That embarrassing experience made me promise myself never again to be embarrassed because of a mistake in pronunciation. So I made it sure that I checked in the dictionary every unfamiliar word I encountered in my readings. I gave myself a timetable of one year to gain mastery of every pronunciation of words. I knew my limitation so I worked on it to improve it. A year later, I became the most admired speaker of my class. The change in me happened because I was able to figure out and accept my deficiency. My point is: we should know where our weakness lies so that we can work on it. Demosthenes, one of the greatest orators of all time, had a speech problem as a youth. He vowed to himself that he would one day become the best orator of the ancient world. Every morning, he would put some pebbles inside his mouth while he made his imaginary speeches along the beach. Later on, he became renowned as the greatest orator of the ancient world. He achieved this because he worked on his weakness and he was open to turn that weakness into a veritable asset.

Clarify Your Motive And Goal For Change

Nothing can stop a man who has a clear view of what he wants to achieve. This is definitely true. Alexander the Great, as a boy, was encouraged by his mentor Aristotle to achieve something great. Early in his childhood, he had a clear understanding of what he wanted to achieve—he wanted to unite the whole world by sword. He almost achieved this at the age of thirty three. What I am saying is that if we have a clear vision of what we want to achieve, we are definitely on our way to achieve it. If we know our motive for change and the end result that we would like to achieve, we put ourselves in a favorable position of achieving our goal. Many among us live life without any clear goal. Not many among us even plan our life like the way we list the items we would like to buy from the grocery store. Yet, if we could do it, we will never really be sidetracked along the way. Clear motives and goals give us the inner confidence which allows us to achieve to the desirable competence.

Change Your Negative Mental Programming

We never really know up to what extent our mental programs can hamper our growth and development. Yet, there are plenty of instances wherein we are precluded from achieving something because our inner programs say otherwise. Negative mental programs are the inner forces which make us cringe before a great challenge. Likewise, our subconscious programs are sometimes beyond our access. They only subtly come out in our dreams and self-talk. Once we become clearly aware of them, we can then take the necessary steps on how to change these mental programs. Say for instance, you hate the lifestyle of the rich and famous because you see that they flaunt their lavish lifestyle to other people. This inner abhorrence of the rich may be an inner program infused into our subconscious mind because of our bad experience with a rich person in the past. On the other hand, we really want to become rich. There may be a dichotomy between what we want and what our inner program is. You can never really become what you subconsciously hate, and hence, in your life, you always

experience a sense of extreme poverty. There are plenty of instances wherein there is great dichotomy between what we want and our subconscious programs. Thus, if we want some real change in our life, we must start with the altering of our negative subconscious programs. If you have a pessimistic view of life, you need to debunk this view in favor of an optimistic worldview, because like computer software programs, mental programs are the programs which play pivotal roles behind our success and failure. Likewise, subconscious programs are mental habits which play themselves well when we least expect them to be working. Hence first, we have to work on changing our negative mental programs if we want to achieve our full potential.

Create A Mental Map For Change

Another useful method for manifesting real change in our life is through the use of mental maps to guide us into the desired change in our life. Similar to mental programs, mental map can greatly assist us to achieve good results. Use visualization to create these mental maps. Create good mental habits which will enable you to achieve your goals. Make a schematic diagram of the mental habits you would like to develop and work on developing them. Every time we tend to revert back to the old negative mental habits, remind yourself of the mental map that you are following. Remind yourself of the end results you would like to achieve in your life, and always assess your progress according to these mental maps.

Write Down Your Good And Bad Qualities

It would also be beneficial to you to write down your good and bad qualities. Then make a “to-do” list on how to improve your good qualities to make them better, and another “to-do” list on how to overcome your bad qualities. Follow the example of Benjamin Franklin, one of the greatest Americans who ever lived. In his life, he gave himself timeline on improving different virtues which he wanted to develop in himself. He created for himself a hierarchy of virtues which he

desired to strengthen every month. He made sure that he note down his progress in that virtue every day. In the end, he became the most prolific and most loved American in both the United States and France, and maybe all throughout the world. There is something good in writing down the things we would like to achieve because our conscious mind usually has very short memory; it has to be reminded every once in a while.

The previous example of writing down the list of items we would like to buy in the grocery store is perfect in explaining the very short span of memory we have. It saves us a lot of effort and time in our daily life if we know how to make the “to-do” list. Likewise, it keeps us focused. If we usually take note when we plan some non-essential things every day, we can also do this in planning our life and I know it will reap you the best results. So start with identifying your qualities which you would like to change and improve. Write down the things you would do to change those qualities. Say for instance, you have a nasty way of being obnoxiously tactless in speech. You can remove this bad behavior if you can make a “to-do” list on how to eliminate this bad habit. You can include in your to-do list statements like: “I will slap my lips a bit if ever I begin to hurt another person by my bad habit of tactlessness.” You may also include statement like: “I will instead talk of the good quality of another person than say something bad.” With the reminders coming from the “to-do” list, you will soon eliminate the bad habit of tactlessness and develop the opposite virtue tactfulness. Likewise, make a “to-do” list on a daily basis. Moreover, you should make the effort of monitoring your progress and measuring your progress against your “to-do” list every day.

Reward Yourself For Every Goal Achieved

Now, the last point about this chapter boils down to the act of rewarding yourself for every goal that you have achieved in your “to-do” list. Make sure that you compliment yourself by giving yourself a good tap on the shoulder every time you

see that you are making a significant progress towards your desired goals. Make sure that you give yourself a positive regard every time your monitor indicates that you have made a great stride towards positive change. When your every small success accumulates, you will notice someday that these small successes are the building blocks behind the great successes in your life. So affirm yourself every time you make a significant progress. This will give you enough confidence to further strive towards the improvement and development of yourself.

The Power Of Affirmation

There is something very potent about the act of affirmation that we should always affirm ourselves every time we achieve some small successes in our process of changing. Affirmation is akin to visualization wherein we imagine the desired results already taking place in reality. The mind, specifically in the alpha state, can manifest anything in reality for if the experts in visualization are right, the mind in the alpha state transcends time and space. Affirmation is stating something in a positive way. Say for instance, you want to be healthy; you can say an affirmative statement such as: "I am always healthy!" Such statement when repeated always sinks in into the subconscious mind and become a new program. Once it gains a foothold in the subconscious mind, its realization in actuality becomes automatic. Thus, many great men of achievement had used the power of affirmation in crushing the negative mental programs and replacing them with positive ones. Think of how you feel good when you were affirmed by your significant others for whatever good things you have done. We can live happily for one month with a single sincere compliment said to us by someone we respect so much. So if those affirmative statements are powerful enough to move us, repeated self-affirmations will also do us a lot of service in our effort to change some aspects of our life.

Chapter 03 - The 3C: Communication

The Environment Is A Factor In Your Successful Change

The birds can't fly without the air. Likewise, the ships can't float without the waters underneath them. In the same way, even before we become conscious of the world around us, we were already born to a world not-of-our-own making. In Philosophy, we call this "factcities" of the world . We are born to a family not-of-our-own choosing. We grew in the neighborhood not-of-our-own wanting. Yet, we got to stay in that facticity until we are capable of fending for ourselves on our own and until we sever our umbilical cords, and find a job to make us financially independent. So to make us succeed, we got to survey the environment in which we live. We got to embrace reality as it is and work to change and grow in that given reality.

The agriculturist before planting a crop would survey the land where he intends to plant. He would try to find out the characteristics of the soil, the source of irrigation, the kind of plants which will grow in that soil. In the same way, if we want to change something in ourselves, we need to figure out the factors in the environment which may hinder us from attaining the goals we intend to achieve. The environment is a major source of change in us. It can either shape us into a good person or a bad person. Likewise, it can debar us from some forms of values as in a case of a boy who becomes a thief because he was born in a slum area where most people steal from each other. Indeed, environment plays a vital role in the shaping of our character. Moreover, in extreme cases, one must get out of his or her present environment to effect change in one's life.

Make Sure Your Significant Others Know That You Want To Change

The environment in which we live does not only include the physical world in which we find ourselves. It also includes the people who are involved in that environment. It also includes the significant others in our life. Say for instance, you need to kick off the habit of smoking because it is already becoming hazardous to your health. You need to make sure that your intention is known to the people around you, especially to the significant others in your life. You need to inform your wife for example of your desire to kick the bad habit. You also need to inform other people in your house of your intention because they will play a significant role in the success of your intention. Moreover, in the office, you got to inform those people whom you are always in contact with. Their encouragement and cooperation can greatly enhance your effort to kick off the habit.

Likewise, if you want to develop a particular skill in a certain area of your work, you need to tell your boss or your immediate superior of your desire to improve your competence on that certain area. In this way, they will align their programs according to your preference and if they are conscientious enough, they will help you improve in that area by pulling strings together to make your goal possible. Sometimes, it needs only a good communication to let other people understand our intentions and allow them to help us.

Heightening Your Awareness Of The People Around You

Many changes happen because we are so keenly aware of the people around us. In any human relationship, there is always that sense of reciprocity. Like in marriage, we discover more of ourselves by being in communication with our significant others. We discover our peculiar characteristics through the observation of other people around us. It is a sad thing if a person becomes callous enough and reactive to the observations of other people. Problems start when we become selfish enough not to listen to the observation and feedback of other people.

Language is one of the greatest inventions of humanity, and through verbal communication, we discover the characters of other people. Aside from our own observation of ourselves, we need the feedback of other people who truly care for us and we can know their feedback through good communication. If we want to really manifest substantial changes in our life, we need the help and inspiration of our significant others. Thus, if you want to change career for example, you need to communicate your plan to your significant others so that she or he can help you figure out if your decision would be good enough for your family. This loving reciprocity between you and the people around you can greatly help you in your desire to change your life.

Surround Yourself With Optimistic People

If we need to change something in our life, we have a choice: we can either associate more with people who can help us achieve the desired change, or we can spend our time with people who veer us away from the needed change. It is a good thing to choose the people you would associate with because other people can influence us. Choose people who can inspire you to reach your goals. Don't associate with people who would pull you down. Associate with people who can push you forward whenever you feel discouraged in your effort to change. It is said that there is no unmotivated person. But there is such a thing as people who are unmotivated in the company of certain people. Remember, you are subconsciously and unwittingly influenced by the people with whom you associate. The more time you spend with pessimistic people, the greater the chance of you ending up being pessimistic.

All persons exude a certain aura or energy. This aura has some relative effect on those they associate with. So if you intend to strengthen your resolve to achieve something, I would rather advise you to associate with optimistic people whose positive auras can push you into positive actions.

Optimistic People Can Challenge Us To Greater Achievements

Many people are inspired by challenges. In the same way, optimistic people can inspire us to face greater challenges. Association with optimistic people allows us to adapt their behavior of optimism. Despite the difficulties involved in change, we can become successful if we are encouraged by people around us. Moreover, we can sacrifice a lot if we are challenged and encouraged at the same time.

Thus we need to carefully choose the people we associate with. Jesus is one of the greatest optimists of the world. He did not call his disciples to a life of ease. Instead he called them to a life of changes and challenges. For this reason, his disciples—even though most of them were not educated—were able to bring his message to the furthest bounds of the earth.

Optimistic people are inspired by needs and struggles. They do not cringe before a great challenge but see it as an opportunity for growth. They would tell you exactly that life is difficult but they would also tell you that this difficulty is the greatest beauty of life. As gold is tested by fire, so also man is tested and honed by the struggles of life according to them. Their behavior can rub off on our behavior if we often associate with them.

We grow in difficult times and not during the times of pleasure and ease. Yet, our society has inculcated in our mind that the sense of pleasure and ease is the most desirable of all circumstances of modern life. Many kids are exposed to the life of instant pleasure. If you want coffee, there is the coffee “vendo” machine. If we want entertainment, we just turn on the TV set. If we want water, we just need to turn on the faucet. We become soft beings. Yet, we need to pass through the crucible to push ourselves to our full potential, and passing through the crucible is difficult. Hence, we need the help and encouragement of people who are optimistic enough to goad us into positive actions.

Climb On The Bandwagon Of Optimistic People

You can never really know what is happening inside a person unless he or she communicates his or her ideas to you. If most of his or her words entail negative ideas, you may be sure that the person is leaning on the negative side of the spectrum of life. On the other hand, if his or her words warm your spirit and encourage you to plod on further towards the change you want to manifest in your life, then you can be sure that that person is living on the optimistic side of the spectrum of life. “By their words, you will know them,” as the scriptures says. You can have a glimpse of their mental programs by listening to their choice of words and phrases.

There are people who can help you in your undertakings and it would be good to find them so that your journey towards change and progress will be facilitated and encouraged. These people look at the brighter side of life. They encourage growth and progress in other people. They communicate well their feedback and they are not hesitant to gain your ire just to point out the flaws in your character. The advice of these people should be readily sought after for they are like wisdom and can lead you towards a better way of living. When you find this person, treasure their pieces of advice to you for they can direct you to a better path. Likewise, you should join the bandwagon of these people because their energy is contagious and can spill over you like a fresh gush of water giving you a new vitality in the struggle of life.

I had a problem before in my work because I usually had a headache at the end of a day's work. When I got home, my headache became acute that my abrasiveness with my wife and children became a daily scenario at home. So, I asked the advice of one of my trusted friends about what should I do with my problem because it was already affecting my kids and my relationship with my wife. He said to me; “You should learn to delay gratification.” I was taken aback because I never thought that I had this problem of doing first the works which are pleasurable to me and letting the non-pleasurable works wait until I am about to

go home. So the result was: I became irritable at the end of the day. So, I followed his advice. I tried to do first the most difficult and non-pleasurable aspects of my office works, and then at the end of the day, I would indulge myself with the pleasurable aspects of my work. It really worked and the pleasure I got from the pleasurable aspects of my work rubbed off on me until I got home. The effect was, my headache was gone at the end of the day and I got some quality times with my family.

Good people are capable of encouraging us into good actions. Likewise, the advice of a good person can definitely lead us to a better understanding of our situation and can help us achieve a substantial change in our life. Moreover, the behavior of optimistic people can rub off on us, affecting us in a positive way. If you come in contact with optimistic people, you should not hesitate to join their bandwagon and achieve the necessary change that you would like to realize in your life.

Discovering Our Own Neurosis And Character Disorders

We may not be aware of the fact that most people have their own peculiar neurosis and character disorders of which they are not aware. Neurosis, in the viewpoint of Scott Peck, one of my favorite authors, is our tendency to take so much responsibility for anybody. On the other hand, character disorder is our tendency to avoid responsibility for our actions. Both of these deficiencies hamper our growth and progress in life. Stephen Covey said that “we should work on our circle of influence.” The circle of influence includes all the things on which we have total control. These include our body, our mind, our emotions, our family maybe, and our work. If we apply the ideas of Scott Peck and Covey on our very existence, we can readily figure out our own neurosis and character disorders. Additionally, some people can communicate to us our own neurosis and character disorders. We need to seek the advice of these people if we want some significant changes in our life.

Scott Peck also said that “to solve a problem, we need to face it squarely.” A problem will not go away if we do not take the responsibility to solve it. Say for instance, if we are always tardy at work, we cannot attribute our tardiness to the heavy traffic on our way to the office. Likewise, we can never say to our boss that we are late because we got insomniac. We got to discover the source of problem and take responsibility for solving the problem. In the same way, if we got an alcohol problem, we can never attribute the problem to our wife who always nags us at night. Nor can we attribute that problem to our depression. We got to take control of ourselves by taking the responsibility for our alcoholism. We may need help from other people in case we want to change and some people can advise us on what to do as long as we communicate our desire to change. Likewise, some good people can point out to us the areas for improvement and the ways by which we can improve in those areas as long as we are willing to take the responsibility for our problem.

Chapter 04 - The 4C: Cooperation

The Usefulness Of Having A Support Group For Change

It is said that “no man is an island.” This saying is true because man is by nature a social being, and as a social being, whether a person likes it or not, one has to relate with other people in his surroundings. In the same way, if one is to undertake a radical change which has great implications on one’s present life, one needs the support of other people to ease out the risks concomitant with change. The Alcoholics who joined the AA are able to bring in substantial changes into their lives because they got the support of people who want to kick off the bad habit of alcoholism. It is indeed necessary and good to know that your struggle to change is not an isolated case. There are other people who also want to change and their encouragement can play a pivotal role in your successful transformation. Moreover, if your significant other is there to assist you in your desire to transform yourself, you will be inspired to overcome any hurdle along the way towards a meaningful change. The presence and the enthusiasm of people around you can rub off on you, giving you the extra kick to achieve change.

Many character disorders are sometimes overcome because of the support of other people. In our society, many people are undergoing psychotherapy because they got no one to converse with, to share their dreams, and even tell their desire to change. Our society has developed a gnawing individualism which is becoming a major societal disease. People are searching for inspiration and they try to find it among the fictional heroes of movies. Yet, if we have a support group which could back us up and accept us whether we fail or succeed, we become confident and secured to take the risk of change. So if you are really intent on making a radical change in your life, you need to solicit a great deal of support from people who really care for you.

The prospect of change elicits fear within us. The thought of giving up something and taking risks to get out of our comfort zone is tantamount to giving up some of our present controls over the situation. We usually have our own routines and have established our own ways of dealing with things, and if we opt for change, we deviate from these established routines and risk losing control of the situation. Even at work, many would rather not risk taking the challenge of promotion, and would rather stay in their present position because they have already mastered the “ins” and “outs” of their present position. The thought of taking a promotion and losing control can be so debilitating to them that they would rather shun away from promotions in favor of maintaining the control they have in the status quo. Yet, if there are people who encourage us and allay our fears, we would surely take the risk and be willing to abandon the status quo and venture into the unknown.

Cooperation As A Catalyst For Change

When people cooperate with each other in a group to achieve something, something great is achieved. It is a fact that individual person can achieve something substantial on their own. But when people join together for a common goal subsuming their individual needs to a common undertaking, the result is multiplied a hundred times. When people cooperate, they act like a single gigantic organism, capable of achieving a substantial change in the environment and in the society they live in. When they act together, they not only bring a definitive change and result, they also change the character of each person who becomes part of the cooperative group. In a way, cooperation is mutually beneficial to every party who cooperates because it influences and changes every individual in the group.

We cooperate when we work in a group to accomplish a task. We cooperate when we have a particular task which is geared towards the achievement of a greater objective. We also cooperate when we share our ideas to the benefit of

the group. Thus, cooperation can bring in more substantial results than individuals who are working in isolation from each other and we can say that there is far more power in a group than in an individual.

The Advantage Of Having A Common Goal And A Common Enemy

People are pulled together if they have a common goal. If in a group, the goals are unclear, people will only squabble with each other and tug on each other shirts without achieving something substantial. Yet, if a group has a common goal or maybe a common enemy, all the efforts of the group are directed not inwardly, but outwardly towards that common goal or against that common enemy uniting the once disoriented group into a single entity. In the same way, if you have a goal which you would like to achieve, you should find like-minded people who can join you in your bandwagon. Likewise, there is always a need in a person to belong. If you want to change yourself, but you work in isolation, you would often find it ridiculously arduous to achieve the necessary change you want to manifest in reality. But if there is another person or a group who believe in the cause for which you are fighting, you will find enough support to continue with your undertaking. Your morale will be high because you know you are not working in isolation. You increase your strength exponentially if you can find two or more people who believe in you and your cause. Alexander the Great would never have had the courage and the determination to conquer the known world then had he not had those faithful childhood friends who had believed in his cause. The moment he squabbled with his friends, his vision began to blur and it spelled the doom of all his undertaking. When he killed his trusted friend in a fit of anger, the people who stood behind him in the thick-and-thin of his adventures started to plan against him. What I am saying is that if you have a group of people who believe in you, you can overcome a lot of snags and hurdles along the way. The good thing about cooperation is that you get to win together

with the people you cooperate with. It is not a case of “me” getting the number one spot, but it is a case of “we” getting better together every day.

Resolving Conflicts

The hurdles to cooperation are conflicts, and you would really experience conflicts if you want to create a group with a common goal. Moreover, if you want to change, you will run into conflict with those people who do not want you to change. To clear this hurdle, you got to communicate your thoughts and feelings with these people. There are times when instead of communicating, we get entangled with no-communication at all. In no-communication, we may be speaking with other people but we may be failing to communicate the essential information we would like to relay. Likewise, we may be involved in a very unclear communication if we could not verbalize what we want and if we fail to listen. Misunderstanding may then ensue and conflict may arise because of miscommunication. In cases of miscommunication and misunderstanding, the solution may be very simple. If you don’t understand something, try to clarify. If they don’t understand something, try to clarify yourself to clear the communication barriers which may balloon into a major conflict along the way if not clarified.

Listening To Criticisms

Often those who are not used to criticisms will try to defend themselves if they are criticized even if the criticisms are outright correct. Most of us have that tendency to accept praise and compliments and shun away from hearing criticisms. Yet often, it is those criticisms which prod us to hone our skills, and there are countless instances where people have failed because they had failed to take heed of and act on those criticisms. If we want to improve ourselves, we need to look into the criticisms we receive and try to assess ourselves and our performances in the light of those criticisms. Athletes are perfect examples of those people who thrive in criticisms. A boxer for example has to be reminded by

his coaching staffs every round to point out the defects in his approach against his opponent. If he fails to make the adjustment, more often he loses the fight. Coaching staff of basketball teams have to assess what is happening inside the court and how their team is performing in the game. Then they usually call a time out to remind their teams of their weak points and strengths so that they could make the proper adjustment.

So the first thing you should do when you receive criticism is to control your first reaction of lashing back at your critics. Count one to ten or take a deep breath to calm yourself down. Likewise, you should always find the positive points of criticism. Honest feedback can assist you on how to improve yourself.

Remember that this feedback can really be an opportunity for you to hone your skills and talents. It may be a gateway to the improvement of your very own self. Moreover, you should always thank your critics for they have the time to help you improve yourself. If there is one thing which may encourage you to change radically, it is a good criticism coming from someone you respect so well.

Always Seek The Opinion Of Wise Men In Important Matters

In the ancient times, the opinions of the wise men were highly sought after. People of the ancient world sometimes had to traverse long distances just to listen to the advice and opinions of a wise man. This is because the wisdom of the wise men were more important than gold or any silver for some ancient people. In our modern world, many among us fail to follow the examples of those people who seek the advice of wise people. Older people have more experiences in life that we have. In some way, they may have a deeper outlook into the intricacies of life than those who are young. They may have more knowledge about life than we do because they had made more mistakes than ours, and for this reason, we can listen and heed their counsels.

The patterns of life are highly determined. The stages from childhood to adulthood are almost identical even if there are technological advancements around us. The crises we experience are almost identical with the crises experienced by the older generation. Since they have already experienced the crises which we are about to experience, their insights may be invaluable to us. Yet many among us want to learn the hard way, and thus fail to heed the advice of older people. So we suffer along the way. However, if you want to avoid some mistakes, you can readily ask the opinion of those who may have experienced the same dilemma as we do. I have seen plenty of friends who have learned it the hard way in life. Their common characteristic is lack of trust in the opinions of other people. They want to experience first the consequences of problems before they could understand the import and the implication of their actions. It is like trying to live life by trial-and-error. There are sure ways and better ways to avoid some consequences. We don't need to learn everything in the manner in which the cavemen had learned everything—that is learning by experience. We need to learn from the stock knowledge which had been handed over to us from the previous generations. We can do this by listening to the opinion of others and taking some pieces of advice from those who are more knowledgeable and more experienced than us.

Take Criticisms Positively

Many among us find it difficult to handle criticisms because we feel that criticisms are given out to bring us down, so we take them negatively. Because we are not totally objective all the time, we often get emotional and we get hurt. Likewise, our personalities are not compartmentalized; we are not beings whose intellectual faculty is separated from the physical or emotional aspects. We approached everything with our whole being. Our works are products of our whole being and not just our body. Thus, if someone criticizes our work, we feel hurt because we poured ourselves into it. Yet, it takes discipline to control our emotions every time we are criticized. It takes maturity to accept criticisms gracefully. Moreover, we need the

ability to accept criticism maturely and gracefully in order for us to develop and grow. Positive change is only possible if we are open to criticisms, and openness to criticisms implies a bit of dying to oneself. Remember, we can only come to grip of our real self if we come face-to-face with other people in a close cooperation or relationship. Thus, if we want to have an objective view of ourselves and a thriving cooperative relationship with other people, we need to listen to the honest opinions and criticisms of those people who cooperate with us, because they can provide us with a different perspective distinct from our very own point-of-view.

Chapter 05 - The 5C: Creation

Action Is Better Than Inaction

Many people have developed the habit of procrastination in their life. This habit is quite detrimental to success and change. If you want to achieve something great, you need to initiate action to achieve it. Initiating the act is sometimes more difficult than actually doing it. Yet once the initial timidity to act has been overcome, the succeeding actions become easy and spontaneous.

The satellite has to be catapulted to a certain level into space by a strong force. But when the needed orbital level has been reached, it will just hover over the earth with lesser effort than the initial force that put them into orbit. In the same way, getting out of the status quo is difficult and we need to exert more effort at first. Yet, once we've made the initial jerk out of the status quo, we find it easy to move further ahead.

The Need For Self-discipline

Substantial personal change can only happen when one changes from within. There is no other being in this world which you can control completely than your very own self. Yet many among us have not yet reached that level in which we have total control of ourselves. This is because many among us are alienated from ourselves. Some of us have developed a character disorder of transferring the responsibility to other people, events, and circumstances for some of our actions. We lament when we bawled at our son and we blamed our action to our hypertension. We say sometimes that we became alcoholics because of our emotional problems. Yet Scott Peck once said in his book that to solve a problem, you simply have to face it and solve it. If you are poor today, it is not because of your father who never dreamed of becoming rich. If you are late, you must never

blame the traffic or the weather. We must never attribute to an outside factor the things that happen to our very own self.

Problems are solved by facing it squarely. If we don't take responsibility for our problem, we can never really solve it. In the same way, we could never blame our parents for our habit of laziness or tardiness. We have to take responsibility for the development of our bad habits so that we could change them and turn them into good habits.

It requires a conscious effort on our part to change bad habits. Moreover, it requires effort on our part to develop good habits. Remember, nothing is achieved without sacrifice. We develop good habits if we are willing to really discipline ourselves. Say for instance, if you want to be healthy, you need to exercise and eat healthy food. If you want to become a good basketball player, you need to practice. Great athletes became great because of their daily sacrifices in training. Aside from mentally practicing their skills, they also hone their skills every day in the gym or in the playing court. In the same way, if you want to improve your personality, you got to watch yourself. Say for instance, you got the habit of saying negative statements every time you feel frustrated: you can develop the opposite habit of optimism if you consciously try to say positive words every time you feel like saying something negative. Once optimism becomes a habit, it will be very difficult to break.

Divide Your Work into Parts So As Not To Be Overwhelmed By The Task

In the previous chapter, we have learned to write down our traits and talents. We were likewise advised to plan our actions and visualize them. Now that we are ready to plunge into action, we should then divide our goals into small achievable goals so that we will never be overwhelmed by the immensity of the task at hand. Remember that the great pyramids were not built in a single stroke. Likewise, the Great Wall of

China was not wrought in single construction frenzy. These landmarks were slowly built with calculated efforts after efforts. In the same way, if you want to attain something great, you need not force yourself to immediately achieve it. First, you have to lay the ground works, the scaffold, and the supports which would help you accomplish it. By dividing your task into small achievable tasks, your effort becomes lighter and your work becomes easier to accomplish.

Unfreezing Your Old Habits

When an action becomes a habit through repetitions, it becomes second nature to us. When it becomes second nature to us, it becomes easy to perform it. The combinations of all our habits constitute our personality. Thus, if we want to change something in us, we have to alter our habits. Our habits hold together our personality. Hence, when we try to break a habit, we experience relapses. One of my professors in college had the habit of chain smoking and alcoholism. I once told him to kick those habits off because they are detrimental to his health. He said that if he tries to break the habits, he might experience terrible relapses which may be deadly to him. So I told him that in both cases—whether he kicks the habits off or maintain those habits, he would surely die. Yet, the prospect of not dying early by kicking off the habits is better than dying early because of the bad habits. After several years of no communication, I've learned that he died of complications due to those habits.

Habits are powerful forces that hold together our being. Without them, we will never really have some consistencies in our life. To change a habit means to alter part of our personality. We can change a habit by unfreezing it. What I mean is that it is hard to break a habit but with perseverance, we can change it. When I say you unfreeze your habit, what I am saying is: “you begin to weaken a habit by consistently working on developing the opposite habit.

Habits are like old knowledge. They can be unfrozen by letting them to thaw, allowing for the formation of new skill and knowledge. Let me give you an

example: I usually scratch my nose every time I am embarrassed. I become aware of this habit when I was told by my friend about it. So, every time I feel shy, I begin to notice myself scratching my nose. Consequently, I took the effort of controlling my hands every time I feel shy. Eventually, I broke the habit. Likewise, I got a friend who always shied away from responsibility. He would blame the weather whenever he was late. He would blame the government whenever he got short of money. He would even blame God for his misfortune in his relationships. I pointed out to him that he needed to take the blame for whatever misfortune he incurred in his life, otherwise, he will be forever at the mercy of the outside forces in his life. He got my message. He began to look at the root causes of his tardiness. He took the responsibility whenever he ran short of money and eventually, he began to save and never ran out of money. He also tried to look into his character and broke some of his habits of nasty talks and tactlessness. His relationships then began to flourish.

To change oneself, one needs to unfreeze old habits to make way for the formation of new ones. We can achieve this unfreezing by constantly being aware of ourselves, our actions, and our behavior.

Never Give Up When Problems And Hurdles Arise

Regular awareness of one's behavior allows for behavior modification. Yet, along the way, you will be frustrated if you experience some relapses to the old habits. It is really frustrating to revert back to the old habit of alcoholism when you have already kicked the habits off several months ago. Yet, we must be wary of these relapse. For the force of the old habits are still there. Remember, those old habits have been part of our personality for quite a long time. Thus, they still leave a gravitational pull like a black hole which we cannot see we but can feel. It takes consistency to overcome the pull of old habits. You must not give up when relapse seems imminent. Take a greater resolve to remain on the right track for change can only be had through consistent unrelenting effort on our part.

Delaying Gratification For Future Satisfaction — A Sign Of Maturity

One of my favorite writers, Scott Peck once talked about one of the characteristics of a mature person. He talked about “delaying gratification for future satisfaction.” A mature person is capable of sacrificing the present satisfaction for a more gratifying future satisfaction. Corollary to the nurturing of new habits, the act of consistently monitoring one’s progress in the kicking off of bad habits and the developing of new good habits is like delaying gratification. You may satisfy yourself if you get a stick of cigar when you feel that you are craving for it. But instead, you took in a juicy fruit gum. Your conscious effort entails sacrificing the present pleasure of puffing a real cigar. Yet, the payoffs— good health and longevity—are the far ahead in the future. Yet, these payoffs are more rewarding than that of present satisfaction.

Refreezing Of New Knowledge Or New Habit

Once we have been consistent in the practice of a good action, we tend to cement the action in our personality. Likewise, once we have been consistent in nurturing our subconscious mind with a new program, the new program takes a firm hold in the ground of the subconscious mind. It becomes part of our personality. Change has been effected in ourselves once a new mental program or a new skill has become a habit. Some habits are formed violently and abruptly, while the stronger habits are formed along an extenuated period of time. Yet, they are formed when we begin to freeze them within us and eventually they become substantial parts of our being. Hence, to cement an action into a long lasting habit, you need to practice it consistent despite all discouragement and frustration along the way. Rain or shine, you need to train yourself to concretize your habits as a vital part of your personality. Only through this constant practice will you achieve a substantial change in your being.

Take The Responsibility For Change

Our own development should not be left at the mercy of the outside forces. We must be responsible for our own personal growth. Change, as said in the earlier part of this book, is inevitable. Whether we like it or not, we will change for the better or for the worse. Either our environment will shape our personality or we will shape our personality. If we don't take the cudgel in shaping our very own self, the world and the environment at large will take the step to change us. So we got to take the responsibility to gain perfect control of all the situations we are in. It is a pity if it is the outside situations and circumstances that are shaping our personality. It is like abandoning ourselves to the whims and fancies of the external world. Yet, if we take the baton, and orchestrate the shaping and nurturing of good habits within us, sooner or later, we will discover that we have improved to a point worthy of commendation, and we will live a highly fulfilling life in the years to come. The challenge is always there for us to change for the better. If we fail to take the lead, we may soon find ourselves at a point-of-no-return, regretting our own existence, and like a scrooge, living in isolation, fearful and stunted in growth. Yet, if we take the challenge, many doors will open to us. New possibilities will be created, and self-realization and happiness will never be far beyond. In the end, we could proudly say to ourselves that we are the ones who had shaped and molded our very own characters and existence.

Wrapping Up

At the onset of this book, I have discussed the inevitability of change and that nothing in this world is impervious to change. Impermanence characterizes everything. Even our very own existence is subject to change—whether it is a slow change or a radical change—and thus, whether we like it or not, we can either embrace the reality of change or try to delay it. The world in which we live is constantly changing and if we let the world to change us, we will always be at the mercy of the outside forces. We got to take the reins and try to own the responsibility of changing ourselves. By changing from within, we can radically change the outside world. Change from within is more substantial and meaningful. Likewise, we can put ourselves in control of our destiny if we will take the initiative to change and improve ourselves from within.

We are always faced with the dilemma of either changing ourselves or be shaped by the outside forces around us. The former is better than the latter. It is preferable to take the lead in developing ourselves and taking the responsibility for our growth and development. Additionally, there is no better place to start this radical change than to begin it with our mental programs. Our mental programs are like the software programs which make the computer function. Computer software programs work at the backdrop and they facilitate the functions of the computer. In the same way, our mental programs work at the backdrop of our actions. They condition and tinge our every endeavor. Hence, to improve and change from within, we got to change our negative mental programs and habits. Once we succeed in changing the inner workings of our mind, we can then see some substantial changes in our behaviors. We can then actualize all our potentials. We can push the edges of our limitations, giving us more room for growth and development. If we change from within, we can finally become the ideal person we envision ourselves to be.

Now, that you have ventured through this self- improvement book to gain motivation in order to change. You are able to use the main five C's to improve the way that you view life. Remember that confidence, competence, communications, cooperation and creation are the five main steps during the process of completing your journey. I am hoping that you have received satisfaction in learning more about yourself through this eBook. As well as the knowledge you have gained about how change can positively affect one's life. Confidence is for being able to hold your head up high. Even when you feel down in the gutter and when you feel like remaining down. Get up and tell yourself "you can do it" because it is simply true. Competence is for your capability. You are capable of anything that you set out to accomplish as long as you have level head and a realistic view point. Use communication to your personal advantage. Allow your close friends and family members to acknowledge your goals in changing. And they will be your supportive system. You can turn to a friend at the roughest of times, right when you feel like you cannot achieve the goal to change. You can proudly encourage your friends and family members to succeed in the change they pursue too. Cooperation is the way that you contribute to a group or to just another person. You show that you care by just listening. Everyone wants to know that what he or she is saying is being heard. Finally, creation is the step to actually do it. One action and one change coming right up!