

THE RANGE CALLED 'NORMAL'

by Tom Champoux, co-founder and President

If you pause to consider the range called normal, we really are a lot alike. I think we just never take the time to realize it. As the result of my forty years as a teacher, trainer and consultant, I have come to believe that there are five things that are common motivators to us all. They are simple and basic, but there is no question they are integral to making a difference in your organization or community.

I believe these five motivators build upon one another and yet, I want to share them out of order because it makes the most sense. Motivators #1 and #5 are the bookends so we will talk about them first. Here they are:

Motivator # 1 - "I want to do good." (Efficacy)

Every morning we wake up with a series of choices to make. The goal is to choose actions that add to - not take away - from our purpose. The key to this is staying in balance. The more we are in balance with our life purpose, the more this motivator actually influences everything we do. When we lose sight of our purpose, we may step off the track of "doing good" and give up the high road.

Motivator # 5 - "I want it to be better because I was here." (Generativity)

This motivator links directly to the highest level of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs - generativity. It is about realizing meaning and purpose, about giving back, about being fully present, about making a difference. At the end of the day, we all want to be able to look back and say our presence made a difference.

Efficacy and Generativity - these are the bookends. On the first day we meet, each of us would like good to happen. The last day of our relationship, we want to be able to look back and say this was a good thing, it is better because we were together.

If these book ends are true for each of us, then why don't relationships - work or personal - always work out? Pretty simple. We forget about, and do not continually work on, motivators #2, #3 and #4. They are the meat and potatoes, the bread and butter of any relationship that works. They are easy to name, but not easy to cause without persistent and purposeful effort.

Motivator #2 - "I want to be trusted."

This is the most basic building block of all. Trust allows us to be vulnerable, to explore, to risk, and to be accepted as worthwhile. Without trust, we experience a loss of safety and a decrease in our willingness to be vulnerable, a holding back in the sharing of our gifts and talents.

Motivator #3 - "I want to be respected."

Each of us wants cause/effect to be part of our lives. We work hard, we share our talents - and we want someone to simply acknowledge or appreciate the "gift" of ourselves that we have shared. When we are respected, we are held in regard, we are validated and empowered. Because of this we are willing to give more, risk more, do more as we live our life purpose.

Motivator #4 - "I want to experience personal dignity."

Every moment, each of us has a choice in how we respond to the people in our lives. If we give others our full attention without evaluation, without judgment, without comparison to our "story" - just accept who they are - then personal dignity is experienced. This experience of dignity creates strength to risk, to be vulnerable, to share talents and skills that accelerate the development of trust and respect.

Now, let's look at the motivators in their natural order.

1. I show up and I want to do good.
2. I am trusted.
3. I am respected.
4. I experience personal dignity every single day.
5. And, when I leave on the last day, it was better because I was here.

These common motivators are basic to everything we do. If we can stay in balance and work toward a purpose that is larger than just "me" - that is the range I call normal - we can focus outward and our ability to make a difference in the accomplishment of task AND genuineness in relationships simply magnifies. Simple, yes. Easy to do, no...but therein lies our daily challenge. Learn the skills to impact trust, respect and dignity in all our relationships - and you will know the joy of being a Difference Maker.