



TRAINING
WORKBOOK

Coaching from the
 Inside Out
with
Michael Neill



Self-Study Program

“The field of the finite is all that we can see, hear, touch, remember, and describe. This field is basically that which is manifest, or tangible.

The essential quality of the infinite, by contrast, is its subtlety, its intangibility. This quality is conveyed in the word ‘spirit’, whose root meaning is ‘wind or breath.’ This suggests an invisible but pervasive energy, to which the manifest world of the finite responds.

This energy, or spirit, infuses all living things, and without it any organism must fall apart into its constituent elements. That which is truly alive in living systems is this energy of spirit, and this is never born and never dies.”

-David Bohm

Introduction

Welcome to the *Coaching from the Inside Out* self-study program!

Over the course of 86 video or audio sessions ranging from about 5 – 15 minutes each, you will begin to see how reconnecting with the deepest part of ourselves – the human spirit – not only unleashes our potential but helps us to solve and dissolve problems, be more creative, connect more deeply with others, and perform at our best more and more of the time.

There is a simple two-step model at the heart of transformative coaching:

1. Show up
2. Respond to what shows up

As you gain more insight into the inside-out understanding, you will come to see that there is nothing wrong with us that can't be fixed by what is right with us – and that the less you have on your mind, the better life gets.

The principles behind Coaching from the Inside-Out

Throughout the program, you'll hear me and others referring to “the three principles” of Mind, Consciousness, and Thought. Here's how I wrote about them in *The Inside-Out Revolution*:

'In every systematic inquiry (methodos) where there are first principles, or causes, or elements, knowledge and science result from acquiring knowledge of these... It is clear, then, that in the science of nature as elsewhere, we should try first to determine questions about the first principles.'

Aristotle

There are usually only a few basic principles which create our experience of anything in life. When we really understand what those principles are, we've got the key to unlocking the mystery of whatever it is. And once we've unlocked those mysteries, they cease to be mysteries – the inquiry opens doors that never become closed to us again.

One of the fundamental principles in geometry is what's called the 'point-line-plane postulate.' There's no such thing in nature as a point, but if we accept the idea of a point as a first principle, we can then put an infinite sequence of points together and get a line. And if we envision a series of lines going in every direction in a single dimension (like an endless piece of paper), we get a plane.

By asserting these three fundamental principles and then building on them, everything else in geometry and design becomes possible, from creating shapes to designing buildings.

Or think about another kind of plane – the kind that flies over our head all day long.

Until about 100 years ago, flight seemed impossible to most scientists, even though it was happening all around them in nature. Then a couple of brothers who ran a bike shop figured out a way to take some fundamental principles – like gravity, lift, thrust, and drag – and combine them in a new way to enable something heavy to behave as if it were lighter than air.

So the word 'principle,' as I'll be using it in our conversation together, refers to the basic or essential quality or element of something that determines its intrinsic nature or characteristic behavior.

In the field of chemistry, 117 distinct elements have been discovered that in various compounds form the substance of every 'thing' on the planet. In art, the three primary colors make up every other color in the spectrum.

When Syd Banks began talking about his insights into the human experience, he articulated their essence in the form of three universal principles, which he called *Mind*, *Consciousness* and *Thought*. While those words mean different things to different people, the principles they point to have been observed and studied in science, philosophy, and religion throughout the ages. I've come to think of them as the basic facts of life – formless, foundational elements which can be observed only through their effects:

1. There is an energy and intelligence behind life. This is ever present but is not 'in control' – it has no inherent morality or apparent point of view. It simply ensures that but for the interference of external circumstance, acorns become oak trees, cuts heal, and life begets life. (*The Principle of Mind*)

2. The capacity to be aware and experience life is innate in human beings. It is a universal phenomenon. Our level of awareness in any given moment determines the quality of our experience. (*The Principle of Consciousness*)

3. We create our individual experience of reality via the vehicle of thought. Thought is the missing link between the formless world of pure potentiality and the created world of form. (*The Principle of Thought*)

You can read more about the three principles in the words of Syd Banks, the author and theosopher who originally articulated them, in the *Additional Resources* section at the end of this workbook.

How to get the most out of this program

I highly recommend that after finishing this introduction, you dive in and watch the video sessions all the way through one time as if you were in the room with us. Don't worry if there's something you don't understand – just keep watching and chances are it will become clear to you later on in the program.

When there are exercises, take at least some time to reflect on what's being asked of the live participants before moving forward. This will ensure that you have some personal context for the experiences and insights they share in the segments which follow. You can also share your own experiences, insights, and questions on the Facebook group.

Once you've been all the way through the program once (it should take you a few days), take a break. Let the material settle in and notice what stays with you, like running river water through a sieve to separate out the water from the silt from the gold. Then, after you've sat with it for a while, go back and listen to the program again on audio. This will allow you to hear new things, and you may even find that there are things on the audio you can't remember from the videos. This is normal – it's both the nature of the mind and the nature of this material.

After you've gone through the program twice – once on video and once on audio – feel free to go back and watch or listen to specific segments again, especially if you found them particularly moving or a bit unsettling. You will find the complete guide to every session at the end of this introduction to help you quickly find what you are looking for.

This workbook also contains photos of the flipcharts from the live training and some additional reference material to support you in your learning.

What's with the language?

The controversial minister Tony Campolo once delivered a sermon that began with these words:

"I have three things I'd like to say today. First, while you were sleeping last night, 30,000 kids died of starvation or diseases related to malnutrition. Second, most of you don't give a shit. What's worse is that you're more upset with the fact that I said 'shit' than the fact that 30,000 kids died last night."

While I almost never use provocative language in my private life, I do find it can wake people up in a coaching or training setting. You'll hear a lot of it in these audios!

How can I integrate this approach into my own practice?

While this may sound like the most important question of all, in some ways it's the easiest one to answer.

There is nothing you need to do to integrate this material into your practice.

New things will naturally occur to you as you get more deeply in touch with and more trusting of the flow of your own wisdom, and you will notice your coaching changing, seemingly all by itself. Some of your old “outside-in” tools and techniques may stop making sense to use, and you will be pleasantly surprised at what shows up to take their place.

While you certainly can experiment with deliberately abandoning your current coaching model for a particular session or with a specific client, always let your wisdom and common sense guide you. Never let a set of “good ideas” get in the way of being fully present with another human being and letting the magic unfold.

Coaching is a noble profession. If you treat the people who come to you with humility, respect, and loving kindness, you will be awed at what they (and you) are able to accomplish. I wish you all the best on your journey...

Have fun, learn heaps, and may the light within you illuminate the world around you!

With all my love,

Michael

Before you Begin...

Here are a few questions to reflect upon before you begin the program:

1. *How long have you been coaching?*
2. *What coaching training have you already done?*
3. *Do you have a particular methodology or philosophical stance you coach from?*
4. *Approximately how many clients do you currently have?*
5. *What is your own most profound experience of your life transforming and/or changing for the better? To what do you attribute the transformation?*
6. *If you could get only one thing or make only one change as a result of this program, what would it be and why?*

Guide to Sessions

Day One, Morning

Session One

A Conversation about the Human Potential

Session Two

How to Get the Most Out of this Training, pt. 1 - Be here for you

Session Three

How to Get the Most Out of this Training, pt. 2 - Insight vs. Information

Session Four

How to Get the Most Out of this Training, pt. 3 - The "No Helping" Rule

Session Five

Empathy vs. Sympathy*

Session Six

Exercise: Being With

Session Seven

Who Owns the Change?

Session Eight

The Problem with Techniques

Session Nine

Setting the Foundations

Session Ten

The Pressure to Make a Difference

Session Eleven

The Feeling of Connection

Session Twelve

Throwing Children in a Pond

Session Thirteen

Our Job as Coaches

Session Fourteen

The Fluidity of Experience

Session Fifteen

Technique vs. Presence

Session Sixteen

The Map Collector

Session Seventeen

Witnessing

Session Eighteen

Settling Down

Session Nineteen

Exercise: Exploring Nothing

Session Twenty

Coaching Session: Being Afraid of Being Afraid

*Copyright RSA Shorts, etc.

Day One, Afternoon

Session One
Being an Insight Catalyst

Session Two
Getting Suspicious

Session Three
Thought vs. Thinking

Session Four
Are Problems a Problem?

Session Five
Discerning Wisdom

Session Six
Exercise: The Purpose of Coaching

Session Seven
The Limits of Reverse Engineering

Session Eight
Rape, War, and Suicide

Session Nine
Coaching Session: Am I Good Enough?

Session Ten
Coaching Session: A Different Approach to Weight Loss

Session Eleven
There is No Such Thing as a "Solution" to a Feeling

Session Twelve
Coaching Session: Crippled by Compassion

Session Thirteen
Sharing Insights

Session Fourteen
Exercise: Coaching Like the Rain

Session Fifteen
Feelings without Thoughts

Session Sixteen
Seeing More

Day Two, Morning

Session One
A World of Deeper Feelings

Session Two
Getting "It"

Session Three
Cultivating our Relationship with Wisdom

Session Four
The Impact of New Thought

Session Five
What Makes a Thought "New"?

Session Six
Big Self, Little Self

Session Seven
The Nature of Insights

Session Eight
The Story of Modello

Session Nine
Connecting the Dots

Session Ten
The Fullness of Ourselves

Session Eleven
The Island of Misfit Toys

Session Twelve
The Flavor of You

Session Thirteen
Exercise: Sharing the Principles

Session Fourteen
Our Secret Weapon

Session Fifteen
Showing Up

Day Two, Afternoon

Session One
Coaching Session: Unrequited Love

Session Two
Coaching from Infinite Possibility

Session Three
Building on a Solid Foundation

Session Four
Speaking into the Room

Session Five
Are We Making Progress?

Session Six
Transformative Presence

Session Seven
Time vs. Space

Session Eight
"I Don't Know What to Say!"

Session Nine
Performance and Results

Session Ten
Everything Comes from Nothing

Day Three, Morning

Session One
Seeing Something New

Session Two
Beyond Models and Problem Solving

Session Three
Shifting Levels of Consciousness

Session Four
Talking about Nothing

Session Five
Freedom vs. Goals

Session Six
Creating from Nothing

Session Seven
The Kindness of the Design

Session Eight
Planning vs. Unfolding

Session Nine
Insights on Demand

Session Ten
Business Building from the Inside-Out

Session Eleven
What Do People Really Pay You For?

Session Twelve
Coaching Session: Seeking Insight into Money

Day Three, Afternoon

Session One
Reflections on How Things Work

Session Two
Two Metaphors

Session Three
Throwing Spaghetti at the Wall

Session Four
What We're Up To

Session Five
Taking a Fresh Look At...

Session Six
...Personality Typing

Session Seven
...3P Teacher vs. Principles-Based
Coach

Session Eight
...Inside-Out vs. Outside-In

Session Nine
...Separate Realities

Session Ten
Exercise: An Insightful Conversation

Session Eleven
On Leadership

Session Twelve
On Health

Session Thirteen
On Creativity

Session Fourteen
On Relationships

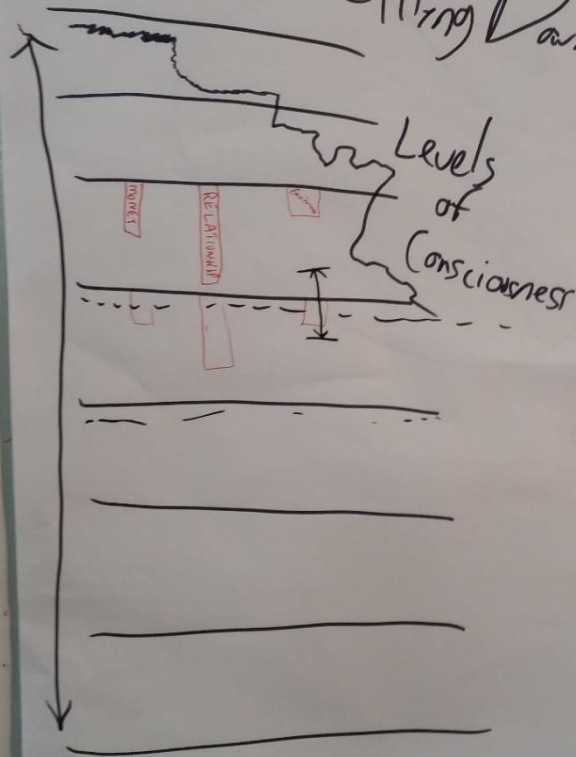
Session Fifteen
The Tao of Leadership; The Zen of
Creativity

Session Sixteen
Some Final Reflections

Flip Charts

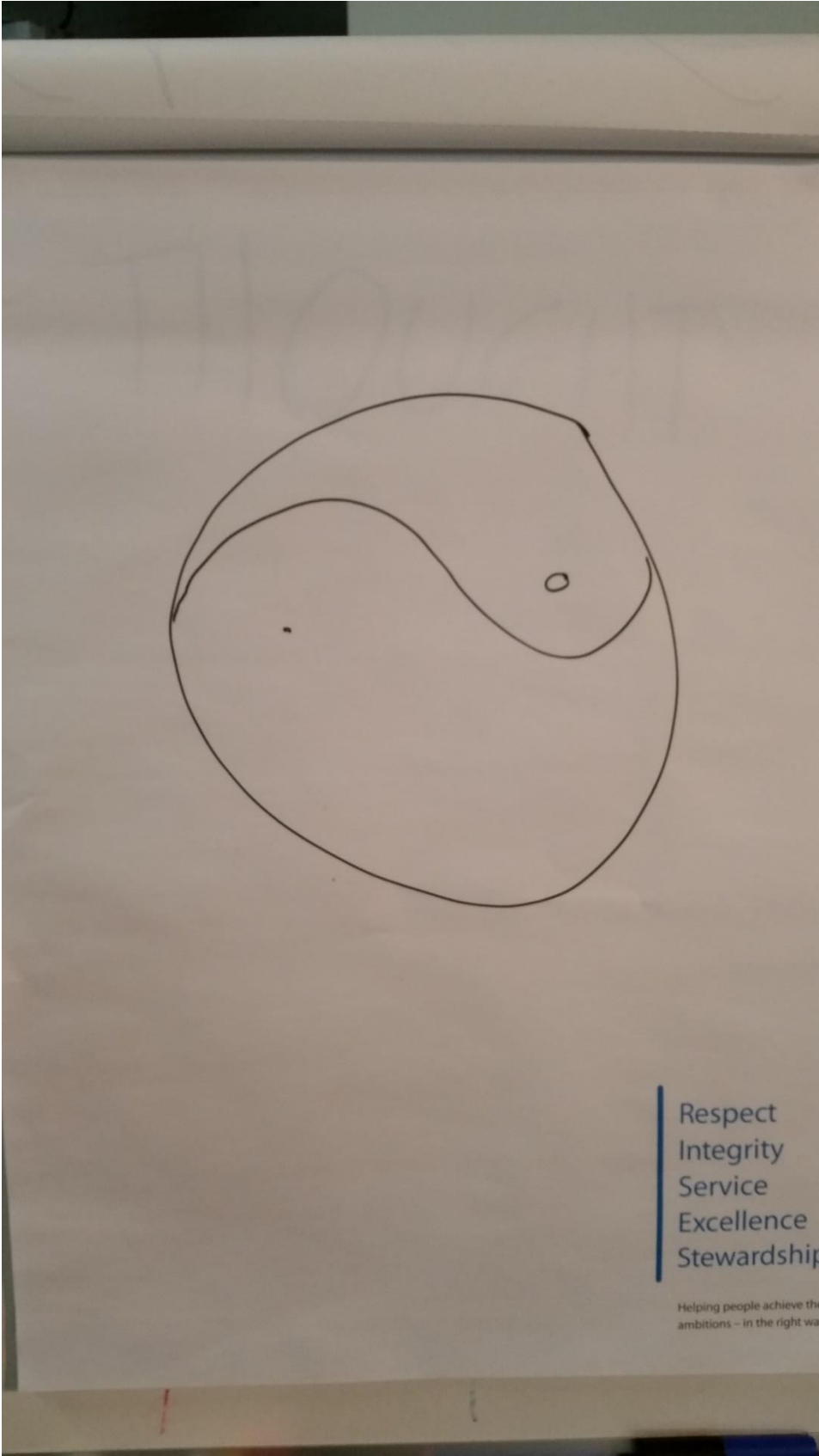
God vs. Goals

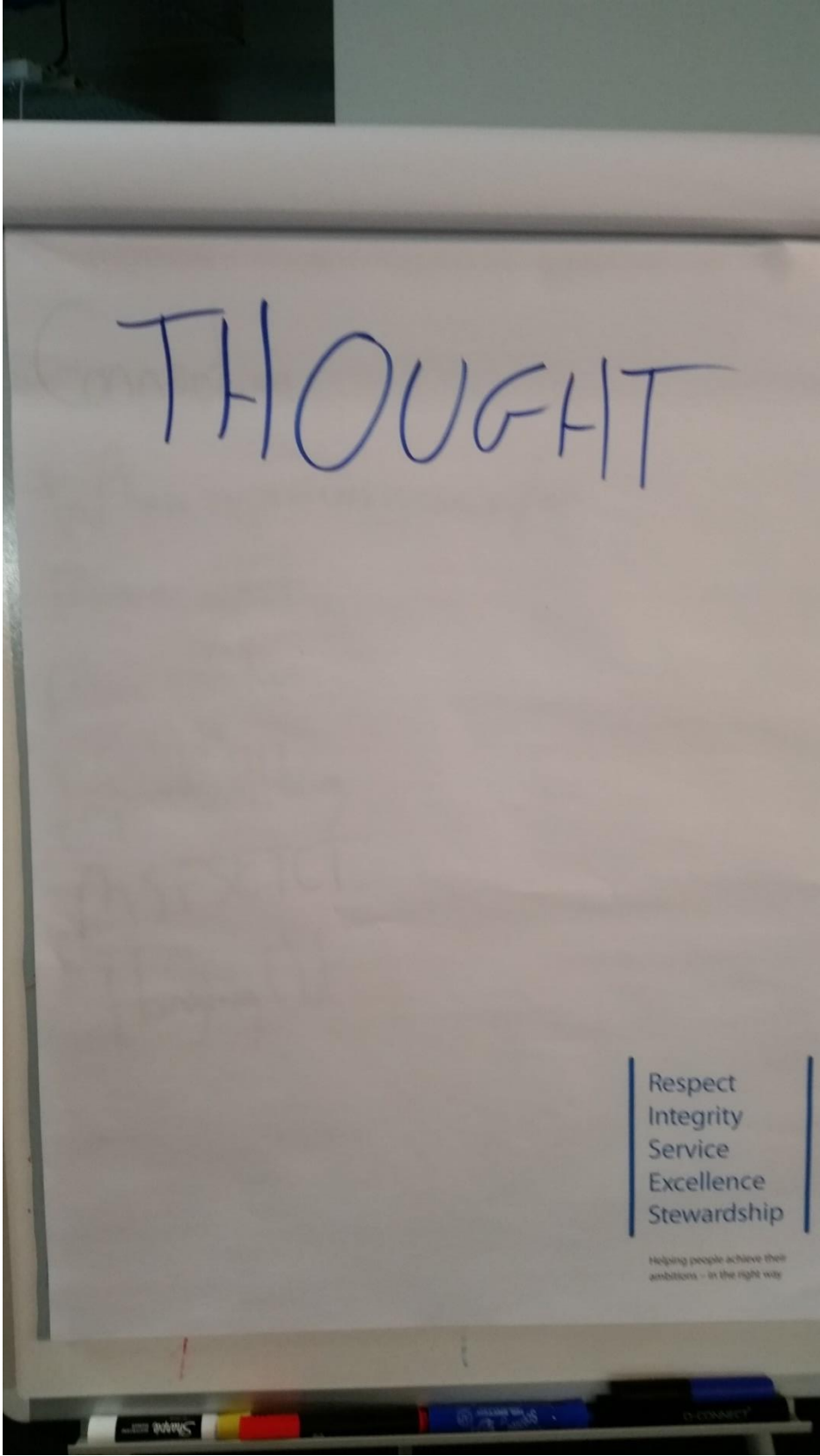
Settling Down



Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

Helping people achieve their ambitions - in the right way





THOUGHT

Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

Helping people achieve their
ambitions - in the right way

Connection

Where experience is coming from

More insightful

More effective

Facilitate
Improved Well-being

M S F S E T C T

Hanging Out

Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

Helping people achieve their
ambitions - in the right way

There is no such
thing as a "solution"
to a feeling

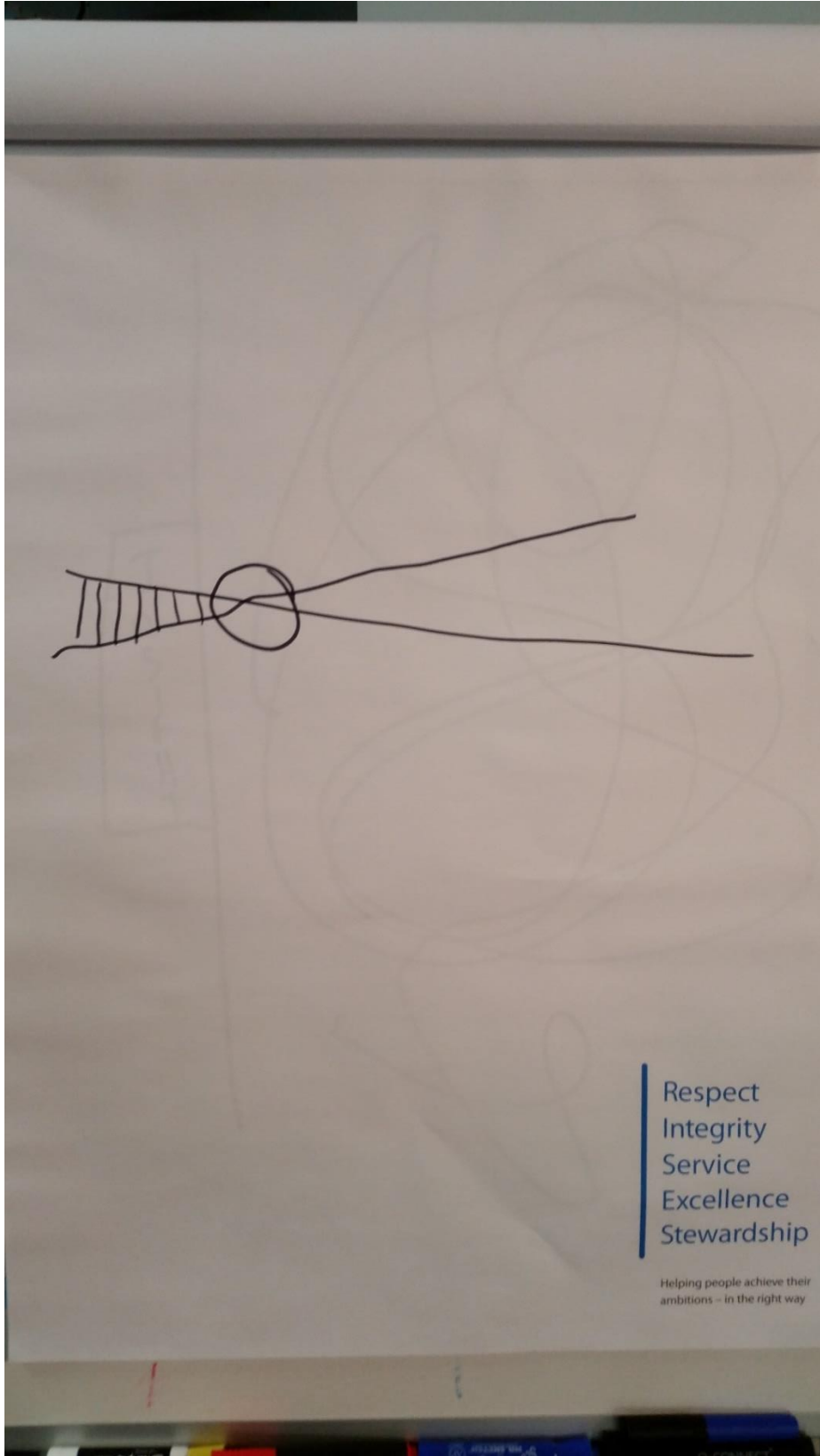
Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

Helping people achieve their
ambitions - in the right way

Curse that
definite
article!

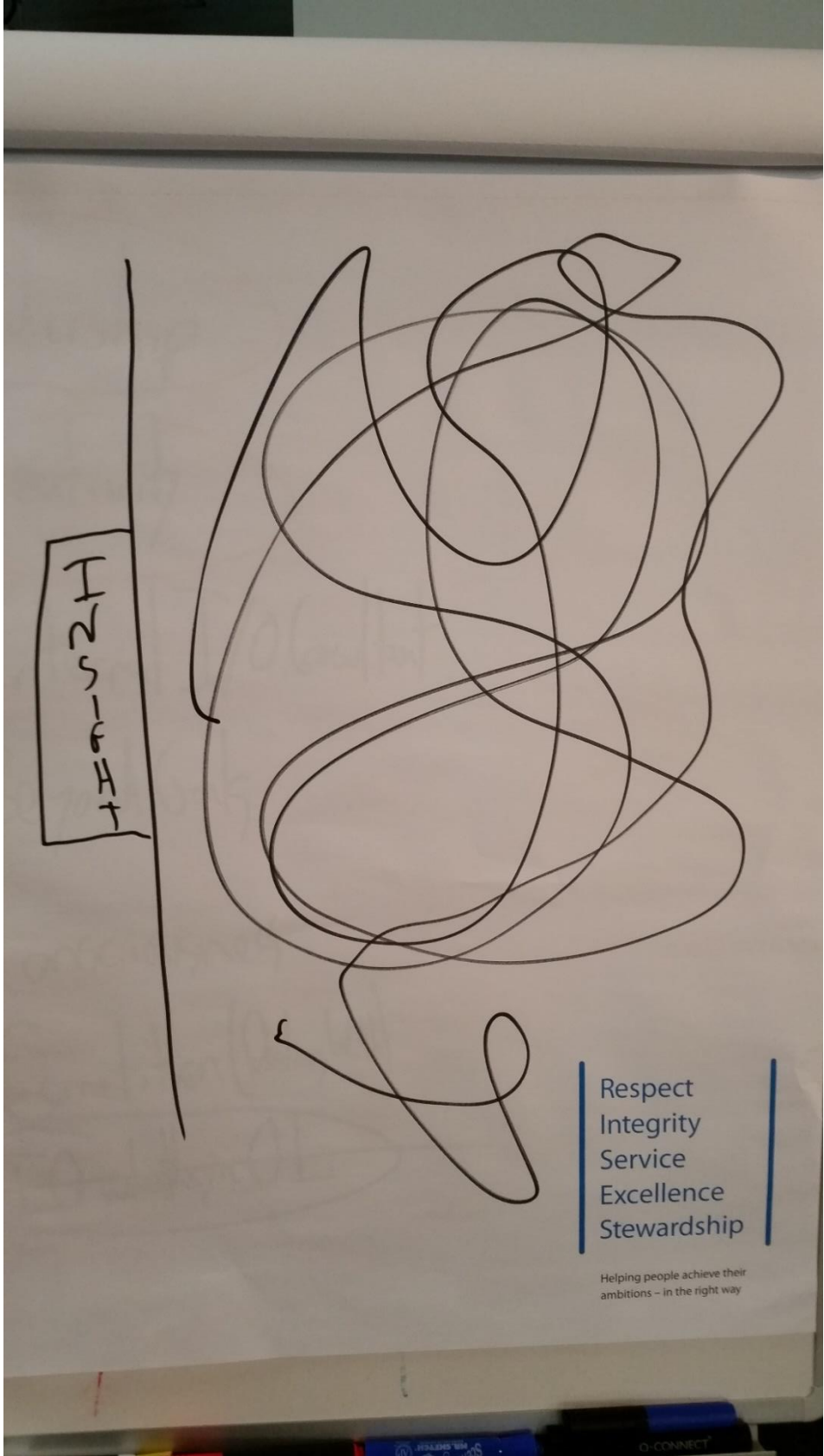
Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

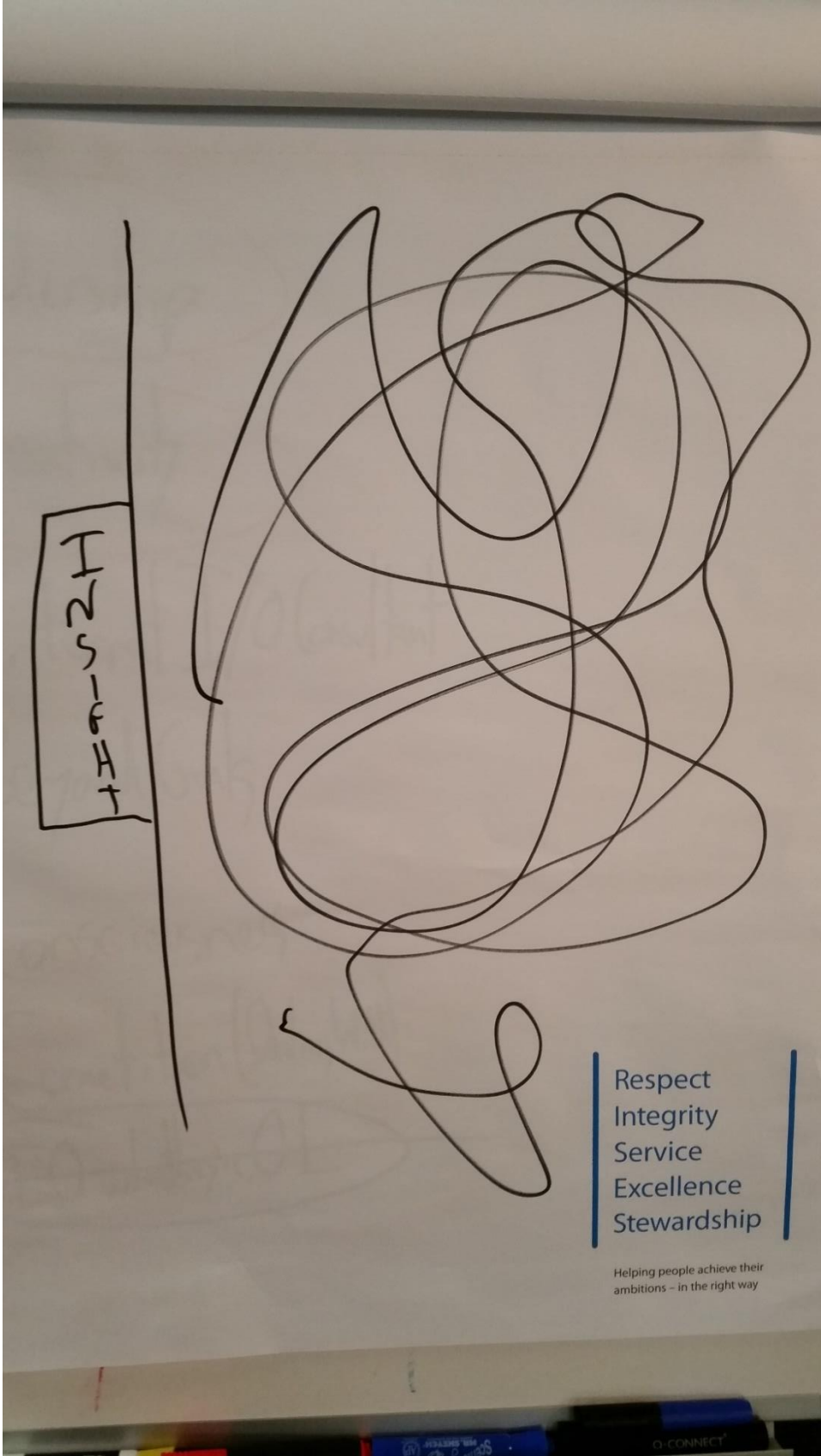
Helping people achieve their
ambitions - in the right way



Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

Helping people achieve their
ambitions – in the right way





Leadership

Creativity

Internal I/O Consultant

Beyond Goals

Consciousness

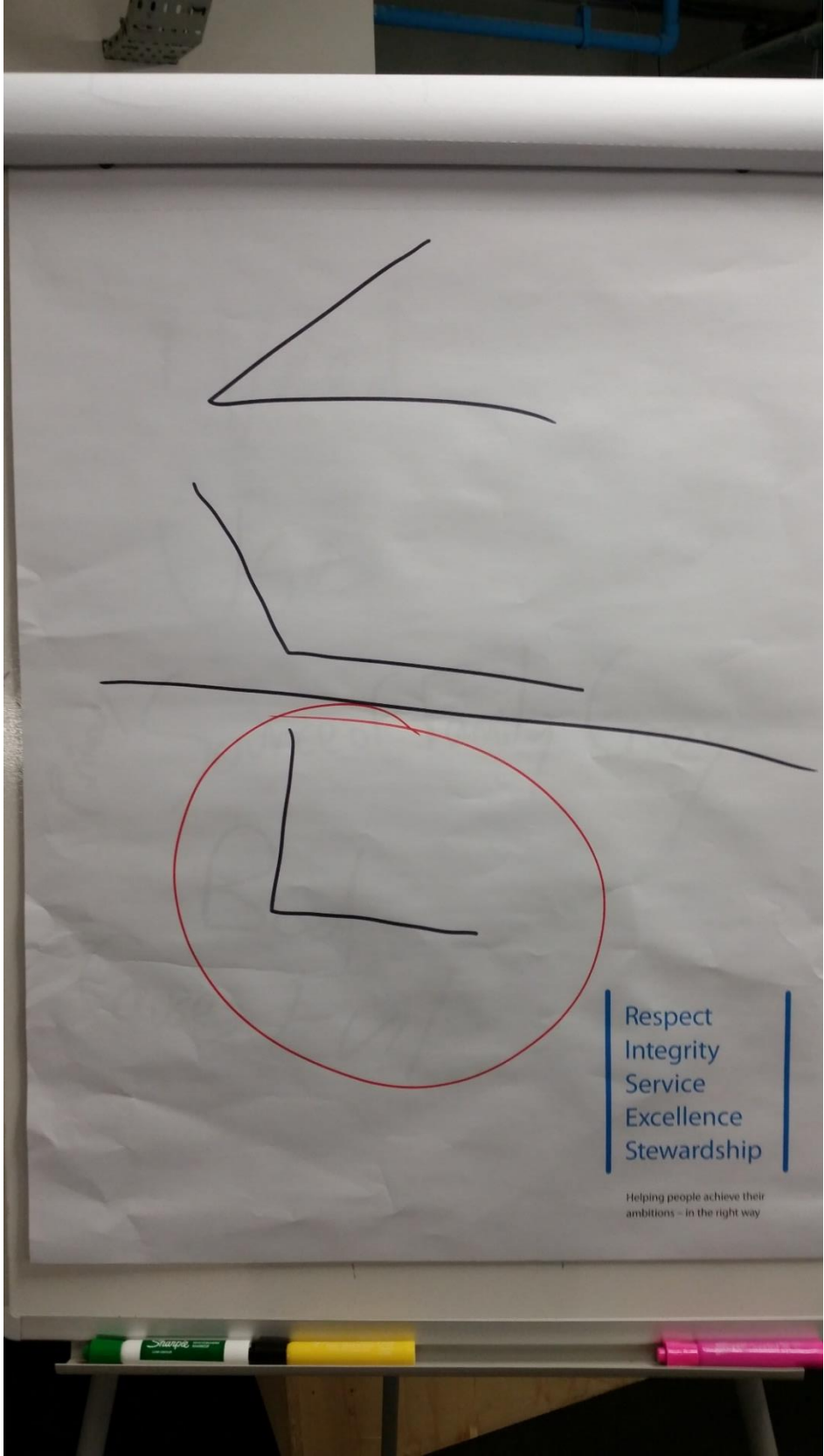
Competition (Dealing With)

~~IO when the IO~~

Charging

Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

Helping people achieve their
ambitions - in the right way



Need

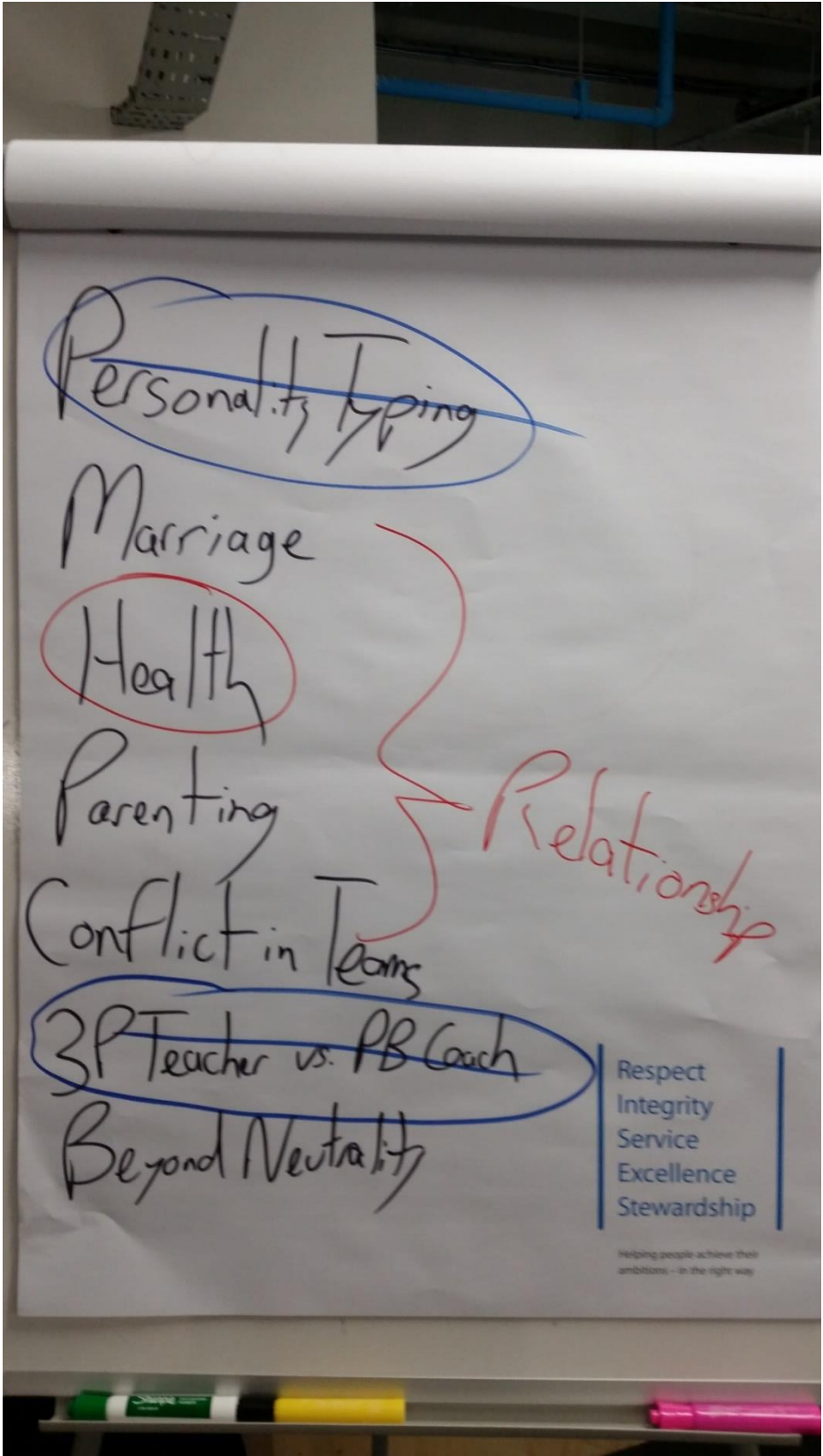
Use

Primary Source of Family Crazy

Bad
Causes Evil

Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

Helping people achieve their
ambitions - in the right way



~~Personality Typing~~

Marriage

Health

Parenting

Conflict in Teams

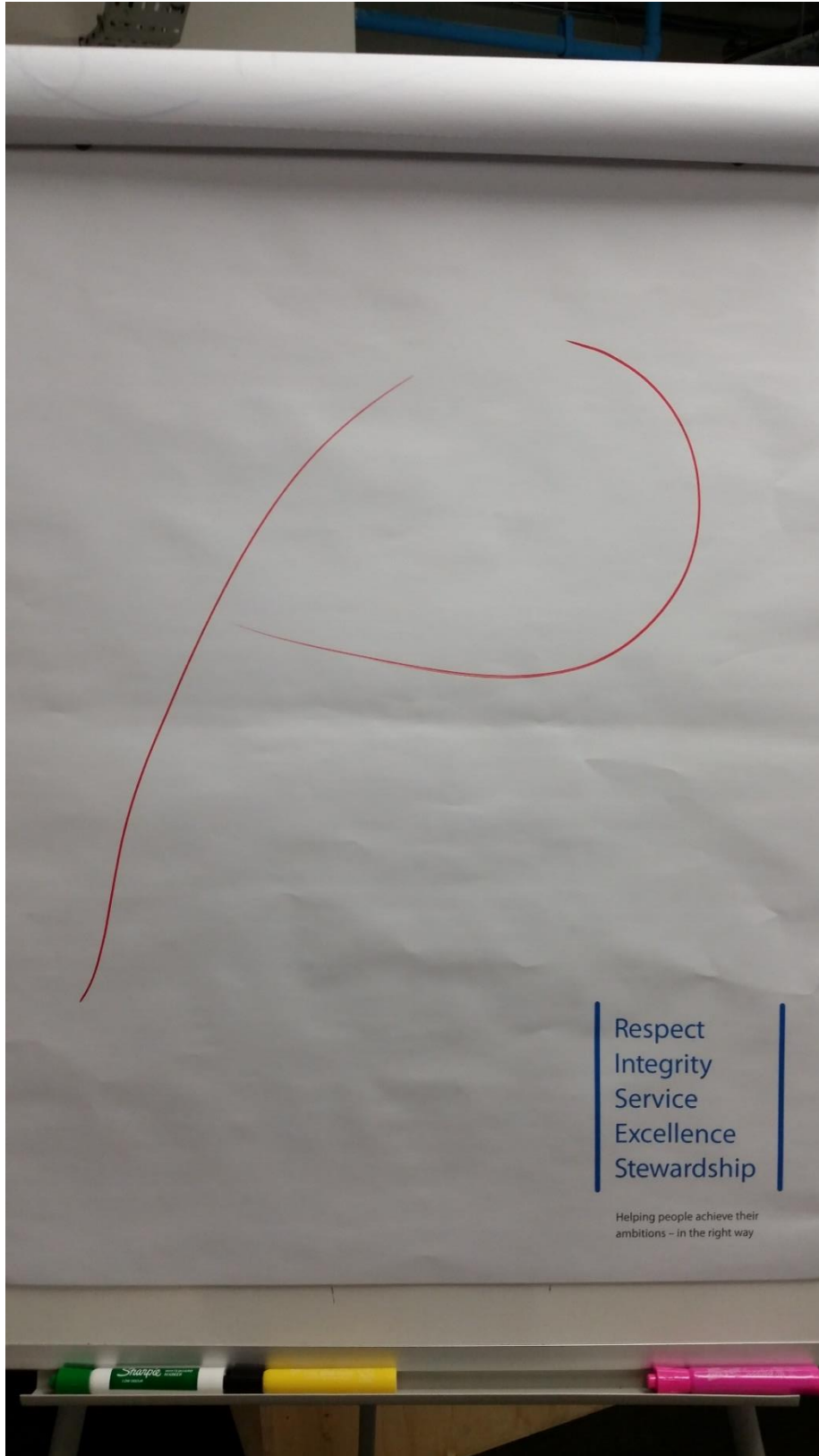
~~3P Teacher vs. PB Coach~~

Beyond Neutrality

Relationship

Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

Helping people achieve their
ambitions - in the right way



Respect
Integrity
Service
Excellence
Stewardship

Helping people achieve their
ambitions - in the right way

Additional Material

The Three Principles of Mind, Consciousness, and Thought as articulated by Sydney Banks

"Mind is the intelligence of all things; Consciousness makes you aware; and Thought is like the rudder of a ship. It guides you through life and if you learn to use that rudder properly, you can guide your way through life far better than you ever imagined. You can go from one reality to another. You can find your happiness and when illusionary sadness comes from memories, you don't try to figure it out. Please don't try to do that - you'll get yourself in trouble. All you have to do is realize that it's Thought.

The second you realize that it's Thought, you are touching the very essence of psychological experience. You're back to the "now," you're back to happiness. So don't get caught up on a lot of details...

When you're ready, you will find what you're looking for. I don't care who you are. I don't care where you are. If you're in the middle of the Sahara Desert...and it's time for you to find the answer, the right person will appear in the middle of the desert and let you know. He will say something to you that will trigger something inside you.

And that's where that life comes from...inside out. It's spiritual knowledge. It's there, everybody has it and people don't realize that. There's no human being more spiritual than you--everybody is equal.

And you know what the equality is?

That we all derive from Mind, Consciousness and Thought.

That's the equalizer. And while you have that equalizer you're as good as anybody on this earth, you're as holy as anybody else on this earth. You always have been, always will be, the only thing is you don't see it because of your thoughts."

ON MIND

"You know the eastern philosophers say: "big Mind, little mind". And here's the paradox. The little mind is the ego mind, that's the self-centered "me" the big hotshot, the only thing in the world worth looking at in the mirror, is me.

The big Mind is the Divine Mind--the Universal Mind, which is the intelligence of literally all things in this world or any other world. That's the Mind you should be looking for. That's the Mind that has the power to guide you through life, and if you can see that, life becomes simple and you'll find your happiness. Because happiness is inside, honestly...it's inside."

ON CONSCIOUSNESS

"Consciousness gives us the ability to realize the existence of life. Consciousness has infinite amount of levels; you will never come to the end of Consciousness. It is literally impossible, because Consciousness is infinite--there is no end. And that's a beautiful thing to know, because it means to say there is no end of you finding beauty, love and understanding in this world. You're not going to stagnate, you're going to keep growing, and the secret to growing is not to try.

The secret to happiness is not to go out there and try and find it, because happiness is not out there. Happiness lies within the consciousness of every human being if you can take your mind, clear it, become healthy, and see what you've got. Because you all have within you a divine secret, that all the wise, from the beginning of time have been trying to tell the world. You have it. That's why the great mystics of the world tell you to look within, because what you seek is inside."

"The way I see it, levels of Consciousness are similar to an outside elevator on a tall building. It goes up and it goes down all day, every day. The higher the elevator car ascends, the more can be surveyed. Views that may be blocked from the fourth floor can easily be seen from the tenth.

Similarly, the higher your level of consciousness, the more understanding will be in your heart. The higher the consciousness elevator ascends, the more you see and understand, allowing you access to more common sense and wisdom. That is, when your consciousness ascends to a higher level, it assists you to see beyond whatever misled thoughts were obscuring your vision yesterday.

Now consider that if someone were trying to explain such a psychological elevator ride--say, to the twelfth floor--to a person who had never been above the second floor, the conversation would appear mystical for the simple reason that he would be talking about the as yet unknown."

ON THOUGHT

"Remember--and this is very important--you're only one thought away from happiness, you're only one thought away from sadness. The secret lies in Thought. It's the missing link that everybody in this world is looking for.

We worry over nothing. How many times have you worried, and you look back in your life and say, "I don't know why I ever worried about that," or you're in a big tantrum and you're mad at the world or you're mad at your spouse and three days later, you can't remember why you were mad - because all it was was thought and you forgot what the thought was. The past is now, it's history, it's an illusion in time and if you're going to work from that illusion in time, you're going to keep it going, there's no end to it.

To forgive is to forget, so you have to forget the past to forgive. Once you do that, you'll find your freedom. But again I'm going to say to you, you don't just do that to other people. When you look in the mirror, you see an innocent person. And I know sometimes you might look in the mirror and say, "Innocent my foot." Because you don't like what you see.

Why don't you like what you see? Because of your thoughts, we're back to that again. It's always Thought, the missing link called Divine Thought. It's a gift that we were given to have the freedom to walk through life and see what we want to see. How much better than that can you get? That you have the freedom to walk through life and see as a free thinker, that is the greatest gift ever, to be a free thinker.

Now this doesn't give you the permission to act on your thoughts because then again, you have the freedom to have a thought to put life into it or let it die. I might have the thought all of a sudden, "Ooh, I'd love to have more money, I'm going to rob this bank," but if I don't do anything about it, I haven't done anybody any harm. It's only when I put life into my thoughts. But if I have the thought, "I'd like to help those people," so I put life into this thought, and the second this life goes into this thought, my actions start, and I go out and I help people because you put life into your thoughts. It's all Thought."

Talking About Nothing

For the past few days, I've been running a workshop for coaches and leaders called Coaching from the Inside-Out. We've been exploring the human potential and the nature of personal reality, getting pretty honest with each other about both our humanity and divinity – what it is to be spiritual beings having a human experience and how that understanding impacts our work, health, relationships, and the way we live our lives.

When I was reflecting this morning on the essence of what we've been discussing, I realized the heart of the conversation has been about “nothing” – the field of pure possibility and infinite creative potential (literally “no thing”) out of which every thing (“everything”) is created.

While sometimes hanging out and talking about nothing can seem a little scary, on the whole the space that we open up to quickly fills with love, deep connection, and surprisingly often wisdom in the moment and inspiration for the future.

Contrast this with the busy-ness of our day to day lives, where in order to escape the emptiness we fear we'll feel if the hamster wheel of our thinking ever stops spinning, we spend every “free” moment plugged in to a screen or a book or an activity designed to save us from the quiet and stillness we sense lurking just beneath the surface.

There is a scene in the sitcom “Friends” where Chandler entertains Phoebe's psychotherapist boyfriend with a constant barrage of jokes and puns and stories. At the end of the whirlwind, the psychotherapist looks at him and says “You're a funny guy. I'd hate to be there when the laughter stops.”

And this is in many ways our biggest fear. That when the whirlwind of our lives stops swirling, we'll be left with nothing. And that if we ever really got past the nuttiness of our own circular thinking, the silence would drive us crazy.

But the very same “nothing” that we spend so much of our time avoiding is the foundation of everything. As Lao Tzu wrote in the Tao te Ching over 5000 years ago:

We put thirty spokes together and call it a wheel;

But it is on the space where there is nothing that the usefulness of the wheel depends.

We turn clay to make a vessel;

But it is on the space where there is nothing that the usefulness of the vessel depends.

We pierce doors and windows to make a house;

And it is on these spaces where there is nothing that the usefulness of the house depends.

Therefore just as we take advantage of what is, we should recognize the usefulness of what is not.

Everything comes from nothing – which means that if we want to create something truly new and fresh in our lives, we must first find our way back to the quiet beneath the notes, the page underneath the writing, and the space into which our thoughts appear and dissipate.

That space is closer than you think, and larger than our little brains (well, my little brain) can imagine. You won't find anything when you get there – that's just the nature of nothing – but the whole world will sit patiently with you and await its creation with your very next thought.

This is truly the space where miracles happen – the place of love, of light, of truth, and of peace.

And when you are in that place in you and I am in that place in me, there is only one of us.

With all my love,

Michael

How Transformative Coaching Actually Works

My son Oliver and I were talking the other day when he commented about how cool he thought my job was, and I had to agree with him. After all, I spend my days talking with people all around the world about their lives and the nature of life itself, and as a result of those conversations, I get to witness their well-being and wisdom bubble up to the surface as their lives begin to soar.

But even while we were speaking about that, I recognized the question he was likely too embarrassed to ask, as I've seen it in the eyes of many people in the past and heard it spoken aloud dozens if not hundreds of times:

What do you actually do?

I've had the question from my wife, my mother, my best friend, my students, radio interviewers and potential clients. I've even had actual clients confront me after a particularly dramatic transformative experience and say "What the hell did you do to me?"

While I've never held back with my answers, I have struggled at times to make them satisfying as I try to connect up the invisible, almost magical nature of what goes on inside us with the wonderfully visible and tangible results that we can see showing up outside us in our lives.

So in today's tip, I thought I'd share a bit of my current understanding of why something that works so well *actually* works so well...

If you have ever seen a post-apocalyptic film or comic book, from *War of the Worlds* to *Mad Max* to modern classics like *The Watchmen* and *The Book of Eli*, you'll recognize that one universal symbol that they nearly always contain is an image of new life emerging through the scarred and scorched remains of a barren wasteland.

The most common one I've seen over the years is a green plant growing up through the cracks of a concrete wasteland - a symbol of new beginnings and hope for the future.

It is not we humans who grow these plants - it is life itself, which like hope, springs eternal.

So what does this have to do with transformative coaching?

Well, what we are doing as transformative coaches is not attempting to change our clients to make them more or less like some sort of societal norm for happiness or success. It is rather opening up cracks in the concrete of their world view that allows the wonder and beauty that is inside them to find it's way to the surface, and then nurturing that "new life" until its roots have truly taken hold.

This involves a shift from attempting to continually control the world in order to feel better about ourselves to allowing our true self to guide us from the inside, and “let the chips fall where they may.” Fortunately, the chips most often fall in the form of meaningful work, wonderfully loving relationships, gentle prosperity, and happy success.

What can be frustrating about this approach is that we as coaches don't control the timing of the insights that lead to transformation. A “breakthrough” may or may not happen in a particular session, and new growth may or may not be evident each and every week.

And because of the “inside-out” nature of this approach, at times it may seem like the coach isn't even necessary. After all, if new life will find a way to emerge in even the most difficult of circumstances, why pay all that money for a coach?

My answer comes in the form of a story I first wrote in [Feel Happy Now](#):

A minister is driving through the country when he comes across a truly glorious farm being tended to by a lone farmer.

Keen to remind the farmer of the source of his blessings, the minister pulls over to the side of the road and calls the farmer over.

'The Lord has blessed you with a beautiful farm,' said the minister.

After a few moments' reflection, the farmer nodded his assent.

'He certainly has, Reverend - but you should have seen it when he had it all to himself! Have fun, learn heaps, and if it feels like life is battering you, let it crack you up instead - because it's through those cracks that your true self can most easily emerge!

INSIGHTS AND REFLECTIONS:

INSIGHTS AND REFLECTIONS: