

SPARK 13

Distinction: You can responsibly choose, declare, and ask best when you are centered.

Notes: Not knowing about your center does not make your center unimportant. There are many things you do not know about that nonetheless strongly affect you every day of your life. A core skill for functioning as a Possibility Manager is to know what you are doing with your center. When you know about what you are doing with your own center you suddenly also know what other people are doing with their centers.

You have two kinds of centers, a physical-center and an energetic or “being”-center. Your physical-center is equivalent to your center-of-balance or center-of-gravity, a fixed position located mid-way between your hipbones and halfway back in your body. In various martial arts or oriental healing forms, the physical-center has been given such names as dan-tien or hara. Possibility Management simply refers to this point in your body as your physical-center.

In addition to your physical-center you also have an energetic center, or center of being, which is mobile. Your being-center starts out about the size of a grapefruit, and through evolutionary processes your being will develop and grow.

Occidental culture trains you to keep your being-center in your head. If your being-center is in your head you tend to interact with the world through your intellect. You disconnect from your feelings and intuition; you depend on reasons and linear logic instead of intuition and a true sense of self, and above all else you try to know. The obvious advantages to having your being-center in your head are that you can rely on cold hard logic for making decisions and you can avoid the messy world of human feelings. The disadvantages of head centeredness arise when you attempt nonlinear endeavors such as relationship, communication, teamwork, leadership, creating possibility, and committing to do something before you know how to accomplish it. Trying to figure out nonlinear creating from your head is far too slow because nonlinear problems are too sophisticated and complex for the rational mind.

If instead of placing your being-center in your head you place your being-center on your physical-center, this is called being “centered.” When you are centered, you possess your clarity, power, voice, feelings, intuition, instinct, balance and presence. When you are centered your destiny principles can move and direct you. When you are centered, you can function with a nonlinear intelligence not limited by linear logic. And, you can still use your linear logic whenever it is appropriate.

But the difference between being centered and not being centered is greater than this. When you are not centered, you have either placed your being-center in your head, as mentioned above, or you have given your center away. Why would you give your center away? What does this even mean?

Perhaps long ago you experienced that when you are centered you are powerful beyond measure. Having such power as a child can be a threat to authority figures. You learned that by giving your center away you could disempower yourself enough for the adults not to feel threatened. Giving your center away created safety, so you gave your Box the trick of being adaptive as a survival strategy. Without realizing the true costs of adaptive behavior, your Box may still be using this strategy today. On the surface, the benefits of being adaptive look great. Without your center you are not responsible! The authority figure is responsible for you instead! If things do not go well, you can blame and resent the authority figure!

Typical organizations have both Gremlin leaders and responsible leaders. Gremlin leaders surround themselves with followers willing to give their center away. After collecting their followers' centers, Gremlin leaders feel safe because their authority is not challenged. If you try to keep your center around a Gremlin leader they do whatever it takes to get rid of you. At some point you have probably already experienced what it is like working around a Gremlin leader.

Responsible leaders dedicate themselves to leader-making and strive to surround themselves with other leaders – people who have their center – because centered people are capable of taking responsibility, making decisions, taking risks, and creating results. If you try to give a responsible leader your center the responsible leader refuses to take it – refuses to play the game with you. Instead the responsible leader asks you to find your center and learn how to keep it yourself.

Experiment: This experiment has two parts. You can do them both at the same time. Learn when you give your center away, and learn when you keep your center. To learn when you give your center away start noticing when other people give their center away. Their adaptive behavior and lack of presence is so obvious. When you give your center away your adaptive behavior and lack of presence is equally obvious to other people.

Do people ever try to give their center away to you? Do you accept it or give it back to them? You can feel the physical sensation of giving your center away. Learn to recognize the giddy sense of “I win, you lose! Ha-hah! I am safe now!” that comes from your own Gremlin giving your center away. Detect your adaptive behavior by honestly observing your physical posture, strategic positioning, tone of voice, gestures, attitude and languaging. Also notice that when you give your center away you are still responsible for your irresponsibility.

When you place your being-center on your physical-center you can feel that sensation too. Learn to recognize the sense of being centered. You have senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. Practice an additional sense perception of being centered by constantly living inside of this question: “Where is my center right now?” Remember that there is a difference between being adaptive, which is giving your center away, and being accepting, forgiving, or kind, which are responsible principles. Some people may not like it if you stop being adaptive and instead keep your center when you are around them. Let it be their problem. On the other hand, be careful that you are not simply being spiteful and seeking revenge.

EXTRA CREDIT EXPERIMENT: From the minute you wake up to the minute you fall asleep, that is, all day long every day this week adapt to nothing. See what happens.

Good luck,
Clinton