

## **Discomfort Zone**

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(Revised: 12. September 2008 by Clinton Callahan)

### **FORMAT:**

Dyad process

Duration: 30 minutes

### **PURPOSE:**

Creating discomfort to enter the state of innovation.

### **SETUP:**

Dyads sit facing each other.

### **INTRO / BACKGROUND**

(Created by Rafael Knuth, Possibility Manager, 23 March 2006.)

All barriers to innovation can be reduced to one, which is COMFORT. True innovation means leaving the COMFORT ZONE or, in other words, creating DISCOMFORT. The purpose of this exercise is to open to innovation through acceptance of the experience of being uncomfortable. The method is to safely be uncomfortable on purpose. For most human beings, such an idea is crazy. This is before they make the distinction between the Physical Body and the Energetic or Spiritual Body. The Physical Body rejects discomfort. The Energetic Body can actually feed on discomfort.

### **INSTRUCTIONS / PROCEDURE**

1. Ask a friend if he has a few minutes of time.
2. Take off your watch.
3. If you are used to wear it on your left wrist, take a minute to think how it would be to wear it on your right wrist.
4. Tell your friend about the feelings you have. Be as specific as possible.
5. Observe yourself while making the experience of wearing your watch on your right wrist.
6. Now, reverse the process. Let your friend make the experience and be the observer.

What's the result of the experiment? You just increased the number of ways to wear a watch by 100%! You can wear it both on your left as well as on your right wrist. Next time, you could try out wearing the watch on your left ankle. Which would be an increase in possibilities by 300% compared to the original state.

### **What is comfort?**

People tend to think, that discomfort equals unhappiness. It's associated with pain, loneliness, being separated from people, things we love etc. Discomfort is bad. On the contrary, comfort is associated with happiness. Comfort is good. In fact, there is

no connection between comfort and our state of happiness. Comfort is comfort. And discomfort is discomfort. The experience of comfort and discomfort lead to different experiences. And that's it.

Nobody would seriously argue that wearing your watch on your left wrist is good, while wearing it on your right wrist is bad. But that's exactly what we do, unconsciously. So, why do we wear our watches on the left wrist? Because we are physically and psychically addicted to wearing it on the left wrist. Try wearing your watch on your right wrist and you might feel like a junkie during a detoxification. Your left wrist shouts: "Give me back that watch! I want it back! I cannot live without it!" For your addicted arm it feels bad not to wear the watch on the "correct" wrist. That's how our society works. We preserve the state of addiction by "morality". Polish workers are bad because they cost less than Germans. Europeans are addicted to the privileges of earning the highest wages in the world. By being so addicted, the German worker limits his possibilities to be innovative. He could, for example, work for the same amount as the Polish worker. "Pay the Polish price, get the German quality." A store owner could start with a promotional one-hour-a-day Polish price to attract new clients. That would be a great promotion, wouldn't it?

### **Discomfort movement**

The discomfort movement is a worldwide open source movement. Each participant is committed to create discomfort in his life for the sake of creating new possibilities. It's easy, really. You can do it anywhere. For example, I was hungry before I wrote the mail. So I decided to eat a tomato. I cut it into pieces and just before I grabbed the salt shaker I stopped. "What about eating it with sugar?" I felt bad and horrible just thinking about eating a tomato with sugar. Then I did it. It tasted different from the tomato with salt. It was neither better nor worse, it was just different. And then I remembered that ketchup contains a lot of sugar. Here we are! Tomatoes with sugar is the foundation of Heinz Co., one of the biggest companies in the world. Someone must have left the COMFORT ZONE to create this.

### **DEBRIEF:**