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## The Personal Effectiveness Continuum – Introduction

*K B S Kumar*

***Swamy Sukhabodhananda has well said in one of his articles that people strive to increase their standard of living and not their standard of thinking. He further adds, the best computer is between the ears; understand the mind, transform and transcend the mind. The book captures the impeccable mantras to achieve personal effectiveness and personal excellence in life.***

**W**hat is the difference between the:

Creative and	not-so-creative
Perfectionists and	not-so-perfectionists
Noble souls and	ill intended souls
Outperformers and	underperformers
Successful and	failed
Leaders and	followers
Good bosses and	bad bosses
Happy souls and	troubled souls

When I asked this question in one of my workshops, ... obviously, there were a few responses from members of the house, which were beating about the bush and which were too vague to be generalized as a principal common reason for difference between the above-mentioned categories.

It goes without saying that everybody, without exception, would like to fall in the left hand side category of people rather than the right hand side.

Then I asked an apparently stupid question to the house, i.e., "How many of you think?"

Unequivocally, not even a single hand remained unraised.

Immediately, I asked the sequel question,

"How many of you think about your thinking?"

The result: No exaggeration if I say, none of the souls could dare raise their hands.

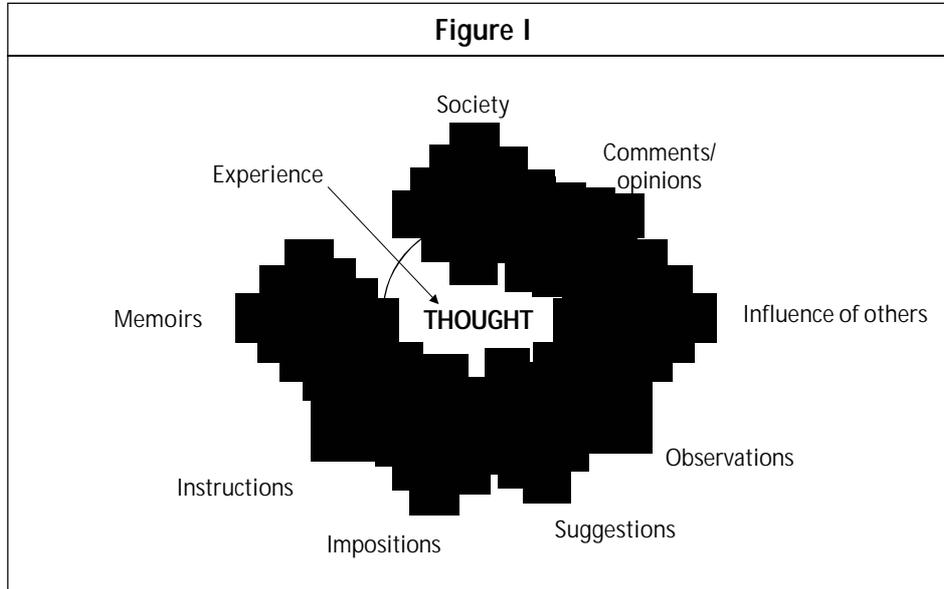
Then I asked the revealing question:

"Do you now understand the difference between the people on the left hand side and the right hand side?"

Thinking is something that is common to every soul that takes birth, and is inevitable until one dies. But it is only those handful of human beings who bother, extending their thought process from mere 'thinking' to 'thinking about thinking'. How does it help?

### **Thought Management**

Generally, a thought is a result of what we gather from our surroundings. In other words, a thought is inevitably affected by various external factors like the societal factors, opinion leaders, influence of others, observations, suggestions, impositions, instructions, memoirs, past experiences, etc.

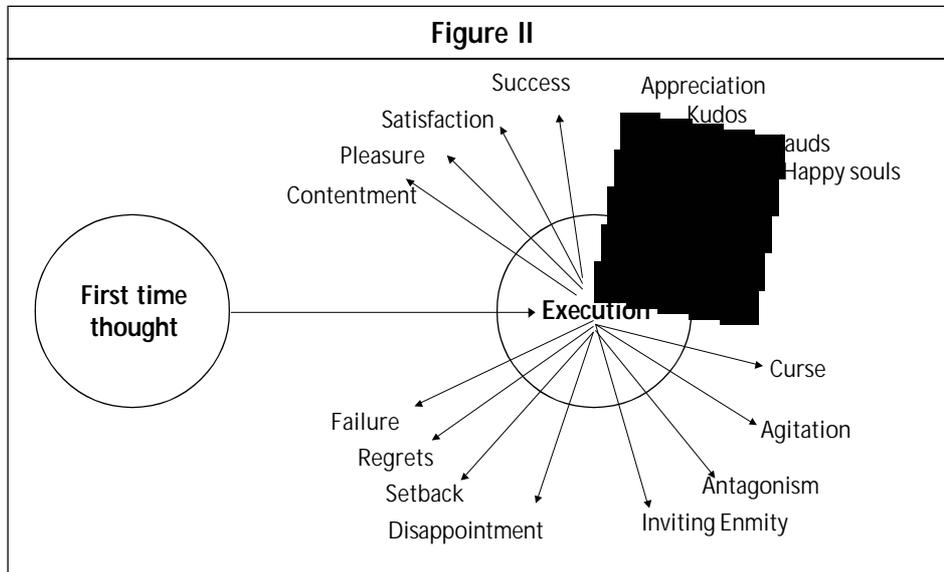


Now whether the action is a quality action or not, depends on how the thought is treated. Let us analyze the way the right handers (not-so-creative, not-so-perfectionists, underperformers, etc.) process the thought. The reason why the right-handers stay a step behind the left-handers is that they don't reason the thought. They think; they don't think about the thinking. In other words, they don't manage and treat the thought the way it deserves. They are under a belief that their first thought is the best and they execute the thought. However, they don't realize that most of the thoughts, if not paid due attention and consideration, may bring along equal probabilities of success or failure. It is something like trial-and-error method of testing thoughts by premature execution of the thought.

However, those who believe in doing things correct, perfect, acceptable, agreeable, desirable, and in a successful manner have a different method of treating their thought. They are constantly involved in *laundrying the thought* to the cleanest and the best state possible which, now, would be destined to nothing but success.

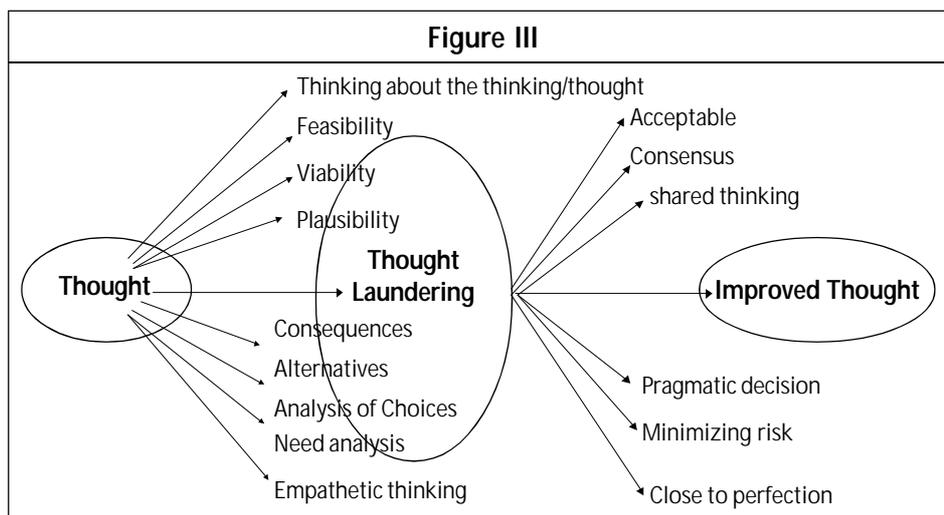
### **Thought Laundering**

While thinking, the thought execution is more influenced by external factors. Thought laundering is more of an internal overhauling. It requires a thorough



refinement of the cognitive and emotional thought processes. Hence, the thought laundering process is more deliberate, conscious, matured mechanism, which refines a human being into a good human being.

This book about Being Good Human being is a humble attempt to present those concepts and practices that make rich contribution towards the process of thought laundering that can shape one into a good and effective human being.



The book is meticulously segregated into four sections signifying the four levels in an ascending order towards personal effectiveness based on the PEC (Personal Effectiveness Continuum) (Table 1).

<b>Table 1</b>	
<p><b>Understanding the ‘Self’</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practising self-control</li> <li>• Taming the self-esteem</li> <li>• Adopting the principle-centered approach</li> <li>• Reinventing and perfecting the self</li> <li>• Imbibing constructive selfishness</li> <li>• Introspecting and rediscovering.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Values, Beliefs and Attitudes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imbibing values: human-cultural-personal-moral</li> <li>• Adhering to commitment and conviction</li> <li>• Finding the inner voice</li> <li>• Embracing discipline</li> <li>• ‘Duty orientation’ rather than ‘rights obsession’.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Managing Emotions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional intelligence and ethics</li> <li>• Emotional Intelligence and leadership</li> <li>• Emotional quotient and performance</li> <li>• Emotional intelligence and managerial excellence.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Managing the Self</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-motivation</li> <li>• The powerful S-Y-M trident; [Spirituality-Yoga-Meditation]</li> <li>• Practising impossible thinking</li> <li>• Effective stress management.</li> <li>• Listening: the neglected jewel.</li> </ul>

Understanding self has been an unending conundrum to the thinkers, researchers, psychologists, spiritual gurus *et al.* The self is a key construct in several schools of psychology (Source: Wikipedia). Hence, there couldn't have been a better subject than ‘understanding self’ which is the first box of the continuum dealt with in the first section of the book.

The section deals with a few crucial elements of understanding oneself including: Practising self-control, taming the self-esteem, adopting the principle, centered leadership, reinventing and perfecting, imbibing constructive selfishness, and introspecting and rediscovering.

*Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens.*

– Kahlil Gibran

Attitude is perhaps the in-thing, which determines the most in the behavioral tendencies of a human being. Attitude and thought patterns are locked in an inevitable symbiotic relationship, which affect each other immensely. Beliefs and values are the fundamental elements that shape the attitude of a person, in turn, affecting the thought patterns and thus the behavioral tendencies of the person. The second quadrant of the Personal Effectiveness Continuum are the values, beliefs and attitudes. Thus, this book dedicates a section to the trio which advocates:

- Imbibing values: human-cultural-personal-moral
- Adhering to commitment and conviction
- Finding the inner voice
- Embracing discipline
- 'Duty orientation' rather than 'rights obsession'.

### **Personal Effectiveness Continuum**

While the understanding self and the shaping of self by the beliefs, values and attitudes have a significant impact on the sub-cortex (cognition) and neo-cortex (emotion) part of brain, emotion part needs a special attention, in principle, for two reasons:

1. The logical, analytical and rational (cognitive) thought process of a person, in the normal conditions, is put to several and adequate tests and as a result of which he/she joins an organization
2. Emotional part of the brain remains untested and unexamined, whereas, according to Daniel Goleman – the father of emotional Intelligence – at the workplace, 85-90% of the success depends on how intelligent the person is emotionally.

Without denying the significance of cognitive intelligence, one must realize the crucial role played by the emotional intelligence of a person, and groom one's personality towards success by becoming emotionally intelligent. The third

component of the book is managing emotions. Thus, the next section of the book deals with the concept of emotional intelligence and its application in one's professional and personal life. The section unveils the concept of emotional intelligence from various dimensions, viz.,

Emotional intelligence and ethics

Emotional Intelligence and leadership

Emotional quotient and performance

Emotional intelligence and managerial excellence.

The proof of pudding is in the eating. All the theory and concepts make sense only when it is put to appropriate practical utility.

The above-mentioned aspects of personal awareness, when put to practice, would pave the way for personal effectiveness. The concluding quadrant of the *Personal Effectiveness Continuum* is managing the 'self', which includes the practical application of the above-mentioned concepts in the real-time scenario – practices like self-motivation, stress management techniques, meditation, yoga, spirituality, the practice of listening and impossible thinking.

The book, as discussed earlier, is a meticulous attempt to identify those very components that promise and guarantee the personal effectiveness and personal excellence on various fronts, viz., professional, domestic, social, etc.

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