

Phil Nuernberger, Ph.D., Editor
Strategic Intelligence Skills Inc.
One Rock Ledge Drive, Honesdale, PA 18431

www.mindmaster.com
email: info@mindmaster.com
ph: 570-253-4754 fax: 570-253-4872

Visionary Skills: Tapping Inner Wisdom – Part 1

Phil Nuernberger, Ph.D.

A senior executive from a major brokerage firm was discussing the lack of visionary thinking in American corporations. "I couldn't believe it. I was meeting with this vice-president from Japan, and we were to discuss our developing relationship. The man not only brought out a five and ten year plan, he actually had a 25 and a 50 year plan. Right there on paper, just as complete, useful and important to him as the five and ten year plans. I didn't know what to say. Hell, we don't even have a genuine two year plan. We don't think much about the future, at least not in any significant way. These people not only think and envision the future, they are busy creating it."

Vision: A Natural Resource

Great leaders are visionary. This is the most talked about quality in leadership literature, but very little understanding about what this ability actually is, or the specific ways to develop visionary skills. Yet, the capacity for vision and insight is far more common than we suppose. It is a natural function of the mind that is mostly ignored, particularly in our educational systems.

Great leaders must have the power to envision the future and move toward that future confidently and effectively.

Visionaries have a strong connection to their own inner wisdom, and use their intuitive powers to move securely and confidently into the future. Intuition is a powerful but subtle form of knowledge that arises from the mind's power of discrimination. This powerful resource of the mind is accessed through inner

concentration which creates a deeply calm and introspective mind. As we develop our inner awareness, our increasing power of discrimination provide us with insight, allowing us to understand possibilities long before others even know they exist. We learn to listen and trust the quiet, small voice of our inner wisdom, enabling us to be decisive, and move boldly where others hesitate.

John F. Kennedy never lived to serve a full term as President, and his actual accomplishments are few. Yet, he is remembered and loved by many as a great President because of his vision and his ability to inspire others. He not only envisioned greatness for the country, but for everyone in it. Now that information moves at light speed, and technology changes almost as quickly, the pace and complexity of our life has increased enormously. Great leaders must have the power to envision the future and move toward that future confidently and effectively. This takes wisdom as well as knowledge, the ability to use *all* of the intellectual power of the mind.

Intuition: The Discerning Mind

The power of discrimination is very subtle, and involves the very core of how our mind forms knowledge. Although discrimination is the basis for rational analysis, it is not an analytic function. This dimension of the mind is free from the limitations of time/space and pain/pleasure which shape the patterns of the sensory mind. The power of discrimination, and the knowledge it forms, is unaffected by conditioning, or habits. It is also free of

the powerful influence of our emotions. Because of this, its voice is subtle and quiet, easily buried beneath the noisier, more demanding distractions of our habits and emotional reactions.

The quality of our concentration is far more important than the amount of information we gather.

When we use the power of discrimination with the sensory function, we think things out, analyze and make conscious decisions. The more skillfully we use our discrimination, the greater our capacity for rational thought, and the more clearly we think about things.

The real power of our pure intellect, however, lies in the fact that it is not dependent on sensory information and its limitations. Through discrimination, we discern the subtle critical elements of cause/effect relationships as they now exist, as well as their outcomes. We experience this as intuition, the ability to "see into the future." This is not fortune-telling, nor is it intelligent guessing, but a clear recognition of cause/effect relationships.

(This is part 1 of a three part series on visionary skills and intuition. We will continue this series in the next newsletter)



The SIS-TIM[®] Method

Strategic Intelligence Skills – Tools in Motion

Learning to Relax – Using the Breath



We relax in many different ways – fishing, music, sitting in a hot tub, massage, even sex. One of the healthiest and most common ways to relieve stress is exercise. I often hear executives say “I don’t need stress management training. Whenever I feel too much pressure, I jog (play tennis, golf or handball).

Exercise may reduce stress, but that doesn’t stop us from creating more the very next minute.

Exercise is a necessary part of a healthy life style, but it is only part of the job, and not sufficient in and of itself.

Far more important is knowing how to work with our breath. For most, breathing is an unrecognized source of chronic stress and imbalance. What we call normal breathing is actually a very unhealthy habit that most of us develop before the age of 20.

Using the SIS-TIM[®] knowledge, tools and training provides effective ways to retrain moment-to-moment breathing and take control of stress in both the mind and body. With a little bit of training and practice, we can work without excess tension, minimize effort and conserve energy. Instead of being tired and worn at the end of the day, we still feel refreshed and ready to go. When relaxed, we think more clearly, solve problems more creatively, reduce chronic levels of stress and enjoy our daily activities.

The Sweeping Breath

This is one of the most simple of all relaxation exercises, and yet one of the most effective. It creates autonomic balance and leads to physical relaxation and a calm mind. Focusing attention on the breath and visualizing it flowing up and down the body concentrates the mind, creating an

even deeper state of rest. Because it is so simple, it can be used with small children, and has been used to calm hyperactive children in classroom situations.

The Exercise

To do the Sweeping Breath, lie on your back. Use a small pillow to support the curve of your neck. Place your feet approximately 12 – 15 inches apart. Place your arms slightly away from your body, with the palms of your hands up.

Breathing with your diaphragm, allow your breath to be very even and steady. Then imagine your body as a hollow tree, and breathe as if you are breathing in through your toes, filling your body with breath to the crown of your head. Then exhale from the crown of your head back down the body and out the tips of your toes. It’s as if you are completely filling your body with breath and then exhaling all the breath back out. Breathe easily and gently, without any effort or strain.

Follow the inhalation up the body and exhalation back down the body as if your attention was riding the breath up and down. After settling into this rhythm, imagine your entire body expanding as you breathe in, and contracting as you breathe out, as if every cell in your body was breathing in and out. You can imagine the breath like a wave, washing in upon the shore as you inhale and receding back into the sea as you exhale. Become completely focused on this feeling until nothing else exists except the ebb and flow of your breath.

After a few moments of experiencing this ebb and flow, you will find yourself completely relaxed and calm. Enjoy this exercise whenever you feel under pressure or tension and have the opportunity to lie down for a few moments.

Mind Food...From the Spirit

The Burdened Monk

Once, not so long ago- well, maybe it was some time ago- an old monk was traveling with a younger one, paying a visit to an abbey some distance from their own. It was early spring, and the rains had blessed the earth in abundance. The monks soon came to a small stream that was swollen with the rains. Standing next to the stream was a young, beautiful woman, crying so much that her tears were nearly as abundant as the rains.

The old monk gently approached her and said, “What is the matter, daughter?”

The young girl replied that she had wanted to visit her parents and attend the wedding of her sister, but was unable to cross the flooded stream. And she had so counted on being there for her only sister.

The old monk replied, “Oh, this little bit of water should be no problem.” And he immediately picked the young woman up into his arms and carried her across the stream. As he placed her on the opposite bank, the grateful young woman kissed him on his weathered cheeks, thanking him for his kindness.

The old monk smiled, blessed her, and wishing her family well, waded back across the stream. The two monks continued their journey.

After a few miles, the old monk could see that the young one was becoming more and more agitated. Finally, the old monk stopped and said, “Tell me, brother, what is the matter with you? Steam is beginning to come out of your ears!”

The young monk exploded, and in a rage he exclaimed, “How could you pick that woman up? You even let her kiss you on the cheek. You know that we are to have absolutely nothing to do with women!”

The old monk replied, “Look. I picked the woman up, carried her across a small stream and sat her down. You have been carrying her all this way!”