

# Achieving Happiness

HOW TO BOOST THE CONFIDENCE,  
SELF-ESTEEM, SUCCESS, AND HAPPINESS  
OF THOSE THAT MATTER TO YOU  
– *IT'S AS 'EASY AS ABC'*

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## *About the author*

I never imagined, 35 years ago, that I would find myself working with homeless people, the unemployed, those with life-threatening illnesses, and Olympic competitors. Nor did I see myself training sports psychologists, and a wide range of coaches.

I just set out to deal with some personal issues, and develop my understanding of how mental preparation can unleash potential, and now I find myself mentoring youngsters, parents, aspiring sports stars, and business leaders, to be happier and more successful.

I take great pleasure in helping people, whatever their circumstances, to find within themselves something stimulating and energising to look forward to – partly because they are fascinated to discover that the three step process is as 'easy as ABC'.

The concepts equip people of any age to develop an effective mindset and put themselves on track for greater success and happiness. Those who study and understand the concepts will appreciate how to help others in their family, or environment, to benefit from their support.

I take every opportunity to run workshops, coach individuals, give talks, and train those who want to use this approach to work with their clients at a deeper level.

I have no intention of retiring – I am enjoying my work, and the rewards it gives me and those I help, far too much!

## ***The purpose of this book***

I have given numerous talks and presentations in Europe and the U.S.A. and members of the audience have frequently asked if they could buy 'my book'.

After a talk I gave, on my 'ABC' model, a former international table tennis player told me that I should not only be working with athletes and other competitors but should also be training our Olympic coaches.

When an Olympic medallist then told me I needed to write a book about my approach I realised that it was indeed time to do so.

While the original book was primarily intended for aspiring sports stars, coaches, and sports psychologists, this version will give valuable insights to any individual (whether a student, parent, employer, employee, or retired person) wanting to use more of their potential and be happier, or more fulfilled.

I stress it is *not* simply intended to be a '*self-help*' book – I hope and anticipate that the concepts will help all my readers to help many others:-

Part 2 of this book, the Psychology element, covers many well-known concepts that all readers will be able to use to their advantage.

Part 4 is deliberately all about what each of you can do for yourselves, to use more of your potential and fulfil your ambitions. Also, the last chapter of Part 4 'Mental simulation' is in the free 'Mind Games' download, on the website, as an immediately available resource for anyone you know who is looking for support of this kind.

If you really want to stretch yourself and fulfil your heartfelt ambitions, you may well need help from a suitably qualified coach, to tap into your inner aspirations, and then to overcome any lurking, subconscious, doubts about your prospects of making your dreams come true.

## ***Extracts from Part 2*** ***The Psychology element***

“Nurture your mind with great thoughts for you will never go any higher than you think.”

**Benjamin Disraeli**

### **Switching on the engine**

#### **The key points:**

*Successful people confidently set goals without knowing how they will achieve them.*

*Your spontaneous decisions are made after a rapid appraisal of your perceptions/memories rather than on reality or your current ability/potential.*

*Your inner/ideal goals are usually more of a stretch than you are currently aiming for.*

*Your drive, energy and creativity (to achieve your goals) are best stimulated by having the maximum stretch between your current performance and that which you are aspiring to.*

*It is possible for suitably trained coaches to put you in touch with not only your subconscious but unconscious level of self-belief about what you can, and ideally would like to, achieve.*

If you are already highly successful in your life, your career, or some sporting endeavour, it is quite likely that you are one of the 15% of people who are instinctively successful.

I have learnt that even that select group are still likely to benefit from learning some practical applications of the basic psychological concepts, that underpin their success, as well as the more profound implications.

I am indebted for that realisation to Bill Curral, who when I first met him was chief financial controller of GKN, a highly successful business then employing some 42,000 people.

I shared some of these concepts with him, in a one to one workshop, over three days and about half way through our sessions he said “You are so lucky, Jeremy, because everybody

needs you – the 85% of people who don't use their potential need you because they don't know what to do, and the 15%, who are instinctively successful, need you because they don't know what they're doing".

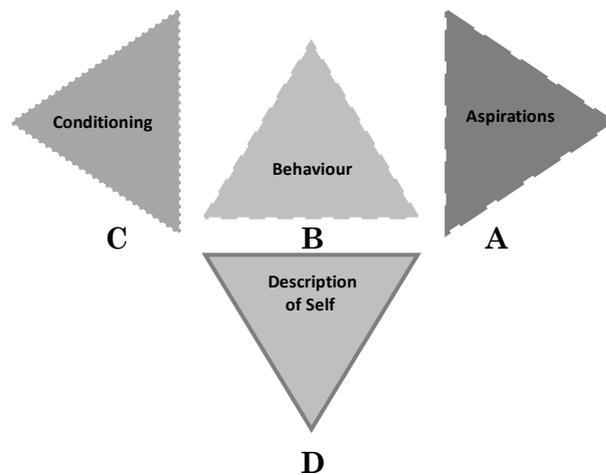
Even as one of the instinctively successful 15% himself, he recognised that with an in-depth understanding of the concepts you gain the ability, and opportunity, to apply the techniques deliberately, and thereby accelerate your progress towards your objectives.

## My 'ABC' model

I created the 'ABC' model to help my clients recognise that, if they wanted to be happier, or improve some aspect of their life, then making successful and lasting change was "as easy as ABC".

The model helps them to look at the interactions between their Aspirations, their current Behaviour, their Conditioning and their Description of themselves.

There are inevitably a great many concepts that interact with each other in the complex field of Cognitive Psychology and I found it hard to present them in a coherent form until I developed the 'ABC' model.



At a simple level the model helps you understand the need to address the underlying reasons that you get 'stuck' at your current levels of performance. I am convinced that when you understand and apply the concepts for yourself you will have a far better chance of achieving the changes and improvements that you hope for.

## Aim higher – with confidence

One more key insight for you to appreciate is that it is vital to realise how much you limit your successes if you set your goals based on what you already know 'how to' achieve. Many people feel it is 'unrealistic' to set goals without seeing how it is possible to achieve them.

One very successful managing director, who has employed me to teach these concepts to a succession of six leadership teams in different (and highly profitable) businesses, refuses to allow the word 'realistic' in the boardroom because he fully appreciates the significance of this insight.

You need to understand the function of a filter system in your brain called the Reticular Activating System (RAS).

The RAS is a net-like group of cells that acts like a good executive secretary - it screens out the junk mail, whatever you do not need to see, or know about, at that time. The implication of this is that the environment holds a mass of potentially useful information of which you are blissfully unaware. You can actually look at it without seeing it.

Your senses are bombarded by far more information than you can, or need to, acknowledge at the conscious level. At times, as we saw from the cognitive dissonance examples, you may need to screen out reality from your conscious awareness; at other times it might be of real value to be more aware of the information potentially available to you.

The advertisement that perhaps caught your eye this morning has probably been in your paper every day. The reason you would not have seen it before is that until now you had no need of the item advertised.

The more clearly you know what it is that you are seeking, the easier it is for the RAS to scan for it.

## Setting your mental satnav

### The key points:

*You have accumulated thoughts about yourself with your self-talk throughout your life.*

*These have established a multifaceted self-image.*

*You have a comfort zone around each element of your self-image and are at your free-flowing best when within it.*

*When out of your comfort zone you will instinctively seek to return to it as soon as possible.*

*Your free-flowing performance will be a reflection of your self-image – so if you want a sustainable and progressive change in your performance, you need to change your self-image and its corresponding comfort zone (preferably with an instinctive and comfortable process).*

*As your performance continues to improve, you may need a coach to check whether your subconscious self-efficacy has increased – and stretch your goal, if appropriate.*

The next section describes how your beliefs, expectations, habits and attitudes may be the cause of your being stuck in a rut, or being unable to move forward to use more of your potential.

Understanding about the impact of your many comfort zones will complete the picture of what will hold you back (unless you know how to overcome these natural restraints).

Until now, when wanting to improve on your own personal or sporting performance, it is probable that you will have been focused on that performance rather than on the barriers to your progress and other underlying issues.

In your life, or your career, you may have seen temporary changes, or improvements in performance, before standards have dropped back to their previous level. New Year's resolutions are a classic example of this.

The key to understanding this trend, and reversing it, is to appreciate the link between your performance and your self-image. Your subconscious has a multifaceted picture of you, and of how well you typically perform your routine tasks and hobbies.

For sanity, your subconscious will keep your performance in line with your expectations. In other words it will ensure that you act 'like you', even though that standard of performance may be well below your potential.

That is why, when people start to make progress towards a new performance level, the rate of improvement so often slows down, or grinds to a halt, and before long they steadily revert back to their 'usual' performance.

If you want sustainable improvements the best way is to change your self-image first, thereby adjusting your comfort zone, and then let the improvements gradually and incrementally follow.

## **Releasing your handbrake**

### **The key points:**

*Your capacity to see options and opportunities is often restricted by your conditioning (especially your beliefs).*

*When you are 'stuck', or not progressing, the root cause will almost certainly be found in one or more of a combination of four elements.*

*Spotting your own 'Creative Avoidance' will alert you to the presence of either a counterproductive attitude or a sense of coercion.*

*Most coaches work in a way that does not access the unconscious beliefs, attitudes, fears, or expectations of their clients.*

*To ensure you are fully committed to your optimum success, and are free of subconscious sabotage, you may need a coach who has been trained to work at the level of your unconscious thoughts and beliefs.*

When I suggest that what restricts your progress is a blend of these four elements - your beliefs, expectations, habits, and attitudes - it may sound as if they would be easy for you to change.

However, as they are tucked away in your subconscious, and have a great deal to do with how you behave in an instinctive way, it is not always easy to identify the ones that need changing as opposed to the ones that are helping you.

Some of the elements combine to trigger a counterproductive trait, 'Creative Avoidance', that clients tell me is one of the most significant concepts they have gained from my workshops.