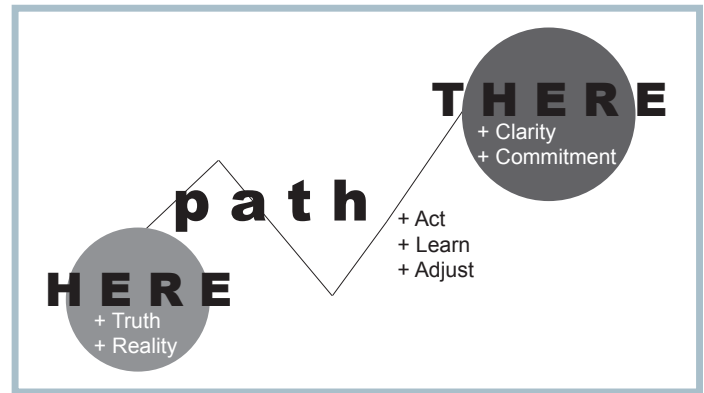


THE FRAMEWORK OF LIFE



There-Here-Path

THERE–HERE–PATH (THP) is the basic structure for how life works. We are motivated by an imagined future, a vision (THERE), requiring us to take stock of our current reality in relation to that vision (HERE) and make steps toward the achievement of that vision (PATH). This simple process of motivation, evaluation, and action is the foundation for all we do.

How Life Works

- I want to have good smelling breath (**T**). My breath stinks (**H**). I'll chew this piece of gum (**P**).
- Our family wants to go to Niagara Falls (**T**). We live in Nevada (**H**). We buy a map and load the car and start driving northeast (**P**).
- Our organization wants to make money (**T**). We have an idea and skilled professionals (**H**). We manufacture a product consumers will want to buy and we market it (**P**).

3 Ways to Use THP

1. htp

- **A problem-solving approach:** Everything else is clouded, blinded, and stunted until we get out of the destructive reality we are in. Our there is determined to be the absence of our current reality.
- Ex: I hate it here in Nevada (**h**), I need to get out of here; let's go on vacation (**t**). How about Niagara Falls; I'll gas up the car (**p**).
- Ineffective if there is no transcendent vision: problem-solving leads us to neutral, not to purpose. In the absence of a purpose, we will find more/new problems.
- Can lead to the habit of exchanging one problem for another (death of loved one leads to substance abuse, etc.) – a sort of whack-a-mole existence where you are constantly trying to subvert new symptoms rather than address underlying causes.

2. thp

- **PATH Tool:** helps us to reach milestones and goals. But leaves us wondering “what next?”
- Ex: I've always wanted to go to Niagara Falls; it is on my bucket list (**t**). We live all the way in Nevada (**h**). Let's just do it; I'll gas up the car (**p**).
- **Act-Learn-Adjust:** Where are our goals leading us? We need to evaluate and adjust to make sure our goals are leading to purpose.

2. THP

- **Transcendent:** We call this version of THP “the creative process” because it is about doing/being/ making something for its own end. The buck stops here. This is the true purpose. The end of the line. A Transcendent THERE is not, ultimately, about accomplishment. It falls under the category of “the journey is the destination”.
- **Mission-Driven:** The motivation is about participating in our deepest values/vision.
- Ex: I want to experience the beauty of the world (T). We live in Nevada and I've always dreamed of witnessing the beauty of Niagara Falls (H). I'll gas up the car (P).

There

There are 2 things you need to have a good THERE:

- **Clarity:** Needs to be brief: think slogan not soliloquy. If you can't memorize it, it is too long.
- **Commitment:** If it is not based on our truest/deepest values, we will bail when things get tough. Has to be something we can fervently commit to.

Me THERE vs. We THERE

- We usually frame our options as “us versus them”. The truth is what is beneficial for the individual and the collective are not mutually exclusive, but wholly interdependent on one another. A toxic vision is entirely insular. A healthy vision includes individuals and communities working in concert with one another.
- **Examples of Me THERE:** Seeking validation; Getting things my way; Receiving praise/credit; Feeling comfortable.
- **Examples of We THERE:** Provide a service for others; Foster a vibrant community; Understand the complexities of social justice; Share truth with others.

NOTES

Here

The majority of the tools we use are HERE tools. They cultivate an awareness of our HERE so that we can move towards our THERE with a true perspective.

- We are skilled at self-deception. The truth is too big for any of us to fully understand it. Therefore, HERE is actually the most difficult phase of THP.
- A false HERE grounds us in superficiality and falsity. We assume an inaccurate worldview; we are out of touch with reality. HERE is about aligning ourselves with reality, naming and accepting what is truly going on as best we can. In order to do so organizations must communicate truth as a value.
- Our HERE is constantly changing – it moves with every emotion and decision. Therefore, it needs constant evaluation, a humility-centric approach, and the tension of THERE to bring it into focus.

Path

This is how we get from *HERE* to *THERE*: Gazing toward our THERE, with an understanding of the realities of HERE, we set goals and reach milestones as we take steps toward our vision.

- **Goal Setting:** Goals are vitally important and should be set and pursued with intention. Goals ought to be **SMART**.

Specific: Clear and defined. “Lose weight” is not specific. “Lose 15 pounds is”. The more specific the goal, the more seriously we will take it. If a goal is vague, our pursuit of it will follow suit.

Measurable: Needs to be something you can tell whether you’ve succeeded or not. Transcendence is for the THERE; goals are practical. “I want to exercise” is not really measurable (how and when do you know it’s done?). “I want to work out every weekday for thirty minutes a day” sets an expectation wherein you can easily determine success or failure.

Achievable: Needs to be realistic. “I want to swim the Atlantic” is not a realistic goal and is so overwhelming you’ll never start. “I want to swim a mile” is.

Results Oriented: Needs to be based on your THERE. A goal of “I want to win the gold medal” doesn’t match with a vision of “I want to be a stay-at-home-dad”. Goals and vision need to align.

Time Bound: Needs an end date to force us to measure, and creates a boundary for us to pursue our goal within. “I want to lose thirty pounds” is not a Time Bound goal; as stated you could legitimately be working on it for fifty years! “I want to lose thirty pounds this year” helps set a time limit, which in turn allows you to evaluate and adjust your goals as necessary.

- **Measure Small & Measure Often:**
 - Keep your goals short and sweet. Evaluate if you achieved them (or not). And, whether or not you did, if the goal has moved you in the direction of your THERE. Measuring small and often helps keep us accountable and keep us on track.
 - A milestone is a larger goal; a significant checkpoint along the way.
- **Act-Learn-Adjust:** Set a SMART goal, chase it, learn from the experience, and then decide what goal to set next (based on the previous experience). Each time we act, our HERE changes and we learn more about the realities of pursuing our THERE. We need to be open to making adjustments so we continue to meet effective goals and milestones, as well as participate in our Transcendent THERE.
- There is not always *one* clear PATH in front of us, we may reach a crossroad where there are multiple paths to choose from. It is up to you to decide which path will most effectively move you closer to your THERE while also staying true to your organizational values

Do you have any specific goals you are currently pursuing or want to pursue? Why?

What are some examples of how you have already been using THP in your life this week? Which approach were you using - htp, thp, or THP?