

The FUTURE Series - XII

Family Unification Techniques: Unique Relationship Enhancement

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QUICK-ACCESS TENSION REDUCER

Along with the more time-consuming 6-step process detailed in Representation Enhanced Psychotherapy (REP), (see the web site, drbarrybricklin.com), it is useful to have a quick technique to reduce tension. This is especially important in situations where arguments are likely.

Every “brain representation” that enters your mind, whether the result of someone yelling at you or the result of your remembering a negative incident, is accompanied by a feeling of “approach the object represented,” “move away from it,” or “fight it.” Only the “toward” tendency is accomplished by pleasant emotions. The most unpleasant emotion occurs when there is a conflict among all three categories. This happens when someone is trying to maintain a “toward” attitude in relation to a represented object, but at the same time is attempting to fight and/or move away from it.

The “toward” tendency ranges from a little interesting, interesting, curious, to feelings at the higher end, positive excitement and physical pleasure. In the middle would be feelings of wonderment or delight.

The following steps will access the toward-tendency. Your MHP will explain the mechanism of “anchoring.” This mechanism will allow you to practice these steps at your leisure, but by anchoring them to certain body-states, call them into action very quickly.

Many of the FUTURE techniques, the Family Council, Non-Adversary Communication and so forth, will work much more quickly when you are relatively calm.

If you are not scientifically inclined, remember the short account given in Future XI; you are actually accessing a “toward” attitude toward your own mind/body representations of any represented object, not the “real” object represented.

1. The first step is designed to get the maximum tension reduction from your muscular-skeletal system. *Fully extend your spinal column by using a head-extension movement we will demonstrate. Achieve maximum shoulder alignment.*

2. This step aims to delay any quick overt responses. Quick responses are almost always negative. Say to yourself: *With patience and courage I can delay any response to this situation until I have completed these steps. Arrange your facial muscles to reflect patience and courage.*

3. This step accesses a toward-attitude. Simple as it may sound, the easiest way to do this is with your facial muscles. *Arrange them as they would be if you were interested in something—not ‘in love with it,’ ‘or even ‘glad to see it,’ just interested. Also, say these words to yourself: ‘Is there something I can learn from this... or wonder about... or be curious about?’* Arrange your facial muscles as you imagine they would be if they expressed the following attitude. I can be courageously open and accepting about *everything* I am thinking and feeling.

Use the next two steps if you are caught up in a real heavy-duty argument.

4. Say to yourself: *‘I can totally and completely accept what I am feeling but I need not show these feelings in my face or voice.’*

5. See the FUTURE items on Inner Shouting and the Anger-Hurt-Fear Triangle, XIII. If you are really upset with the other person, express your thoughts and feelings with these sentences:

- (1) Here is what’s going on at my “anger” level.
- (2) Here is what’s going on at my “hurt” level.
- (3) Here is what’s going on at my “fear” level.

6. Negative emotional states can be triggered by anything that creates conflict among the motor tendency to go toward something, away from it, or against it. Even “away from” or “against” can be healthy responses, although neither will be accompanied by pleasant emotions. However, they are only suitable in situations where they are deployed for short periods of time AND they are not accessed in relation to a situation that you must continually deal with, since this requires “toward.” In other words, it would be useless to try to go “away from” someone you must continually deal with, or “against” someone you otherwise love and choose to remain with. “Away from” and “against” were biologically designed to deal with objects you can either successfully run away from or kill within a relatively brief time span.