

# "The Big Pick"

OR

"HOW TO BREAK THE ICE CAREFULLY FOR  
PARTICIPANTS IN THE KOSCIUSKO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY"

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# T A P P

TO ACTIVATE POTENTIAL THROUGH PLANNING

NOT T-GROUPING OR THERAPY

BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION

"WE ARE MENTALLY HEALTHY PERSONS"

AWARENESS OF SELF & STRENGTHS

## Goals

1. GETTING TO KNOW SELF & OTHERS BETTER
2. POSITIVE THINKING
3. PRACTICE IN LISTENING SKILLS
4. COMPARISONS
5. I'M O.K. - YOU'RE O.K.

## Ground Rules

1. NO NEGATIVES - POSITIVES ONLY
2. SHARE ONLY WHAT YOU WISH TO SHARE -  
PASS IF YOU WISH
3. I WON'T ASK YOU TO DO OR SHARE ANYTHING  
I WON'T DO OR SHARE FIRST.

## SUCSESSES: "I CANNES"

Behavioral scientists agree that the average person is functioning at less than 10 percent of his potential. A person with a negative self-image certainly functions at much less than 10 percent.

There are a number of reasons involved in the "whys" of this minimal use of an individual's potential. Some of the "whys" are known; some are in the category of theorized, possible answers; and still other reasons, perhaps, will never be fully understood.

One of the thoughts that lodges in the "possibility" category involves influences of negativism in our contemporary society. There is no question that "constructive criticism" has played, and will continue to play, a part in positive growth and learning of individuals and of institutions. However, we find ourselves at a time and place where negativism--"mocking" criticism, reporting of the weaknesses, etc.--are the rule rather than the exception. One might wonder how healthy this is for an individual and for a total society.

We are coming to realize that every child is born with the unlimited potential to become and to achieve, but that as the child grows older his self-concept is often damaged by negative comments about his behavior from people who are meaningful to the child. The self-image resulting from negative feedback can lead to fear of failure and to non-action, thereby creating doubt within the child about his own competence.

Often, this doubt originates within the home as children begin to explore their environment. Parents tell them, "Don't touch that," or "Don't eat that", or "Don't say that." Many things the child has an urge to do are "no-no's". Children ask questions of their parents. The questions and the answers are important for the children. But they are told to go play or wait until later. They are forbidden to do this or that, on the basis that they're not capable of doing it right, or without injuring themselves. Parents induce a feeling of inferiority in the child. They tell friends "Johnny doesn't talk much because he's shy." Johnny hears this and believes that he really is shy.

When a child enters school the negative feedback usually increases. Some teachers believe that only a small proportion of their students is going to be bright. The rest, they assure themselves, are going to be dull or just average. This is the tyranny of the bell-shaped curve.!

Even with good intentions, we create doubts in the minds of children about their capabilities. Questions like "How come you don't pay attention like Bill does?" do not motivate a child toward "I canness". Instead the child may begin to doubt his ability to pay attention. Because this statement tends to be destructive to a 'capable' self-image, he may give up trying. What we need to do is to give the child affirmative feedback about his ability instead of raising doubts in his mind. We should be encouraging the child, e.g. "Come on, Billy, I know you can pay attention. I'll help, if you try."

Successes: "I Canness", page 2

If we are to help motivate others, we must firmly believe that every person possesses unlimited potential. The potential of two persons may be in different areas, but each has individual areas of unlimited potential. This potential can be tapped if specific attention is given to responding to each person in ways that build self-image.

The beginnings of "I canness" develop in a child through encouragement and support in a new experience. Realistic expectations on the part of parents and significant others, followed by action and resulting in a successful experience, move the activity or goal from "You can do it" to "I can do it." This becomes a reaffirmation of my strengths on the basis of my action and the successful accomplishment of the new experience.

If as a society we began to focus on meaningful productive goal-setting, involving an affirmative attitude about ourselves and about others, the 10 percent usage of potential could expand to 30 or 40 percent more. This would involve development of the skills and the wherewithal to say: "This is what is important to me--I value this activity (or goal) and my behavior is an affirmation of what I believe is important." In addition, individually and collectively as a society, we must encourage and positively affirm others' successful attempts at clarifying and acting positively in activities and decisions based upon what is of value to them.

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## SUCCESS ANALYSIS

One of the first steps to a more successful life is to stop exploring your negative past--your mistakes and failures. Instead, begin to explore and build upon your successes and achievements.

Most people restrict the use of their own potentialities. We are taught throughout our life to assimilate attitudes that limit our growth and effectiveness. These attitudes are taught in our homes, our schools and most of our religious institutions. These attitudes were pointed out extremely well in a conversation between Alice and the Mad Hatter in Wonderland.

ALICE: Where I come from, people study what they are NOT good at in order to be able to do what they ARE good at.

MAD HATTER: We only go around in circles here in Wonderland; but we always end up where we started. Would you mind explaining yourself?

ALICE: Well, grown-ups tell us to find out what we did wrong, and never to do it again.

MAD HATTER: That's odd! It seems to me that in order to find out about something, you have to study it. And when you study it, you should become better at it. Why should you want to become better at something, and then never do it again? But please continue.

ALICE: Nobody ever tells us to study the right things we do. We're only supposed to learn from the wrong things. But we are permitted to study the right things OTHER people do. And sometimes we're even told to copy them.

MAD HATTER: That's cheating!

ALICE: You're quite right, Mr. Hatter. I do live in a topsy-turvy world. It seems like I have to do something wrong first, in order to learn from that what not to do. And then, by not doing what I'm not supposed to do, perhaps I'll be right. But I'd rather be right the first time wouldn't you?

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## STRENGTHS

A strength is any skill, talent, ability or personal trait which helps the individual express himself or function more effectively within his environment. Strengths are power-power to act in a variety of areas: physical, intellectual, creative, emotional and vocational. An exhaustive listing of strengths would be almost impossible, for a person's potential is virtually boundless.

Heredity has some, and probably negligible, influence on personal strengths as here defined. The actualization or full development of the strength is profoundly dependent upon environmental forces. Interaction with significant others (social environment) is the first and most important environmental factor influencing strength development. This social interaction shapes the person's self-concept. Parental attitudes of love and attention are the first affirmation of the child's worth.

Exposure to "strength situations" is the second most critical environmental factor. The child with an innate artistic ability for sculpture, for example, cannot develop or even recognize this strength if he never learns that there is such a thing as sculpture, or if he never tries his hand at it. The social/psychological situation can suppress a strength into latency, or it can call forth a strength into potency.

Society's evaluation of the particular strength is the third critical environmental factor. A child will not work to develop a strength or to actualize a potential unless he feels that it is important or desirable to do so. It is social value internalization. What was once an external pressure or cue, is internalized to become a desire--what others say and think, to internal--what I think, and I want to become. People are dependent upon others for awareness of their reality. Some people will remain vulnerable to the changing judgments of those around them; others grow to be less susceptible to these judgments. An individual may have accepted one definition or evaluation of himself from society; and later adapt it and improve upon it until this self-concept is very much his own. He is no longer pliant clay to be molded by just anyone. He is not, however, blind to the expectation or opinions of others, nor has he withdrawn into apathy or flared into defiant rebellion. He simply balances his own self-concept against the concepts others hold of him. He has discovered a happy medium between personal freedom and responsiveness to others. His strengths have permitted him to become fulfilled in his own right.

A cardinal principle of the M.A.P. is that all individuals have solid strengths, many of which are presently unidentified and unused. If one can assist an individual in: (1) identifying present strengths and strength potentials; (2) further development of these strengths; and (3) restructuring "weaknesses" into strengths, he can enable the person to enhance his own freedom to choose the self he will become.

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A. Background -

B. Comfort Spot

1 2

3 4 E) Successes & Strengths

Early

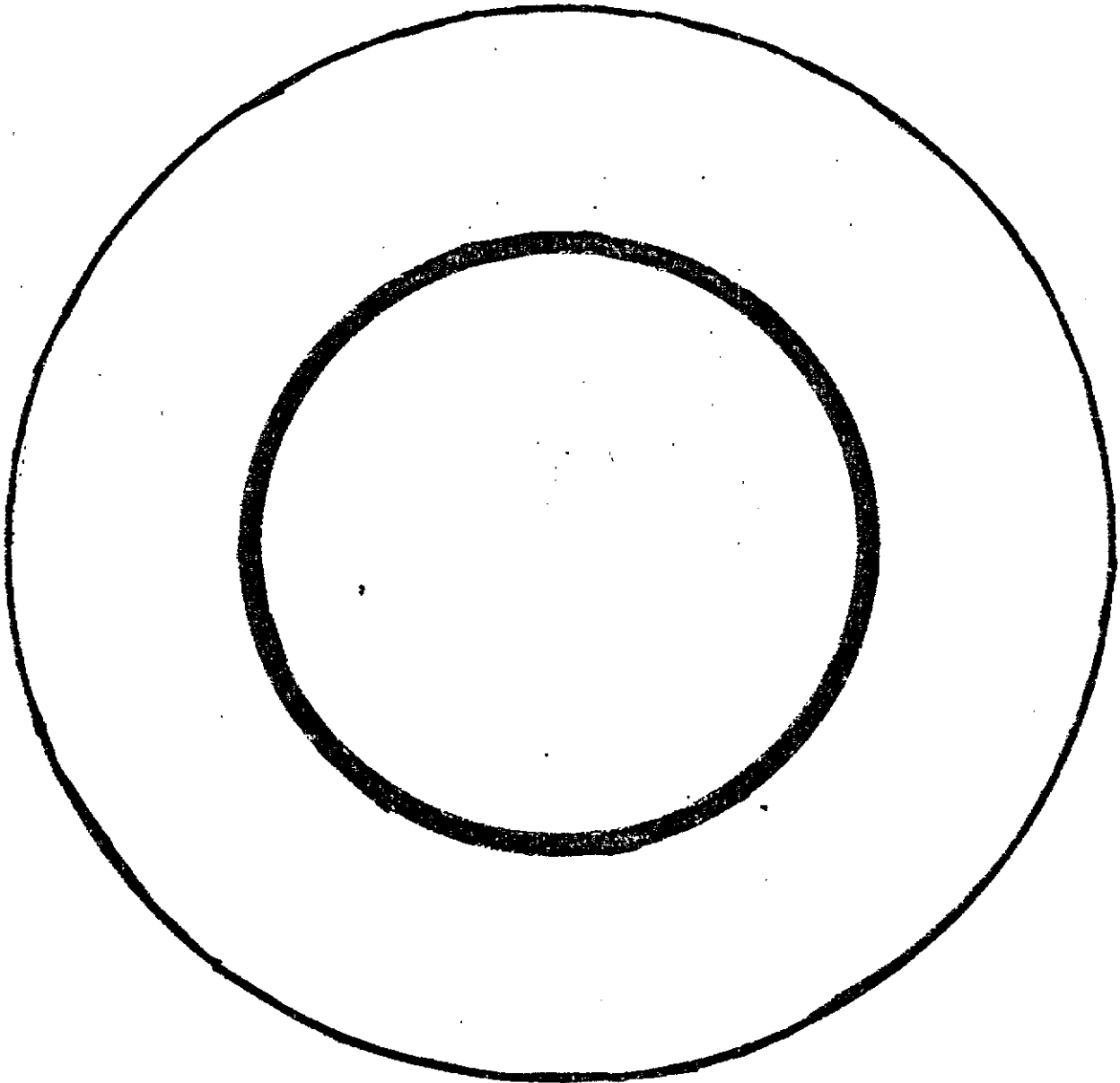
adult

recent

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Motto

"Strengths"

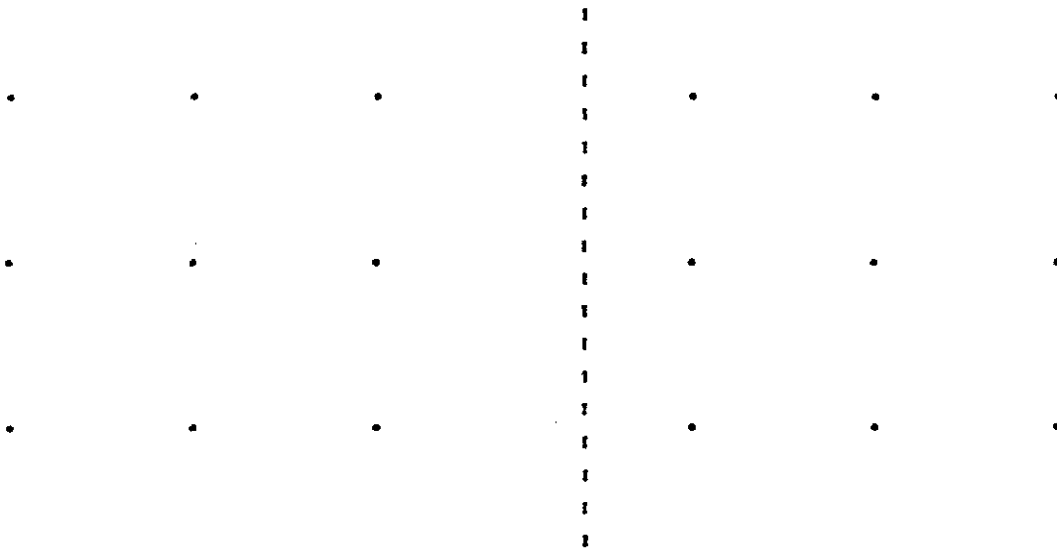


## THE NINE-DOT PUZZLE

Many of us suffer from a boxed-in feeling. This is the feeling that a lid has been nailed down on one's opportunities to grow.

Below is a revealing test that exposes the boxed-in feeling for what it is. Unless you are the one out of a thousand that can solve it, it will be of great help to you.

In the space below are two sets of nine dots:



The test calls for you to join all nine dots with four straight lines without taking your pencil from the paper. You have two chances. You are urged to use both of them, taking all the time you need.

BEYOND THE NINE DOTS

By John Fallon

. . . . . a funny thing about these dots,  
They make one want to scream.  
The symptoms of a pragmatist,  
Who learned not how to dream.

The squares and obtuse triangles,  
That represent a "shot"  
Are lessons of the why of it,  
And surely not why not.

The "inside" represents what is,  
The "outside" what could be.  
The people who can deal with them,  
Are futurists to me.

A matter of perception some,  
Have said the key to be.  
The ultimate: survival for,  
The whole world--you and me.

Be careful of this little game,  
Not subject to a con.  
It can't be solved with beauty,  
Talk, degrees, or tricks, or brawn.

I'll listen to your nervous laughs,  
And watch your perplexed look.  
The answer, though, to this brief game,  
Knows no solution book.

Of those who try there are so few,  
Who solve it with one mark.  
Which makes me think the outlook is,  
Quite frightening and stark.

What will you do about these dots,  
From whence you leave your room?  
The hope is that you'll work quite hard,  
To savor hope from gloom.

JAF:em