

## Moods, Feelings, Work

There is not one of us who doesn't take our feelings seriously. As human beings, job satisfaction (indeed, life satisfaction) is critically importance to us. Working with businesses and organisations over a number of years, one topic that crops up repeatedly is moods, emotions, and feelings within the workplace. This is not surprising because this one aspect of human experience is with us forever. And the moods, emotions and feelings of others have a great impact on our work and personal lives...

The affects of feelings are often a mystery to us. Feelings seem to have a life of their own; until we understand the role they play in our lives and more imperceptibly; *their origin*. For the purpose of this article let's consider *emotions* and *feelings* as the same. *Moods*, on the

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other hand, are a sustained level of the same feeling state. By way of example, we would consider someone who is critical of life on a sustained basis as surly. And we might consider someone who exhibits buoyancy most of the time resilient or optimistic. In my experience, negative moods usually come to the fore - I hear variations of "the way they spoke infuriated me, so I walked away", as if the *circumstance* is the source of anger and behaviour; as illustrated below:

**Circumstance (comment) » Feeling (anger) » Behaviour (walking away)**

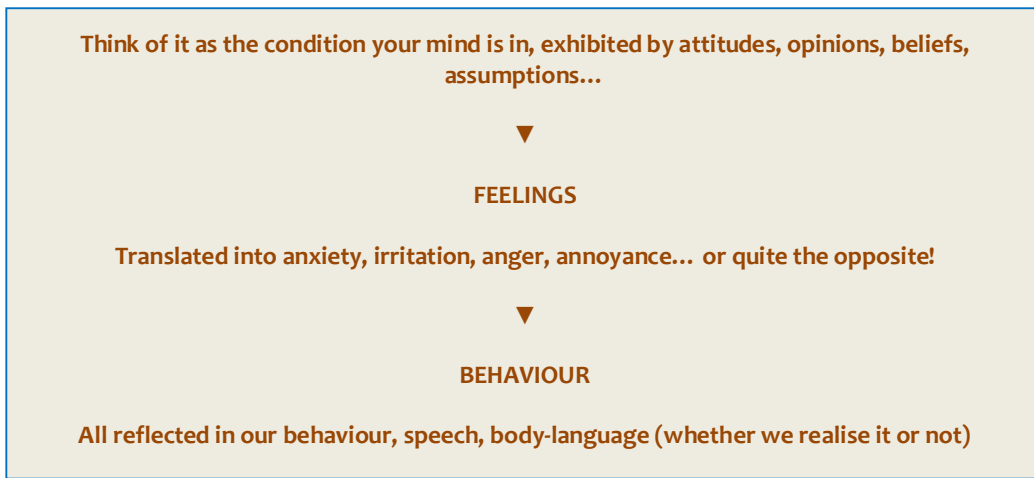
Another variation, one that many of us can relate to, is "Hey George, we're in for a bad day. Frank (the foreman) is in one of his moods again!". As if *Frank's mood* is the source of us having a bad day.

**Circumstance (Frank's mood) » Feelings (anxiety) » Behaviour (poor relations)**

Interestingly, our personal experience seems to confirm this to be the truth of the matter - it really does look as if a derogatory comment is the cause of our anger. It looks as if a surly foreman can and does create a workplace where people walk on eggshells. It is hard to see our experience in any other way, because the life of circumstance is so real for us - feelings are so immediate and raw that it is hard to see that the cause is not an 'outside-in' affair.

Yet, it is our opinions, beliefs, judgements, assumptions and attitudes about life, people and events that reveal our state of mind. For example, we may have a strong stance that certain language should not be used at work and when we hear it, our irritation reflects our stance. The level of our reactive feelings will only reflect how seriously we hold the stance. Similarly, we notice that a work colleague appears to be upset and immediately we duck for cover or try to comfort him or her. Our reaction is immediate and however we react, it is influenced by our memory and conditioned thinking. And of course, our memory and conditioned thinking is simply our state of mind at work in that moment...

### State of Mind



The above explanation seems logical and yet, our experience seems different. It still appears that circumstances do create our feelings and reactions. Pib suggests that just the opposite is true. Why are our circumstances so influential, so real to us? And when a group of people experience the same reaction, it is especially significant for us; seemingly validating our feelings... whether the reaction is avoidance, irritation or kind-hearted offers of help. This article proposes to you that, whatever the circumstance, it is our thinking or state of mind that manifests our reality. Whatever our thinking (in the form of attitudes, beliefs and opinions); it looks and feels like how life really is. A person's thinking and their experience of reality are one. It is the only access to reality that we have as human beings.

There is a seamless flow between our thinking, personal reality and our feelings. Behaviour is just the end product of an inner process.

Each human being has the creative energy to bring alive their personal reality. I think my reality each moment and the form of my thinking creates the feelings I experience. That creative energy is within all of us. It is how our personal lives are created, and this unseen power to bring into being our seamless reality is the Principle of THOUGHT. Thought is formless. Its energy enables us to manifest the form (our attitudes, opinions, beliefs and our personal reality).

All Principles are an inclusive and exclusive explanation to the way things are - how LIFE is for us as humans. It is the Principle of THOUGHT that enables us to create whatever stance, belief, view or opinion we have about the way life is. The consequence is that these views and stances once created are mirrored by our feelings. This is not to say that, in the workplace, there is not a quality of behaviour that is required to enable better communication and more harmony. Clearly, certain language and behaviour makes for a better work environment. However, the spoken or unspoken rules are only a reflection of our societal state of mind - perhaps only indicative of a confused and cluttered collective mind, mirrored by negative feelings and behaviour.

### Seeing from the Inside Out

What is happening when we can or cannot see that it is our state of mind that's determining our work and personal lives? How do we explain the fact that sometimes we are not affected by a work colleague who is in a grumpy mood? What is happening when I am the only one in the office that gets bent out of shape by a colleague's behaviour "Am I the only one that sees the behaviour as a problem?!" Why do I sometimes blame the external world of circumstance for the way I feel while at other times find a positive and effortless way forward in exactly the same circumstance?

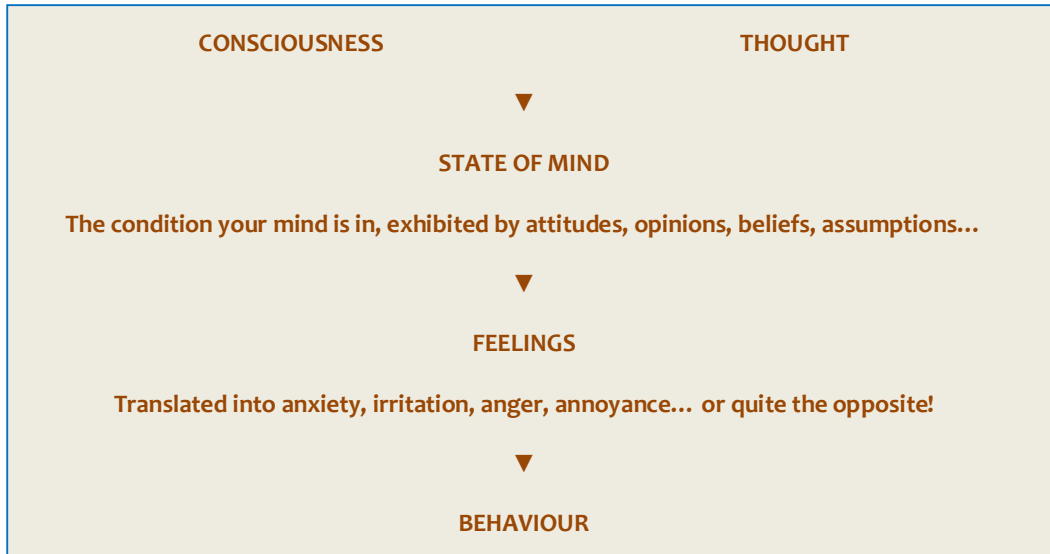
More puzzling to me personally is that some behaviours and attitudes no longer concern me, yet a year ago I would have been enraged and so reactive to them. Somehow, I do not take the behaviour and attitudes of others so personally now. It seems that I am just more able to handle it and be calm enough to find ways of relating to people more positively. This is a mystery that I suspect most people ponder from time to time.

We all know that we experience our lives. There is a KNOWING within each of us that we are alive and experience our life. We take it for granted so much of the time, possibly all the time. Again there is an inner Principle at work. Some call this 'just knowing that I am alive', self-awareness or consciousness. This Principle of Consciousness has human beings experience their lives from moment to moment. This FORMLESS KNOWING that we live and experience LIFE.

There is another aspect to our experience of life, an intangible knowing or Consciousness. There is a level of UNDERSTANDING within people that they can SEE that their state of mind, their personal attitudes, stances and thinking determines how they experience LIFE.

When we are Conscious in this way, we are able to see the PRINCIPLE OF THOUGHT ... see *that we think* and so when we form attitudes, beliefs, and stances we UNDERSTAND that we are creating our personal lives from within. The connection between our life, our personal reality and our state of mind that determines our personal experiences is UNDERSTOOD from within.

The PRINCIPLE OF CONSCIOUSNESS coupled with the PRINCIPLE of THOUGHT coalesce in a seamless and natural process within each of us to create our lives as seen below...



...all of which are reflected in our behaviour, speech and body-language (whether we realise it or not). When we have no appreciation of the power of our thinking to determine our experience of life, we will always be a victim to thinking, or state of mind. Conversely, when we understand the true nature of our thinking or state of mind, we understand our experience and can move through life in a conscious way.

**TABLE 1.** How state of mind impacts the work world via the Principles of THOUGHT and CONSCIOUSNESS.

Circumstance	Feeling	Behaviour	Level of Understanding
Not meeting monthly business targets.	Anxious or stressed: wants to leave the job because the boss demands too much.	Begins to search for other job opportunities.	Has no understanding that state of mind influences feelings.
Not meeting monthly business targets.	Anxious or stressed: feels the targets are unfair/unobtainable. Takes it all very personally.	Becomes insecure and reactive. May seek validation from others.	There is some notion that feelings or state of mind relate to thinking but will attempt to validate them rather than see beyond the distress.
Not meeting monthly business targets.	Anxious or stressed: takes ownership of the insecurity felt.. translates it to 'it's just me' or 'I just need to calm down'.	Resorts to Affirmations... 'I am confident and self empowered'.	Has seen the connection between feelings and insecure thinking. However, sees Affirmations as a way to change or implant other feelings.
Not meeting monthly business targets.	Anxious or stressed: recognises that those feelings are just 'in the moment' and allows for 'state of mind'.	Calms down and phones James to see if he is interested in this month's deal.	Has a clear understanding that feelings directly relate to state of mind. Is able to move beyond that moment and get on with the job at hand.

**TABLE 1** shows the same circumstances in place and the same feeling state. However, there are four levels of understanding about the nature of feelings. Person One has little understanding that his state of mind influences feelings and hence, his CONSCIOUSNESS is low. By contrast, Person Four sees the direct link between his feelings and his state of mind, sees no need to change his thinking (unlike Person Three) and has a higher level of consciousness than the other three.

Person Four understands the inner creative nature of THOUGHT and CONSCIOUSNESS to create their personal experience of life. There is an inner understanding that the other three do not have and therefore, life is lived from a deeper perspective - more grounded or centred. More to the point, their feelings reflect inner strength or inner contentment no matter what the circumstances. It isn't that they are saints and don't get upset! For them however, there is a deeper presence of LIFE reflected in their daily lives most of the time.

## Living Gracefully from the Inside Out

We have all met people who have an 'inner connection' and reflect this connection via graceful living. There was a woman I knew a number of years ago that had many life circumstances that all of us would consider painful; even tragic. She had five children and was pregnant with another child. Two years after giving birth to Josh, a beautiful little boy, he died in his sleep one night. Within twelve months her middle son, Michael, was drowned during a fishing trip with his father and within the same year of this tragedy, two other children were killed in a car accident.

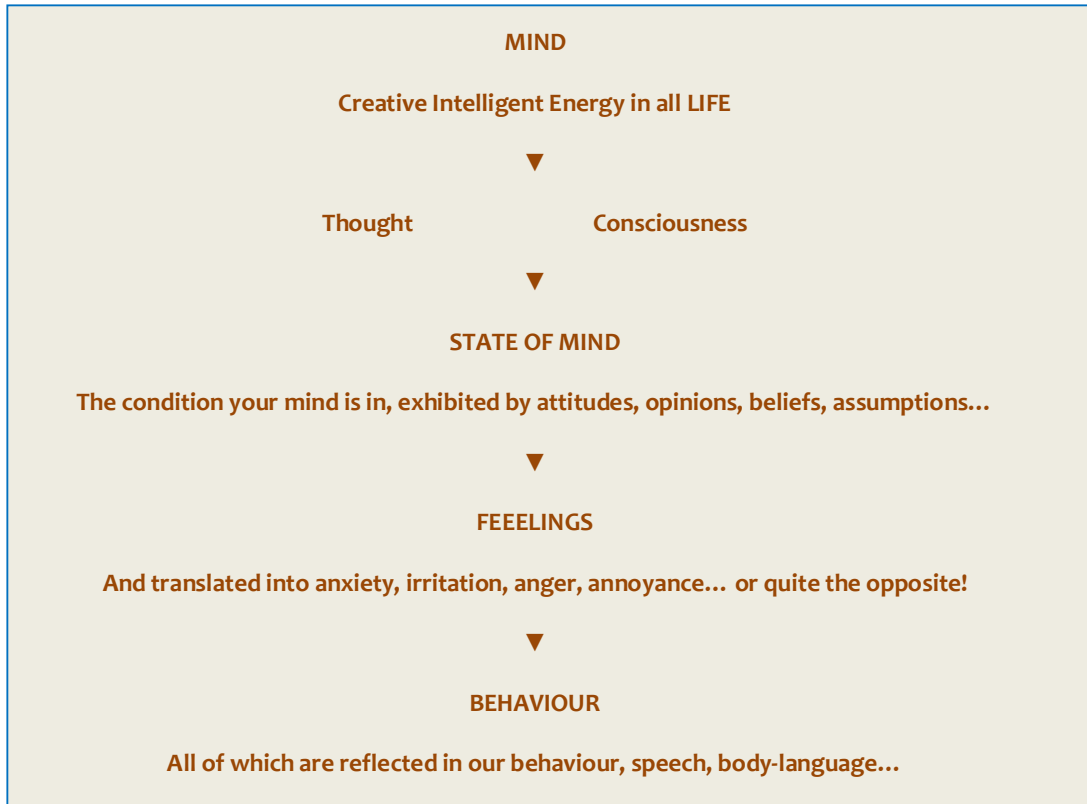
One has to meet Kerry, the children's mother, to really appreciate the genuine depth of this woman. She felt the tragedy, the loss and the heartbreak - and at the same time was able to see a bigger picture. "Kerry digs deep and God only knows how she does it!" her best friend told me. Kerry didn't deny her loss or push her feelings away. However, there was a powerful human experience being revealed to those around her. She once told me "I am thankful for my children, even though it was for a short while. I don't regret being part of their life."

I am sure we all have met or at least heard of people, like Kerry, who dig deep - able to see something bigger in life. Life itself maybe. We are all able to live lives like Kerry, once we understand and appreciate a deeper inner reality. She is what many would describe as a simple countrywoman. Not dumb, not intellectual, but a woman who can manage a large family with ease, contribute to the local CWA as chairperson, take part in reading groups at the local school and be on the tuckshop roster once a week. In addition to being a mum and a wife she contributed greatly to the local community. Her family, school and local community were her workplace, with all the hassles and drama of any workplace you care to name. So what is it that enabled Kerry to live at ease with life for most of the time, and be so responsive to her workplace? Happy and resilient to life's dramas? What is it that enabled inner resilience and contentment?

There is LIFE in each of us, an energy that is creative, sustaining, animating every moment. There is a dynamic energy within each of us and we experience this CREATIVE LIFE ENERGY when we live free from our congested state of mind. When we are freed from the obstruction of our views about how LIFE should be we live more CONSCIOUS lives; dwelling less on what we think and seeing *that we think*. Kerry could have gone into self-pity and depression, and no one would have blamed her. Yet, she chose to see *that we think*.

We all have 'a beautiful mind', one that has the capacity to create doom and gloom - or the opposite - via the resilient energy called LIFE.

Call this energy: LIFE, MIND, CHI, GOD, INTELLIGENT LIFE FORCE... whatever we call it, we are all capable of getting in its way, interrupting the living of our lives filled with energy, resilience and possibility. We all want to live a life of possibility, especially at work - and when we see LIFE from this deep place within us we feel a powerful connection to a creative intelligence within us. This inner power is ordinary, powerful and enhancing to others and us.



## Closing Comments

When we live our lives CONSCIOUSLY our feelings indicate how noble life is. When we are lost in opinion, judgements, views of how life should be, then our feelings indicate how lost we are in our conditioning, our past and memory. Our feelings are the compass to our state of mind and level of consciousness - our awareness *that we think* our very lives. Life is a full contact sport, as they say, and within each of us there are three powerful hidden energies (Principles) that create our daily lives. Circumstances are just what life presents to each of us and we can dig deep and see from this deeper perspective. Or we can be lost in our 'what should be'...

The workplace, like life itself, is innocent. How we experience it is simply our ability to forget that we are creating that experience from within. Our beautiful creative minds have the power to bring to life our feelings, and it is our responsibility to remember that our feelings are only reflecting our state of mind - brought to life via the power of THOUGHT and CONSCIOUSNESS.

LIFE is responsive, nurturing and powerfully resilient in the face of circumstances. We can live our day-to-day experience blaming the world of circumstances or we can dig deep within us and be prepared to step back from what I call 'lostness' - our certainty of what we know.

Each of us gets lost in our own creation or our own personal reality. What is important is waking up and being willing to stay awake to the inner creative forces that make up our daily working and personal lives. When we have anxiety about our work colleagues, anger towards our boss, frustration with the lack of support - or become engaged with the many other dramas that make up our life, let's remember that these feelings are just a reflection of our inner world - our state of mind. Similarly, when we are thoughtful and compassionate to the distress of others and respectful of their unawareness, then our beautiful feelings will only be a reflection of our beautiful minds. ■ ■