

# **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Study Guide**

**The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R.  
Covey**

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# Summary

“The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People,” by Stephen R. Covey is a life-management guide book that lays out the pathway to optimum success, achievement and happiness. This book targets the many individuals who appear to be outwardly successful but who find themselves struggling with an inner hunger for more. The void that many experience calls out for personal contentment and effectiveness and for satisfying personal and professional relationships. Author Covey provides the pathway to achieve just that.

Covey describes “habit” has the “intersection of knowledge, skill and desire.” To begin, the author suggests that two paradigm shifts take place in order to attain the greatest benefit of the book. He asks that the reader doesn’t see the work as a book to be read and then put on the shelf. He asks that the book is read and re-read and that it becomes part of the reader’s life. He also asks that the reader become teacher and share what he or she learns with friends, family and colleagues.

Covey then devotes sections to each of the 7 Habits of Highly Efficient People. Habit 1 is “Be Proactive.” There are proactive and reactive people. A person who is proactive addresses problems without blame and finds solutions based on his core principles and values. Proactive Focus is positive energy that enlarges the Circle of Influence which comprises those things that people have most control over. Habit 2 is “Begin with the End in Mind.” Focusing on where you want to be and what you want to achieve will propel you to success as you start your journey toward effectiveness. Habit 3 is “Put First Things First,” is the mental creation of what you want to attain. Habit 4 is “Win-Win.” A proactive person with self-awareness and in touch with his deeply held principles and values will seek a win-win solution in dealing with others.

Habit 5 is “Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood.” It is impossible to understand and influence another person until you know yourself. Once you understand yourself, you’re ready to be understood. Habit 6 is “Synergize.” A synergistic environment empowers people to achieve the optimum success. Synergy means the “whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” Habit 7 is “Renewal.” Once you have achieved success in the six habits, you must continually maintain and renew the four dimensions of your nature – physical, spiritual, mental and social/emotional.

By centering on the correct principals and developing a balanced focus between doing and increasing our abilities to do, we are empowered and can flourish in creative effective, useful and peaceful lives.



# Inside Out

## Summary

Successful people often hunger for more – personal congruency and effectiveness that are necessary for healthy relationships. Success can be accompanied with losses in personal relationships. It's difficult to stay committed to personal goals. Marriages can fail and business relationships can falter.

To achieve success on a primary level, we must first understand our paradigms and how to make a paradigm shift. A paradigm is like a map. We all have two fundamental maps in our heads: the way we think things are and the way we would like them to be. Our behaviors and attitudes emanate from the assumptions we make. Trying to change is impossible without examining these paradigms. Every person thinks he or she is objective but that is rarely the case. By exploring our paradigms we can be far more objective. We can make superficial changes but if we want to make deep and lasting changes, we must work on our basic paradigms. Not all paradigm shifts are achieved overnight but once achieved it opens up new possibilities and new ways to see the world.

The Personality Ethic promises a quick fix and an easy ascension to one's goals and dreams. But that is just an illusion. It is not possible to shortcut the natural process. Corporate executives sometimes jump from one Personality Ethic to another leaving failure after failure in their wakes. People in positions of authority borrow personal strength from their positions and force their opinions on others – also known as bullying. Such practice fosters weakness in the individual, those he forces his opinions on, and his relationships in general. Allowing the other person to grow at his or her own pace involves being patient enough to assume a sense of self.

The Character Ethic is based on the concept that certain principles govern human effectiveness. These “laws” are just as certain and reliable as the laws of physics. An individual's paradigm emerges from their experiences and teachings. They are subjective in nature. Objective reality encompasses those fundamentals that are essential for human growth and personal happiness and success. They exist within all human beings and in most religions –fairness, integrity and honesty. There also exists a potential for growth and development within all of us. The more alignment with natural laws within a person the better they will be able to successfully function. The Personality Ethic promises a quick fix and an easy ascension to one's goals and dreams. But that is just an illusion. It is not possible to shortcut the natural process.

Shortcuts to success are a dime a dozen. But their shelf-life is short. Sometimes the way we see a problem, to see something that needs to be fixed, is the problem. Even if our first reaction is to disagree with other or an issue or defend ourselves against criticism, maybe there is some truth to the other side. Could our perceptions be the culprit? Perhaps deep down we see things differently than our conditioned self. The



Personality Ethic tells us there's an answer out there, a solution that will make people like us and understand us. The Personality Ethic leads us to see a distorted version of a problem and how we attempt to solve it.

The "inside-outside" process calls for private victories before public victories. Outside-in solutions are temporary and ineffective. A new level of thinking, a new paradigm based on effective human interaction is needed to solve problems. "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" addresses that need.

## **Analysis**

The author begins his work by introducing the reader to the complex topic of change and fundamental paradigm shifts that are necessary for success. He compares the Personality Ethic that gives false hope for quick change with the Character Ethic that pursues change on a slower-moving more permanent basis. It is only possible to effect change by digging deep within and connecting with your inner principles and values. Quick fixes are only temporary band-aids and have no real long-lasting impact. Character-driven traits like fairness and integrity are the drivers of real change.

The author is providing the fundamentals for real change which many people seek and fail to attain. He is giving the reader a dose of reality when he stresses that there are no quick-fixes that have any permanency. He is preparing the reader for a long process if the goal is true change. The need and desire for change are elements of humankind and, therefore, the hope that it engenders has appeal to everyone.

## **Vocabulary**

congruency, reprimanded, superficial, serendipitous, coalesce, rhetoric, duplicity, esoteric, intrinsic

# The 7 Habits – An Overview

## Summary

Our habits define us. They are often unconscious but they are consistent and constant. Habits are not impossible to break but doing so is a challenge. Changing habits makes us feel like we're giving up part of ourselves. A habit can be defined as, "the intersection of knowledge, skill and desire." Change of habits has to be motivated by a "higher purpose" and the individual must be willing to let go sacrificing the familiar "now" for the new and improved better "later." The 7 habits transition us on a Maturity Continuum from "dependence to independence to interdependence." We all start out dependent and grow to be independent. Then there's a point when we must realize that all of nature is interdependent in order for all its parts to survive and flourish. Dependence is the paradigm of "you," independence the paradigm of "I", and the paradigm of interdependence is "we."

The quick-fix culture places "independence" on a pedestal. Reaching independence promises liberation, self-assertion and doing your own thing. Interdependence is a maturation of this concept. An interdependent person is self-reliant and capable but he realizes that more can be accomplished through cooperation and team work. Two heads have always been better than one. Habits 1, 2 and 3 deal with self-mastery and 4, 5 and 6 deal with public victories that include team work and cooperation. Habit 7 is the habit of renewal. All seven habits are habits of effectiveness. However, effectiveness depends on balance – the P/PC Balance with "P" standing for production of desired results and "PC" standing for production capability.

There are three types of assets: physical, financial and human. Physical assets are your material possessions. Financial assets include money and investments and our ability to earn. Human assets are your relationships. When people fail to maintain a P/PC balance in their use of physical or financial assets in organizations, they decrease overall effectiveness. This balance is most important as it applies to customers and employees in an organization. In many organizations the focus is on the customer but management fails to focus on the people who serve the customers – their employees. The P/PC balance is essential for effectiveness.

To use this book effectively, focus on not seeing it as a book you read and put away. Read it and return to it often to expand your skill and knowledge. Secondly, read this book with the goal of sharing what you learn with others. Following the guidelines of the seven habits, you will find that your growth will be evolutionary first and revolutionary second. Your confidence will be increased in both personal and public victories. You will unleash the assets necessary to heal and improve relationships. Finally, with the seventh habit, you will be capable of effective interdependence.



## Analysis

Habits are entrenched in us. We are not even conscious that they're there because they become such a part of us. It is a challenge to break them but can be motivated by a "higher purpose" and there must be a willingness to be open to new possibilities. The 7 habits of effective people could be referred to as that "higher purpose."

The author is again prepping his readers for a lengthy process that will take hard work and determination. The individual who wants to achieve change has to recognize bad habits that are disguised as good ones. The author prepares the reader for that inevitable look in the mirror when, rather than asking who's the fairest in the land, he must look closely and see all the warts. Everyone needs that moment before the mirror in order to effect change.

## Vocabulary

superlative, procrastination, continuum, paradigm, interpersonal, validated



# Habit 1: Be Proactive

## Summary

Only man has self-awareness which is what makes him powerful over all things on earth and how we make important advancements. Self-awareness allows us to examine how we see ourselves. Without self-awareness we cannot understand others and our personal relationships are limited. The Social Mirror, or social paradigm, is the only vision we have of ourselves. It usually includes criticisms or observations we've heard about ourselves and bought into – “You're always late!” or “You eat like a horse!” There are three social maps. Genetic determination translates as characteristics or traits you've inherited. Psychic determination refers to the impact your parents had on you. Environmental determination refers to the elements of your current life.

In addition to self-awareness humans have imagination, conscience and will. Being proactive means taking initiative. Highly effective people take responsibility; they don't blame a situation or conditions for their behavior. In empowering the things that control us, we become reactive. Reactive people are often happy when the sun shines and not so happy when it rains. They are impacted by how well or poorly other people treat them. Reactive people are driven by emotions; proactive people are compelled to action by values. We all know of people who have faced impossible challenges yet are able to maintain emotional strength. Their integrity is inspiring. Times of struggle can create paradigm shifts. Tragedy and pain can give us a whole new frame of reference.

Our natural instinct is to act in the face of a problem or circumstance. Acting does not equate with being obnoxious or aggressive. Showing initiative is a positive behavior that can be helpful in one's career. “Solution selling” is an important element in business success. By honoring another's natural instinct to be proactive they are given a positive glimpse in the social mirror. It takes initiative to bring balance to P/PC effectiveness and to develop the seven habits. Proactivity is not synonymous with positive thinking. A proactive person faces reality and deals with the problem.

The problems we face fall into three categories: direct control, indirect control or no control. Direct control issues are solved by honing our habits. Indirect control problems are solved by changing our influence methodology. We have no influence on “no control problems” – something that the proactive person recognizes. Some people view proactivity as being pushy and aggressive. On the contrary, proactive people are smart, value driven, face reality and understand the solution that is needed.

Another way to distinguish one's Circle of Concern from one's Circle of Influence is to look for “be's and have's. The Circle of Concern is the focus with language like, “I'll be happy when I have a house,” or “If I had my degree...” Circle of Influence folks speak in terms like, “I can be successful,” or “I can be more loving.” In the latter approach, the person takes the onus for change upon himself. In the former, outside circumstances control the person's happiness and success.





While we have control over our actions, we don't have control over the consequences of them. If there are regrets, we can learn from them and respond to mistakes in a proactive way. It is important to admit mistakes and quickly correct them where possible. Making and keeping commitments is an important element of being effective.

## **Analysis**

Being proactive and acting on ones deeply held principles will result in positive results. "Positive thinking" is not part of proactivity. Positive thinking connotes hoping and wishing something wasn't true. A proactive person faces reality and acts on his core principles.

The writer conveys the message that "positive thinking" is a myth as it relates to making fundamental change that will achieve success. Author Covey underscores that rhetoric does not make change and success possible. It gives false hopes and loses air quickly. Rather than striking a sour note by telling the readers to ignore the promises of positive thinking, Covey gifts the reader with the honesty that change takes hard work and dedication. Perhaps hard to hear but it rings true.

## **Vocabulary**

crucible, stagnant, proactive, reactive, abdicated, stimuli, postulates, repugnant

# Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind

## Summary

Beginning with the end means to visualize an image of you at the end of your life. In that way, you can measure your success in the context of your whole life – at least the life you expect to have. By doing this, you will have clarity about your destiny. As successful as people are, many strive for more. Lives can change when there is understanding about what really is important to us. Thinking about what you want your eulogy to say will tell you a lot about your definition of a successful life.

All things are created twice – the mental or first creation and then the physical creation. A house is first an idea and a blueprint. The second creation occurs when the house is built. Not all creations are by our design. We allow others to shape our lives. We perform the scripts handed to us by friends, families, co-workers. We accept them from our deep need to be accepted and loved.

We can take the scripts we were handed and rewrite them. Using our imagination and self-awareness we can begin to see the possibilities within us. By rewriting ineffective scripts, we can shift the paradigm that was built upon the scripts of others. Habit 2 tells us that we don't have to live with scripts that don't work for us, scripts that are unworthy of us. When we apply our imagination, conscience and self-awareness we are able delve down and gain clarity on our deepest values. We are responsible for our own first creation and for rewriting ineffective scripts so that we achieve a paradigm that matches our core values. An effective way to begin at the end is to develop a personal mission statement that captures what you want to be and achieve.

Creating a personal mission statement based on your values can become an individual's constitution. Once you've established your mission statement, you will know where to focus and where to be proactive.

What is ideal is to dig down and create one clear and cogent center from which a robust degree of security, guidance, wisdom and power will flow. By centering our lives on good principles we lay the foundation for the development and nurturing of these four essential factors -- security, guidance, wisdom and power. Principles are deeply held basic truths that are woven throughout the fabric of life. Principles are bigger than people or circumstances and they never change – we change when our understanding of them grows. Your paradigm is the source of your attitudes and behaviors that impact the relationships and other areas of your life.

When making a decision based on the paradigm of principles, you can be certain that you did not act based on someone else's script. You know that your decision is based on solid principles, and your choice ultimately impacts your life values because you acted independently and you can be effectively interdependent. You can relax and feel satisfied with your decision.



When composing a mission statement, there should be a reliance on your proactivity and Circle of Influence. The meaning of your statement will come from deep within and may take a while to complete. In the end, it is a summary of your vision and values. Your self-awareness abilities will be useful in compiling your statement. When people try to tap into their deeply held values they automatically begin to think bigger. You can expand the concept of the mission statement and develop one for your family and another for your organization.

## **Analysis**

In order to have an impact beyond oneself, it is necessary to first change from within. By thinking of the end – where you want to wind up in life and how successful you want to be – you can project yourself into that distant time and visualize yourself with the personal and professional life you aspire to.

Covey has moved on from telling the reader what he cannot do to change to specific methods that in his wisdom and experience can effect change. What is important about this information is the author's urging that people not limit themselves with short-term or intermediary goals. He tells the readers to go for it... to visualize everything that they want to be. The writer recognizes that failures in short-term goals are demoralizing and cause a person to give up on their ultimate dreams of change and success. Eliminating the chance for failure will force the individual to keep striving for the gold ring.

## **Vocabulary**

incongruent, omniscient, criterion, diminish, overreactive

# Habit 3: Put First Things First

## Summary

Habit 1 teaches that you are the creator and are in charge. Habit 2 is one's first mental creation which is the result of the power of one's imagination and the ability to see one's potential and uniqueness. Habit 3 is the second creation or the fulfillment of your mental creation. Of course, Habit 3 is not possible without laying the groundwork in Habits 1 and 2. In addition to self-awareness, imagination and conscience, independent will is what ensures that your Circle of Influence is successful.

Our independent will is built upon our integrity and the value we perceive ourselves to have. Effective management requires "putting first things first." Part of the effective management of the second creation is discipline. Successful people often do things that failures don't like to do. In addition to being disciplined, one has to subordinate himself to his purpose and mission.

Time management is a big consideration in the successful implementation of Habit 3. The phrase, "organize and execute around priorities," is the best guideline for effective use of time. The concept of "time management" has evolved through the decades. For these purposes, time management really translates to self-management. Rather than focusing on time and things, focus is on results, enhancing relationships and maintaining the proper P/PC Balance.

There are two major categories that define our activities: urgent and important. Urgent matters, of course, require immediate attention while important matters are more about results. Effective personal management deals with matters that are not urgent but are important. Effective people don't allow opportunity to pass them by. Being proactive in the matters that are important to you will dramatically increase your overall effectiveness. You will be thinking ahead to prevent crises.

Identifying your key roles and goals is essential in becoming a successful self-manager. Scheduling your time forces you to prioritize how your time is spent with a focus on the important things you want to focus on. By keeping a schedule you will see what blocks of time you need for the various activities and the goals you have identified and need to focus on. Think of our schedule as an action plan instead of a calendar of events. An efficient weekly plan will naturally have extra time that will allow you to deal with the unexpected.

Your planning tools are not your masters. On a daily basis, you will frequently need to re-prioritize your activities and adapt your schedule so that you can address unexpected events. Reviewing your schedule each day will put you in direct touch with the value-based decisions you made about your personal time management. Prioritizing your daily activities prematurely – before you understand how they relate to your personal



mission and how they impact the balance you seek in your life – is not effective self-management.

Your independent will along with discipline, integrity and commitment facilitates effective personal management. These principles may be challenged many times during your weekly action plan. If you have embraced your second creation in your heart and mind, a higher purpose will drive you. Your ability to be flexible will allow you to re-prioritize and deal with urgent and unexpected events without feeling guilty about not meeting your original goals.

Effective self-management is principle-centric and allows you to see your time in the context of what is important to you. Delegating to others is a powerful tool in self-management. “Gofer” delegation is the assignment of specific tasks to others at your direction with the focus on accomplishing your plan of action. Stewardship delegation assigns tasks to others but gives them the choice of how they proceed making them responsible for the results. Identify the resources that the person can use to accomplish his tasks. Be clear about what is expected in terms of results and deadlines and the consequences for good and bad outcomes.

Trust is a motivator and it has proven to bring out the best in people. Trust is something that develops gradually between two people. Trust does not replace training and competency. More will get done through the stewardship process and each person will benefit by gaining more knowledge and confidence and more will be accomplished. This approach requires a new delegation and it necessarily changes the dynamics of the relationship. The person assigning the stewardship to another must assess how much direction the individual needs and how many tasks he can be given.

## **Analysis**

Before you can change and become what you aspire to, you must first create a mental image of that new reality. Learning personal management will prepare one for the paradigm shift that is being sought.

The author fine tunes the elements that will propel one toward a permanent paradigm shift. Proper self-management of one’s activities and time is a way to place controls on the process. Covey explains the elements of successful self-management and how to achieve them. The path to change and ultimate success is not paved with gold or any other material; it is a cobblestone work that is built block by block and no block can be left out. His advice to the reader is to adhere to the seven habits in sequence. Habit three is not possible without laying the groundwork with the first two habits. His is a cautionary tale to not omit any step.

## **Vocabulary**

endowment, matrix, spontaneity, intrinsic, transcend, quadrant



# Paradigms of Interdependence

## Summary

A solid foundation of independence is essential in order to build an effective interdependence and thus move into the Public Victory sector. One must travel the road to arrive at the destination. Trying to cover the absence of the necessary lead-in to interdependence with personality techniques and skills will not work in the long term. If you don't know yourself, you can't control yourself and you can't like yourself. Traversing through Habits 1, 2 and 3, you have gained independence which is quite an achievement. The most important element that individuals can bring to their relationships is what we are. The place where any substantive relationship must start is in the Circle of Influence.

As we approach interdependence, a whole new world awaits us – deep and meaningful relationships, increased results and countless opportunities to serve, contribute and learn. In the tradition of yin and yang, bigger challenges and greater pain also lurks in this new venture. The pain can't be fixed with Band-Aids in the interdependent world any more than it can in any other circumstance.

In defining the P/PC balance in an interdependent reality, think in terms of an emotional bank account. Just like a checking account where the balance builds up to a point where you feel safe, it's the same with an emotional bank account. The trust between two people builds up slowly but eventually a level of security is attained. In any relationship, there will be ups and downs, progress and regression.

In an intimate interdependent relationship, you must use the P/PC lighthouse as your guiding light. To nurture the fledgling relationship requires constant attention. Old deposits fade and must be replaced with new ones in order to maintain. A child who needs advice won't try to make a withdrawal from a closed account. Embracing Habit 3 and focusing on the important things will help you circumvent crises and build up a stockpile of trust. Building relationships and making repairs along the way takes time, focus and effort.

It goes without saying that keeping one's word is a sure way to win someone's trust. Staying committed to a relationship through the good days and even the bad days will have a huge and positive impact on the individual and will go far in building trust. Clarifying expectations is necessary for building your account of trust. You must be on the same page as the other person. He must know exactly what is expected of him and you must be totally thorough and transparent about your expectations. You can imagine the chaos if each person has a different view of what the other is supposed to accomplish – chaos to be sure, but it happens every day. It takes courage and complete honesty to clarify expectations but it is crucial for the emotional bank account to prosper.



A lack of integrity will drain your account and sabotage your efforts. Integrity is comprised of keeping promises and fulfilling expectations. Be loyal to the other person even when he's not present and treat everyone with the same principles. Siding with the other person in a conflict he has with another person you both know will only appear to be a show of disloyalty. The person with whom you are trying to build a relationship can see your duplicity in a situation and will wonder if you will turn on him some day.

When you mess up, 'fess up. Apologize with sincerity when you make a mistake, or withdrawal from your emotional bank account. That which was lost in your account will return in spades when you acknowledge that you were wrong. Only a secure person with a deep sense of self can apologize without caveats or excuses. Trust will grow when a sincere apology is made and a misstep is recognized. By loving the other person in an interdependent relationship, we can inspire them to greater heights of self-worth and integrity.

P problems are PC opportunities. Every disagreement, conflict, or emotional display in an interdependent relationship is an opportunity to discover, learn and grow for both parties. A P/PC balance is crucial for an effective interdependent reality.

## **Analysis**

Every person starts out dependent. With work he advances to independence which can be used as a launching pad for the ideal state – interdependence. Just like the 7 habits of highly effective people, the highest levels of achievement and success can only be achieved through interdependence.

At first blush, the word “interdependence” may have a negative connotation to some. It sounds needy. The author makes the point that, actually, the contrary is true. Relations built on interdependence are the strongest and longest lasting and most inspirational. The author advises the reader to aspire for interdependence on his or her way to change.

## **Vocabulary**

truncate, reconnaissance, avid, manifest, arbitrary, variables

# Habit Four: Think Win/Win

## Summary

Companies suffer from having flawed paradigms that don't work. When they fail, management hopes that quick fixes will turn things around but any success is not long lasting. Focusing on personal and organizational excellence that reinforces the value of cooperation is a method that will produce desired results. Transitioning from independence to interdependence is a sign of leadership.

There are six paradigms of human interaction. In the Win/Win scenario all agreements and solutions are mutually beneficial and satisfying to both or all parties.

The Win/Lose paradigm is often employed by those in authority. Those in power get their way and all others lose. Individuals who ascribe to this philosophy often were raised in a competitive environment in which one child was frequently compared to another. Education can confirm a child's perceived superiority. Modern society is a litigious one in which courts decide winners and losers. There is a role for the Win/Lose paradigm but in an interdependent relationship that depends on cooperation, this mentality sabotages that cooperation.

The Lose/Win paradigm is one in which the individual expects to lose and who wants to please others. They believe that they will attain success through the acceptance and admiration of others which is a false hope. People living under this methodology repress their true feelings, resentment and disillusionment build within and can ultimately cause the individual to suffer from emotional and even physical ailments. Both the Win/Lose and the Lose/Win scenarios are weak and are based on individual insecurity.

It is obvious from its title that no one wins in the Lose/Lose paradigm. When two out-sized egos clash, neither one intends to lose. However, they will both lose because they focus on outdoing the other person. In this scenario, the matter at hand takes a back seat to the desire that each has for the other to lose.

At first glance, the "Win" paradigm seems to be a positive scenario. The individual with a Win philosophy has no animosity against his opponent. However, he places winning above all else. He thinks strictly in terms of his own results and leaves others to battle it out for their own point of view. That is not a description of an effective interdependent relationship which is nurtured only by the

The Win/Win or No Deal paradigm, which describes a negotiation in which both parties agree that if the solution does not benefit both sides then there is no deal. There are no hidden agendas and when individuals have a "no deal" scenario in their minds, they feel liberated and without pressure to manipulate the other side. The desired end result is Win/Win. This paradigm is best served when it is established at the beginning of a





relationship and there are some circumstances in which the Win/Win or No Deal would not be viable.

The Win/Win paradigm consists of five interdependent dimensions. “Character” is the first which flows into the second, “Relationships” and the third, “Agreements.” These three dimensions are dependent on a structure and process that is based on the Win/Win paradigm. Win/Win relies on a character-driven foundation. The individuals must possess integrity which Habits 1, 2 and 3 help develop and nurture. Maturity is also key in the make-up of the character. Maturity is “the balance between courage and consideration.” Translated, that means that a mature participant must have the courage of his convictions yet be considerate of the other person’s feelings and beliefs. A balance between courage and consideration is the mark of real maturity and a necessary trait for the Win/Win paradigm.

The third essential character trait is the mind-set that there is plenty to go around for everyone. It is referred to as the Abundance Mentality. The opposite of this concept is the Scarcity Mentality. People who are scripted in this view see only limited chances and opportunities for everyone. Individuals who fall in this category have a difficult time being pleased with other people’s successes. They interpret someone else’s win as their loss. The Abundance Mentality is rooted in a deeply held self-esteem and a sense of security.

Win/Win solutions can only survive in an environment that provides the systems to support it. If your solution was touted to be a Win/Win but in practice it becomes a Win/Lose – everyone loses. All systems within an organization must support the Win/Win paradigm and the agreement that resulted from it. Ineffective systems can ruin the hard work that it took to achieve a Win/Win solution.

Focus on the interests that lead to mutual gain is essential for a Win/Win solution. If followed, a four-step process can achieve success. 1) See the matter from the other’s point of view; 2) identify the issues and concerns; 3) determine acceptable solutions; and, 4) identify new methods to achieve those solutions.

## **Analysis**

Focus on the Win/Win paradigm when dealing in interdependent relationships whether personal or professional. Another option – the Win/Win or No Deal paradigm – sets the premise that there will be no deal unless there is a Win/Win in which all sides are satisfied.

Covey advises his readers not to settle. In other words winning after all IS everything, the most important thing. What he means is that an individual must hold onto his values and goals when dealing with others. One should take umbrage at the suggestion of a Win/Lose proposition because it is one in which everyone loses and one’s values are lost as well. He is advising his reader to stay strong.

## Vocabulary

litigious, adversarial, capitulation, embodiment, vindictive, synergistic

# Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood

## Summary

It's a natural human response to want to fix what's broken. However, we can make the situation worse if we fail to properly diagnose and understand that issue and rush in with a fix-it that doesn't address the real problem. Effective communication is essential in addressing a problem involving others. The four types of communication are reading, writing, listening and speaking. We've all been conditioned to read, write and speak. Listening is as important as the other communication skills but it is the one that is most neglected.

When an individual desires to build a relationship with another person, he must first understand that person. And the most efficient way of coming to this understanding is listening to the person. There can be no honest exchange between two people who don't understand one another. Unless a person is treated like the unique person he is, he will not be impressed with your counsel or advice.

The development of empathetic listening skills will go a far way in engendering trust and open exchange. It is human for a person to want to be understood. We are often caught up in our own story that we don't listen to the stories of others enough to absorb them. We generally "listen" at four levels; we ignore, pretend to listen, listen selectively and listen attentively. It is using only the last listening skill that we can understand another. Being an empathetic listener means that you "get" the other person on an emotional and intellectual level. This type of attentive listening gives you real insight into the other person. It also builds trust and stores up your Emotional Bank Account.

It is not possible to attain an interdependent relationship with a misunderstanding of the other person. Trust is built with empathetic listening because it makes the listener vulnerable and opens him up to be influenced when his goal is to influence. The mark of all true professionals is to understand and diagnose before you prescribe a solution. Seeking to understand has a tremendous impact in interpersonal relations.

As we listen, there are four autobiographic responses that we can have: We evaluate what we hear and either agree or disagree with it; We probe when we feel the need to know more; We advise based on our own life experiences; We interpret – we figure the person out from what we've heard. These responses are so entrenched within us that we don't know we have them.

The ancient Greeks had a philosophy comprised of ethos, pathos and logos. Ethos is the trust that people have in you and your integrity and competency. Pathos is the empathy that you have for others. Logos is the logic that you apply to the problem



presented to you. Translated to paradigm terms, this philosophy embodies character, relationships and the logic with which you present your ideas and solutions.

Habit 5 falls into the center of your Circle of Influence. Something that is always within one's control is to seek to understand. As your understanding grows of others, you will appreciate them more. It is through deep understanding that creative solutions and more alternatives are generated.

## **Analysis**

An interdependent relationship is not possible without understanding the other person. With this understanding comes trust and openness. After a person comes to understand another person, it is his turn to be understood.

The author stresses the importance of trust and honesty in a relationship. He cautions that understanding comes from trust and that it's a two-way street. He proclaims that understanding leads to a greater appreciation of one's loved ones and serves to strength one's interpersonal relationships.

## **Vocabulary**

caustic, transactional, transformational, hypocrisy, guile



# Habits 6 and 7 and Inside Out Again

## Summary

### Habit 6: Seek Synergy

All the previous Habits prepare you for Habit 6. For these purposes, the synergy relies on four human elements, the Win/Win paradigm, and empathetic listening. Synergy means that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; it is the core of principle-centered leadership.

Synergistic listening is defined as opening yourself to new possibilities. You are fulfilling the requirements of Habit 2 to begin with the end in mind. A sign of high level synergy can be observed in an emergency situation where there is cooperation and all pride and egos are subjugated. The synergy in an emergency can be translated to everyday life but requires high level of personal security and openness.

The concept of synergy in the classroom challenges both teacher and students – are they truly open to the idea that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts? In such an environment, there is openness to all ideas, egoless brainstorming and finally a new idea that is embraced by the entire class and the teacher. When successful, the process can be exhilarating, almost miraculous and can be a lasting reality in the classroom, and its spirit can even transcend space and time for those who were part of the process. When an experiment in synergy doesn't work well and the process transcends into chaos, the image of failure is also long-lasting and those participating do not have fond thoughts about synergy and tend to stay away from future encounters.

In business synergy can release an incredible level of creative energy. Achieving synergy requires courage, authenticity, and a willingness to confront inner truth about the person or organization. When an individual displays these traits, others will soon follow suit and the creative process that will create unimagined results is in motion. A crucial part of effective synergy is open communication – trust and cooperation rely upon the honest exchange of ideas. Synergy allows two opposing sides to come to a third alternative that is amenable to both. Negative synergy is wasting valuable time on rivalries, lobbying, masterminding and second guessing in trying to achieve a pre-conceived solution. This valuable time that is gone forever could have been applied to a positive synergistic process which values the differences in two sides rather than battling it out. The driving forces of synergy can successfully deal with the negative forces that sabotage the process. Embracing a synergistic process points to the nature around us. Synergy in nature is also known as ecology.

### Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw

Habit 7 is taking time to “sharpen the saw”, to make sure your paradigm continues to run at its optimum effectiveness and is renewed when necessary. Habit 7 surrounds and



supports all the other habits. There are four dimensions of renewal: physical, mental, spiritual and social/emotional. “Sharpen the saw” means exercising all four dimensions regularly and consistently. The physical dimension is taking care of our physical bodies through diet, exercise, rest and relaxation.

Renewing your spiritual life gives you leadership and is closely related to Habit 2. Spiritualism is your center and commitment to your values. Spiritual renewal allows you to recommit and live in harmony with your core values. Mental development is achieved through our education. However, once leaving school, many of us stop reading, studying and learning. Continuing your education by honing and expanding the mind is essential for mental renewal. Returning to school for classes gives some the structure they need. However, a proactive individual will find ways to self-educate and renew and expand his or her mental dimension. The social/emotional dimension is aligned with Habits 4, 5 and 6 while the physical, mental and spiritual/emotional dimensions relate closely to Habits 1, 2 and 3.

In order to achieve the optimum in your renewal, you must achieve balance in all four dimensions. Neglecting one dimension will impact the others. Synergy is vital in the balance renewal of the four dimensions. Renewal is essential for growth and change. As we move up we learn, commit, and do on a continuous basis that elevates us to increasingly higher planes.

#### Inside-Out Again

Real change comes from the inside-out. Achieving balanced unity within ourselves, with our loved ones and friends and colleagues is the reward of the 7 Habits. It's not easy to live a life of completed integrity and there are no quick fixes. It takes hard work, commitment and discipline. Following the 7 Habits outlined here, you will focus on the principals that will attain unimagined success.

## Analysis

Synergy is described as being the whole being better than all its parts. When open-minded people who work proactively from their deep beliefs and convictions come together, great and unimagined heights can be reached.

The author stresses the importance of attaining synergy with others. The concept hints at the old adage that two heads are better than one. The author cautions that true synergy cannot be enjoyed without openness and willingness on both or all sides. This is important to the reader because he knows that honesty and openness is essential for success. Since no man is an island, man needs synergy with others to achieve his goals and beyond.

To keep the 7 Habits running at top speed, there must be constant maintenance and renewal. Without this renewal as part of the process everything else that the individual worked for will collapse. The author does not let the reader off the hook merely because he has arrived at the last step. The hard work has just begun. To maintain change and



achieve his goals, an individual must be of the mindset that highly effective people must adhere to the seven steps that got them there.

## Vocabulary

synergy, endowments, ambiguity, brainstorming, mesmerize, syllabus, dichotomous, atrophy, posterity



# Important People

## Steven and Sandra Covey

Author Stephen Covey and his wife Sandra went through some struggles with one of their sons. He did poorly in school, found it hard to follow directions, and was physically weak and uncoordinated. Other kids laughed at him. Covey and his wife encouraged him and tried to help however they could but nothing helped.

In his studies and research, Covey ran across the “Pygmalion effect,” which focused on how perceptions are formed and how they are deeply entrenched within us. Covey and his wife looked in the mirror and realized that they perceived their son to be inadequate, behind for his age. They also realized they were conveying this perception to their son. They realized they had to change.

Covey was also deeply involved in “success” literature published since 1776. The more he scrutinized it, it became clear that most of these works over the last 50 years were superficial. In the prior 150 years, the works were more substantial and focused on among other elements basics like courage, justice, integrity and humility. After World War I, the fundamental view of success changed from Character Ethic to Personality Ethic. The latter was comprised of two paths -- 1) human and public relations techniques and 2) PMS a positive mental attitude. The Personality Ethic depended on, at times, deception and practiced techniques to win people over. Covey realized he and his wife were using these techniques with their son. They realized that these methods were not in sync with their deeper values. They decided to separate themselves from him – to see his individuality and value.

Stephen and Sandra began to see their son as a unique person and began to enjoy him. They stopped comparing him and expecting him to be a clone of themselves. Their son began to gain confidence and blossomed.

## Carol

Steve and Sandra Covey were inspired one of Sandra’s best friends, Carol, during a four-year period when she was dying of cancer. Carol and Sandra had been friends for 25 years, and Carol had been one of Sandra’s bridesmaids. When Carol was nearing the end, Sandra spent many hours with her, sitting at her bedside helping write her story. Sandra was overwhelmed with her friend’s courage and her goal to write special messages to each of her children which she wanted given to them at specific times in their lives.

It was important to Carol that she remain as lucid as possible for as long as possible. Therefore, she took as little pain medication as possible. She wanted to have full access to her emotional and mental faculties. At her weakest and most fragile moments, Carol





would whisper to Sandra or into her tape recorder. She was determined to write her story and her messages.

Despite the harrowing end to her life, Carol's principles and values shone through to the end. As ill as she was, she was able to inspire all those around her. Steve recalls looking deeply into her eyes the day before she passed. He didn't see a dying woman... he saw a person of tremendous worth and character who had made great contributions during her life and who shared her love, concern and appreciation for others until she drew her last breath.

## **Sean Covey**

Steve Covey worked with his son, Sean, who was a football player in high school. He played quarterback and was uptight about getting sacked by the defense. Steve worked with Sean on visualizing himself into a relaxed state in a pressurized situation.

## **Ptolemy and Copernicus**

Ptolemy was the celebrated Egyptian astronomer who believed that the earth was the center of the universe. Many centuries later, Copernicus believed that the sun was the center of the universe. They were both wrong but the change from Ptolemy's theory to that of Copernicus was an example of a paradigm shift.

## **Albert Einstein**

Albert Einstein, the great physicist, observed that, "The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." This serves to illustrate that superficial problems that had been band-aided could not be fixed with the same logic and reasoning that fostered the problems.

## **Horace Mann**

Horace Mann the renowned educator, said, "Habits are like a cable. We weave a strand of it every day and soon it cannot be broken." The author uses Mann's statement to emphasize how entrenched man becomes in his habits. He disagrees with the sentiment that habits cannot be broken – but it does take a lot of effort to break them.

## **Marilyn Ferguson**

Marilyn Ferguson determined that no one can persuade another person to change. Each of us "guards a gate of change that can only be opened from the inside. We cannot open the gate of another, either by argument or by emotional appeal." This



illustrates the author's contention that change can only come from within and can only be achieved by the person himself.

## **Victor Frankl**

Victor Frankl was a determinist who was a disciple of Freudian psychology. He was a Jewish psychiatrist who believed that whatever happened to an individual as a child shaped his character and personality and impacted his entire life. His self-awareness allowed him to respond within his mind as he chose to the harrowing experience of imprisonment in a Nazi death camp.

## **Anwar Sadat**

One of the most inspiring accounts of the rescripting process is the case of Anwar Sadat, past president of Egypt. Although he'd been raised to hate Israel, when he came president of his country he came to realize that his hatred was standing between his people and a chance for peace. He dug deep inside and found the way to rescript himself through self-awareness and imagination and reached out to Israel in peace which led to the Camp David Accord.

## **E. M. Gray**

E. M. Gray wrote the essay, "The Common Denominator of Success." He spent his entire life searching for the one factor that all successful people had in common. He learned that it came down to putting first things first which is Covey's Habit 3.



## Objects/Places

### Inside-Out Process

The Inside-Out Process stresses the importance of achieving private victories before public victories are possible. Changing internally and reaching deeply within to find one's true values and principles are necessary steps before it's possible for an individual to impact external issues and relationships.

### Pygmalion Effect

The Pygmalion Effect focuses on how perceptions are formed and how they are deeply entrenched within us. Covey and his wife realized that they were applying the Pygmalion Effect to a son who was struggling socially and academically.

### The Personality Ethic

Some believe effectiveness is achieved through the Personality Ethic in which success becomes a function of personality and public image. The Personality Ethic has two paths: human and public relations techniques and a positive mental attitude.

### The Character Ethic

The Character Ethic is the foundation for success and includes traits including - among others - integrity, humility, fidelity, temperance, courage, justice and patience. It is the process of integrating these traits deep within one's nature.

### The Pareto Principle

The Pareto Principle says that 80 percent of the results form out of 20 percent of the activities. The point the author was making was that being discriminating with your time and your activities will yield the desired results rather than wasting time on non-productive activities.

### Paradigms

People have two fundamental paradigms in our heads: the way we think things are and the way we would like them to be. Our behaviors and attitudes emanate from the assumptions we make. Trying to change is impossible without examining these paradigms.



## **The Social Mirror**

The Social Mirror or social paradigm is the vision we have of ourselves. It is an amalgamation of the criticisms and observations that others have sent our way.

## **Circle of Concern**

An individual's Circle of Concern is comprised of those things that a person is concerned with. This can include disease, terrorism, poverty all areas that concern an individual.

## **Circle of Influence**

A person's Circle of Influence is located within the Circle of Concern. It is comprised of those things of a specific and personal nature that the individual has impact and influence upon like our families, friends and organizations.

## **The 7 Habits**

"The 7 Habits" are the powerful guidelines that provide a pathway for an individual to make personal change and to become a highly effective person.

# Themes

## Proactive v. Reactive

There are proactive people and reactive people. Being proactive means taking the initiative to solve a problem, develop a new idea or reach out to others – even one’s opponents or enemies – to find solutions and reach higher levels of efficiency and productivity. Highly effective people don’t pass the buck; they take responsibility and take action. They don’t blame a situation or conditions for their behavior.

Reactive people are the polar opposite of proactive people. In empowering the things that control us, we become reactive. Reactive people are often happy when the sun shines and not so happy when it rains. They are impacted by how well or poorly other people treat them. Reactive people are driven by emotions; proactive people are compelled to action by values. We all know of people who have faced impossible challenges yet are able to maintain emotional strength. Their integrity is inspiring. Times of struggle can create paradigm shifts. Tragedy and pain can give us a whole new frame of reference.

Our natural instinct is to act in the face of a problem or circumstance. Proactive people make it part of their psyche. Being proactive does not equate with being obnoxious or aggressive. Showing initiative is a positive behavior that can be helpful in one’s career. Proactivity is not synonymous with positive thinking. A proactive person faces reality and deals with the problem. Those who are proponents of “positive thinking” as a solution, may also pray for rain when the crops dry up.

There are languages of proactive and reactive people. “That’s just the way I am,” and “He makes me so mad,” are examples of reactive speak. “Let’s look at alternatives,” and “I can choose a different approach,” are examples of proactive language. Proactive language opens doors while reactive language can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Allowing our feelings to control our actions is abdicating our responsibility to act proactively. Proactive people react out of values not emotions.

## Self-Awareness

Among all the animals on earth, man alone has self-awareness. He knows that he’s alive and that he will one day die. This self-awareness is one of the human attributes that makes man powerful over all things on earth. It is also how we make important advancements. Self-awareness is the tool that we use to examine how we see ourselves. It is a microscope into our depths. Without the ability of self-awareness which allows us to self-assess ourselves we would not be able to understand others and, therefore, the possibilities for synergistic personal and professional relationships are limited and restricted and superficial.



Using our self-awareness along with our imagination we are able to see our potential. It is only through this self-awareness and our imagination and conscience that we are able to dig deep and connect with the values and principles that are at our core.

An individual is not able to understand another person if he does not understand himself first. In order to achieve strong interdependent relationships, therefore, it is essential that we get to know ourselves. Without self-awareness that goal is impossible. Self-awareness compels us to be honest with ourselves and our true values along with our flaws and frailties. Without looking at ourselves and being aware of our foibles, there is no remedy, no solution for improving our lot.

## Synergy

Synergy is defined as the whole being greater than the sum of its parts; it is also the core of principle-centered leadership. Synergistic listening occurs when an individual opens himself to new possibilities and imaginations. An example of high level synergy can be seen in an emergency situation where there is cooperation and all pride and egos are repressed and disappear. It is possible to attain the same level of synergy in one's life but it requires dedication, effort and tenacity.

Positive synergy fosters an environment of openness to the exchange of ideas. Egos are checked at the door to allow honest brainstorming so that creative ideas and solutions emerge. There is nothing more exhilarating than a synergistic session that produces new concepts and new interpersonal exchanges. Its magic can be contagious and almost miraculous.

As with everything else in life there can be downsides when this process is misused. When an experiment in synergy doesn't work well it is a sure bet that the process wasn't approached or planned correctly. Such a session can spiral into chaos and burn those who are participating. It's a bad experience that will make even the most well-intentioned participants feel the burn for a long time.

But when done well, synergy can release an unimagined level of creative energy. It's not a cake walk. Attaining true synergy requires courage, authenticity and the inner truth of those participating.

# Styles

## Structure

“The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” is separated into four main parts. Part One: Paradigms and Principles is comprised of two sections, Inside-Out and The 7 Habits – An Overview. Part Two: Private Victory is comprised of Habit 1, Habit 2 and Habit 3. Part Three: Public Victory covers Habit 4, Habit 5 and Habit 6. Part Four: Renewal contained Habit 7 and “Inside-Out Again.” The book progresses in a logical order that lays out the guidelines for becoming an effective and successful person.

There are many diagrams, charts and tables that are used to augment the text including depictions of the Circle of Concern and the Circle of Influence. A Venn diagram illustrates what effective habits are with overlapping circles of knowledge, skills and desire. Another diagram is repeated several times within the book that depicts how the seven habits are interdependent upon one another. Also included is a weekly planner that suggests an effective way of scheduling one’s time with focus on weekly and daily priorities – a way of keeping what is most important to a person always in front of his eyes.

Preceding the first section is a Foreword to the 25th Anniversary Edition of the book. After the last section there is an Afterword and two appendices. An About the Author section provides the background, experiences and achievements of Steven Covey.

## Perspective

“The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” by Dr. Stephen R. Covey is told from the perspective of Covey who is an internationally recognized leadership authority, family relations expert, teacher and author. The book celebrated its 25th anniversary edition in 2013.

The book is based on Covey’s own experiences in his personal and professional life as well as on his education at Harvard University where he earned an MBA and at Brigham Young University where he earned his doctorate and was a professor of organizational behavior and business management. With his background, one would be hard-pressed to find anyone more knowledgeable in the subject matter or more qualified to write about personal and professional management.

Covey is the author of many other life management books including among others “The 8th Habit,” “Living the 7 Habits,” “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families” and “The Nature of Leadership.” In all, Covey has sold more than 25 million books and all of them, like “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People,” are focused on successful methods for the individual, family or organization to reach their highest levels of achievement, synergy and effectiveness.

## Tone

“The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” is full of words and phrases that are unique to this work. The author refers to the 'Circle of Concern' which is comprised of those things in life that we concern ourselves with. This can include war or peace, politics, disease, charity and many other areas that concern an individual. The Circle of Influence is located within the Circle of Concern and it contains issues that each of us can have more impact and influence on like our partners, spouses, children, home, career, family and friends.

A Paradigm Shift is one in which true change occurs within an individual based on the process of the 7 Habits. The Personality Ethic provides solutions and success through personality and public image. The solutions that come by way of the Personality Ethic are ultimately short-lived and ineffective. By employing the Character Ethic an individual taps his core principles and traits that include integrity, humility, fidelity, temperance, courage, justice and patience. These principles are deeply embedded within an individual and become part of one's nature.

Time management and personal management meld into one entity. The Pareto Principle says that 80 percent of the results flow out of 20 percent of the activities. A Private Victory is becoming in touch with one's core, inner beliefs and principles. It is necessary to reach those core values before a Public Victory is possible. In a Public Victory, an individual reaches out to others for a synergistic relationship based on his principles, values and commitment. Interdependent relationships are the ultimate goal of the process.





## Quotes

There is no real excellence in all this world which can be separated from right living.  
-- David Starr Jordan (Part 1 paragraph Page 23)

**Importance:** This epigram captures one of the tenets of the author's theories about the habits of effective people.

The term paradigm shift was introduced by Thomas Kuhn in his highly influential landmark book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Kuhn shows how almost every significant breakthrough in the field of scientific endeavor is first a break with tradition, with old ways of thinking, with old paradigms.  
-- Author (Part 1 paragraph Page 37)

**Importance:** Covey references Thomas Kuhn who coined the phrase, "paradigm shift," which is an important and continuing element of Covey's work.

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.  
-- Aristotle (Part 1 paragraph Page 54)

**Importance:** Aristotle sets the stage for the premise of "The 7 Habits of Effective People." The ancient philosopher saw the importance of the concept long ago.

Knowledge is the theoretical paradigm, the what to do and the why. Skill is the how to do. And desire is the motivation, the want to do. In order to make something a habit in our lives, we have to have all three.  
-- Author (Part 1 paragraph Page 55)

**Importance:** The author is providing the elements necessary to make something a habit, the essence of his work.

I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by conscious endeavor.  
-- Henry David Thoreau (Habit 1 paragraph 155)

**Importance:** This captures Covey's contention that man is capable of elevating his state through effort. The 7 Habits provides the guidelines for this change.

Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least.  
-- Goethe (Habit 3 paragraph Page 155)

**Importance:** This quote underscores one of Covey's main theories – digging deep within and finding the principles and values on which one can build an effective paradigm and have the tools to identify one's Circle of Influence.



Win/Win puts the responsibility on the individual for accomplishing specified results within clear guidelines and available resources. It makes a person accountable to perform and evaluate the results and provides consequences as a natural result of performance.

-- Author (Habit 4 paragraph Page 244)

**Importance:** The author is stressing the optimum way to approach a negotiation in an interdependent relationship. The Win/Win scenario makes the individual responsible for his behavior and the final results.

When you communicate synergistically, you are simply opening your mind and heart and expressions to new possibilities, new alternatives, new options.

-- Author (Habit 6 paragraph Page 275)

**Importance:** The author lauds the personal advantages of synergistic communications within interdependent relationships. Engaging in synergistic communication gives the individual an inner sense of excitement and security.

Sometimes when I consider what tremendous consequences come from little things... I am tempted to think... there are no little things.

-- Bruce Barton (Habit 7 paragraph Page 299)

**Importance:** This quote captures the clarity and insight that the seven habits provide to the individual.

You cannot play with the animal in you without becoming wholly animal, play with falsehood without forfeiting your right to truth, play with cruelty without losing your sensitivity of mind. He who wants to keep his garden tidy doesn't reserve a plot for weeds.

-- Author (Habit 7 paragraph Page 317)

**Importance:** The author uses this quote to emphasize the importance of choosing purpose and principles through self-awareness.

I believe that as we grow and develop on this upward spiral, we must show diligence in the process of renewal by educating and obeying our conscience. An increasingly educated conscience will propel us along the path of personal freedom, security, wisdom and power.

-- Author (Habit 7 paragraph Page 318)

**Importance:** Through "commit, do and learn" individuals can continue to "commit, do and learn" more. The process is unending.

Change – real change – comes from the inside out. It doesn't come from hacking at the leaves of attitude and behavior with quick fix personality ethic techniques.

-- Author (Inside-Out Again paragraph Page 328)

**Importance:** Real change takes real effort and doesn't happen over night or with a quick fix.



# Topics for Discussion

## Topic 1

Explain the difference between “quick fix” philosophies and the concept of the 7 habits described in the book.

## Topic 2

Why is it not impossible to achieve real and lasting success by applying the concepts of Personality Ethics to achieve ones goals and dreams? How is relying on the Character Ethic the way to ultimate effectiveness in one’s personal and professional lives?

## Topic 3

Describe the three social maps: Genetic determination, psychic determination and environmental determination. What are their importance and how do they impact your life?

## Topic 4

As they relate to this book, what is a private victory and what is a public victory? Why is it not possible to have a public victory without first having a private victory?

## Topic 5

Name the three categories that all problems fall into, and describe how problems are solved within each of the categories.

## Topic 6

What does it mean to be proactive? What does it mean to be reactive? What are examples of the language of each? Why is being proactive superior to being reactive?

## Topic 7

What is the theory behind Habit 2, “Begin with the End in Mind?” Why is it important to possess a definition of your life as a successful one? How can you visualize it?



## Topic 8

What is an interdependent relationship? How does it differ from an independent relationship? What are the positive elements of an interdependent relationship and what are the challenges and risks?

## Topic 9

Describe the Win/Win, Win/Lose, Lose/Win, Lose/Lose and Win/Win or No Deal paradigms and describe scenarios for each. Which are the optimal paradigms?

## Topic 10

Describe the various types of listening. What is the importance of empathetic listening and what does it, once mastered, achieve?