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Change Philosophy

The Transtheoretical model focuses on intervention before action. There are seven distinct stages, the first of which is Precontemplation, when the individual is unaware of the need to change and there is no desire to do so. At this point, people can learn about new behaviors and be encouraged to change. The individual moves from Precontemplation to Contemplation, where the individual is considering change and examining existing problems. The pros and cons of moving forward might seem to be equal at this point, making it difficult to be motivated. When the pros outweigh the cons and the decision has been made to change, the individual will move forward into Preparation, designing strategies and making plans on how to change. Encouragement during this stage is key in order to move on to the next stage. It is when this change becomes visible that they have entered the next stage, Action. Following Action is Maintenance, in which specific actions are sustained to keep the change going. Individuals in either Preparation, Action or Maintenance will need constant encouragement to be successful. It is important they do not allow themselves to get into situations where they might be tempted, but instead seek assistance from those who have been successful before. If the individual reaches a mastery level of change, the next step is to Exit; however, if mastery is not achieved, the individual will Relapse and continue going through the stages.

Highlighting how unique the cycle of change is, this model gives a clear image of the changer at each step, allowing opportunities for the facilitator to better support and intervene. At each stage, the individual will behave and view progress differently, and the stage specific interventions give the facilitator an idea of how to help someone no matter where they stand.

The Satir Model goes through stages of changes that can be applied to a group. Starting off with Stage 1, the group is operating at a Late Status Quo where performance is consistent, people know how to react to one another and there is a feeling of belonging; it is a familiar place. Members at this stage may feel stressed depending on the group dynamics, but it is something that they are accustomed to and can expect. In a program, it may be beneficial to help the group identify strengths and weaknesses before moving forward. To move to Stage 2, Resistance, stressful stimuli must be introduced that threatens the stability and requires a response from the group members. This foreign element may cause members to blame others and some may try to avoid it. Members in Stage 2 will need support opening up and assistance with avoiding blame. Given the stressful stimuli is truly foreign, the group will enter Stage 3, Chaos. Here the group enters the unknown and relationships may shatter; members lose identity, behave uncharacteristically and express feelings of anxiety. It is the job of the facilitator to help members acknowledge their emotions and remind them of their support systems. It is important this stage is experienced in its entirety as it is crucial to the process of change in this model. Through stress and challenge, the group discovers a transforming idea and moves to Stage 4, Integration. At this point, the group begins to see the foreign element as something beneficial and they become excited; relationships are mended, new ideas form,

performance improves and group members feel euphoric. If this idea is well received and applied, they develop a New Status Quo in Stage 5. The group is now operating at a higher level than before and members feel less threatened by change.

The Outward Bound process starts off with a motivated learner, who has been assessed prior to the program. In the assessment, the facilitator assesses needs and gauges the learner's level of motivation. The motivated learner is placed into a novel physical environment; this environment must be somewhere that is different from their home. The environment will allow the learner to examine details that are not present at home and experience adventure. The learner is also placed into a prescribed social environment. The social environment includes 7-15 people with a common objective; the group needs to be large enough to offer variety without allowing opportunities for people to form cliques. Having only 7-15 also allows the group members to support each other's individual goals and work towards more complex group outcomes that cannot be achieved alone. After being placed in new, novel environments the learner will be introduced to a set of problem solving tasks; these problems incorporate all learning domains and are unique to adventure experiences. These problems are organized by the facilitator to meet the needs of the learner and use a progression of skills. This progression will challenge the learner but the problems will be manageable and solvable, challenging them socially, cognitively, emotionally and physically. Although they may seem unachievable at first, clients possess the skills necessary to overcome these tasks and experience consequences, positive or negative, to help them change.

Combining the new physical and social environments with challenging tasks may induce anxiety or dissonance in the learner, but it is the dissonance that can help propel

them forward by adapting their behavior to overcome the task. This kind of adaptive dissonance must be outlined through the lens of challenge by choice, that is, the learner can choose their own level of challenge and nothing is forced. By choosing to overcome the challenge and reaching mastery or competency, they are able to reorganize the meaning and direction of change in their life.

Keeping in mind these models of change, my personal theory is a combination of the Outward Bound Process and the Satir Model. In the Outward Bound Process, I appreciate the explanation of the motivated learner. I believe that change cannot occur unless an individual is motivated to do so. This may take encouragement and support from friends or the facilitator to assess needs before they are willing to change. Combining the two models, I believe when the learner is motivated they are operating at a status quo that can be improved. Within this status quo they have patterns and behavior that can be directly focused on by placing them in a prescribed physical and social environment with thoughtfully orchestrated challenges and tasks. This environment correlates to Stage 2 in the Satir Model where a foreign element threatens the individual's stability and requires a response. It is important when placing someone in a novel environment with added stress to provide support and create an environment where they feel safe expressing and working through their emotions. It is through the stress and Chaos (Stage 3 Satir Model) that self efficacy can improve.

Given the facilitator organizes the environment and stress in a way that the learner can solve the problem, this point in the cycle of change can be very beneficial. It is typical for people to have feelings of shame, wanting to blame others, wanting to quit and perhaps thinking the task is unsolvable. Full expression of this stage is key because being at that low

point and being able to work through it is what improves self efficacy. Support is vital to the individual's success. If someone in the midst of chaos is not supported, it becomes difficult for them to reach a level of mastery or new status quo. The individual may lose identity, feel overwhelmed and anxious, and it is through the assistance of their support system that they will realize their competency. The change happens when a new idea or approach to the problem is well received and applied to move into mastery.

The cycle of change can continue throughout the program by increasing challenge and stress to achieve a higher level of mastery or new status quo. The facilitator must have an appropriate needs assessment to create an achievable task with skills progression. They will also need to be prepared to change the program if the challenge is not well received and the transition to integration is not occurring. The facilitator can help prevent this by helping the learner change their perspective on the problem to see it as beneficial and a pivotal moment for them. I truly believe that it is important for the learner to experience the stress fully and face the problem head on to realize their capabilities and change their behavior or lifestyle.