Notes on Personal Mastery

Structural Tension is formed by two major components:

1. A vision of the result you want to create
2. A clear view of the reality you now have

Structural Tension is senior to structural conflict and has the following properties:

- It incorporates structural conflict into itself.
- It transposes a complex structure into a simple structure.

**Vision:** The best place to begin the creative process is at the end. What is the final result you want? This way of thinking helps you conceive the result you want to create independently from how you will create it. Start with nothing, and form it in pictures. How clear do you need to be about the result you want? Clear enough that you would recognize the result if you had it.

**Knowing What You Want:**

1. Ask yourself the question, what do I want?
2. Consider what you want independently of considerations of process.
3. Separate what you want from questions of possibility.

**Current Reality:**

The way you activate the seeds of your creation is by making choices about results you want to create. When you make a choice, you mobilize vast energies and resources that otherwise often go untapped. All too often people fail to focus their choices upon results, and therefore their choices are ineffective.

**Choices:**

The fact that human beings have choices is one of the most overlooked and underemphasized aspects of our education. When we’re taught to avoid missing some
possibility that might be good, we’re taught to be indecisive. When we’re taught that our choices are limited, we’re taught compromise: learn to live with what you don’t really want, because there will always be plenty of that. Fortunately, it’s never too late to learn. You make thousands of choices daily anyway--and will continue to for the rest of your life. Why not make them strategically, so that you use the forces in play in your lives, rather than reactively.

In the reactive-responsive orientation, there are eight common ways in which people avoid or undermine effective choice and by which they lose the potential power of choice:

1) Choice by limitation--choosing only what seems possible or reasonable

2) Choice by indirectness--choosing the process instead of the result

3) Choice by elimination--eliminate all other possibilities so that only one choice remains

4) Choice by default--the choice not to make a choice, so that whatever results happen seem to occur without choice

5) Conditional choice--imposing preconditions on choices

6) Choice by reaction--choices designed to overcome a conflict

7) Choice by consensus--choosing by finding out what everyone else is willing to recommend and following the results of that poll

8) Choice by adverse possession--choice based on a hazy metaphysical notion about the nature of the universe