

Spirit Level Success™ System - Six Secrets of Self-Esteem

Secret #4 SKILLS – Week 2

S.T.R.E.A.M.™ – Test Behaviour

The **T** in **S.T.R.E.A.M.™** stands for **Test Behaviour**. So what exactly do we mean when we talk about behaviour?

Imagine that an alien has landed from another world wanting to find out about humans. They film you going about your everyday activities. Everything that is recorded, is your behaviour. Your behaviour is simply what other people see you doing. It's just what you do.

Have you ever heard the phrase 'we judge ourselves by our intentions, and other people by their behaviour?' Well that statement is totally true. No-one else will ever know the intention (good or bad) behind your behaviour, unless you share it with them.

Your behaviour is *not* who you are. It is *not* your identity, and it is so important to separate the two. Think about it.

Young children and toddlers will often misbehave. It's an age thing. The intention behind the behaviour (even though they will have no conscious idea of this) will be to get attention. That's all. Children love getting attention. And if they don't get it from behaving well, they will misbehave until they do get it. Any attention is better than no attention at all.

How often do you hear parents saying to their children, 'Stop that you naughty boy! (or girl)!' It breaks my heart every time I hear this. Because the child, at such a young age, is absolutely not an inherently naughty person. Their *behaviour* might be naughty, but they are not. Yet if those words are said to them repeatedly throughout those early years, they will eventually start to identify with being a 'naughty' child. And once you associate with that at an identity level of consciousness, it acts like a filter and a guide for them in life – all out awareness, but with a damaging impact never-the-less. I'm not suggesting this will make them go off the rails necessarily, but in terms of self-esteem and self-worth in later life, it's not helpful for anyone to have developed an early belief that 'I am a naughty person', especially when that belief was founded on flawed thinking and parenting.

So all you parents out there; please, please, please - always separate out the behaviour that was naughty (it is naughty to spit, scratch, punch or whatever) but reinforce that your child is a 'good boy or girl' and that good boys and girls don't behave in that way.

You probably have off days when you might say or do something you'd prefer not to have done. One of the main reasons this happens is simply because

you are in the *habit* of behaving in a certain way. When you have habits that have been ingrained for so long, all your neural pathways in your brain are working so efficiently that it is effortless and automatic to bring about that same outcome every time.

What do you turn to under stress? Chocolate? Biscuits? Alcohol? You probably do so on automatic pilot, as the neural pathways in your brain spark into life to run the same old programme that gets you to do what you've always done.

But the good news is that each time you make a new decision or choice with how to behave in the same set of circumstances, a new neural pathway is created and, after only a few times, becomes established enough that you genuinely move to a position of having a true choice available to you.

**What habits are you engaged in repeatedly that don't serve you?
List as many as you can;**

Pick one specifically that you would like to change – which one?

Now take a little time to reflect on this habit carefully. Whilst there is a part of you that wants to stop, there is also another part of you that drives this behaviour. Maybe it's the part that wants comfort or feels fearful and needs reassurance. What intention drives this habit? What exactly are you trying to achieve by behaving in this way?

Take some time for reflection and really connect with the part of you that drives this behaviour. How old is that part of you? Ask whether they would be willing to try an alternative way of achieving the desired outcome that was more healthy and appropriate, if it still

achieved the same result. What is the instinctive response you receive?

What alternative options do you have available to you for behaving differently on these occasions instead of just following your usual habits? Write out at least 10 possible options of what else you *could* do, and don't limit or discount anything at this stage. Remember that you are listing things you *could* do, not necessarily that you *would* do (there is a difference);

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2

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Now review this list and put a star next to each of the options that would still achieve your original intention, albeit in a different way (if none of your answers do, take some more time to think about and identify more examples).

Out of all the answers you have written, which possible alternative behaviour is the one that appeals to you the most?

On a scale of 1 -10, where 1 is the least and 10 is the most, how much do you want to change this behaviour?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(If you score it less than 8, go back to the original question and identify a different behaviour to work with. You need to be really motivated to want to change and less than 8/10 isn't a strong enough desire).

Now take yourself forward to a time in the near future where you see yourself in the same circumstances, and see yourself enjoying the full experience of behaving in the new way. Play it like a film in your mind, watch it from the outside so you see yourself doing things differently, then move inside so you have the felt experience of successfully behaving in the new way. Keep repeating this new behaviour again and again a few more times – all still in your mind. Because research shows that rehearsing an outcome in your mind, can be just as powerful as physically rehearsing it for real. You can actually achieve the same level of successful results.

There you are - you did it. You managed to behave in a way that feels good, and isn't harmful. Yet still gets you the results you want.

What was different for you? What did you say or do? How did you feel as you were doing it?

Doesn't that feel really, really good?

Isn't that worth fighting for?

Now you have practised this new behaviour a few times, you have set up a new neural pathway so that the next time you are in this situation, you will genuinely feel like you have a new choice available to you.

What *will* you decide to do?

It is really important that you take time during this week to repeat the work covered so far in this Secret.

Value yourself enough and really connect with your motivation, so you can prioritise this and spend *sufficient* time on it, ensuring you make a meaningful emotional connection with each step you take.

This is your time now, and you matter.