

THE
DAVIS FOUNDATION

FOR PROVIDING
EMOTIONAL COMFORT

Letter of January 10, 2007

Dear Reader,

Although I usually pump my own gas, when I leave on a long trip I go to a different gas station that has “full serve” and ask Willie, the competent and friendly attendant, to check all the fluids and the tire pressures in addition to filling up the gas tank. When I left for the Christmas holidays last month I felt badly having Willie check everything because my gas tank was already almost full so I gave him a sizable tip. To my surprise he told me that it was too much and tried to give it back to me. I insisted that he keep it and we wished each other a Merry Christmas. As I drove off I marveled at this man’s generosity. What enables a person to be so generous?

The mental apparatus strives to maintain an optimal stimulus level. It deals with understimulation by seeking additional stimuli but when we are overstimulated it causes us to diminish the excess by repeating the stimulus until its novelty wanes. We may do that by talking about it or simply by thinking about it.

A student who has won a prize will respond to his overstimulation by telling his friends and relatives and by thinking about how it may further his career. A woman who becomes engaged may handle her excitement by immersing herself in the details of her upcoming wedding.

Giving is another way of diminishing overstimulation. When you feel that you have received all that you need, and yet receive even more, you may find yourself giving to others. If you receive more than enough of a variety of things your response of giving to others may become generalized and generosity will become one of your character traits.

An act of giving is not typically a *true solution* because one act alone is not usually sufficient to end an overstimulation. Multiple responses are necessary. Giving is a *partial solution* because it diminishes the disequilibrium caused by the overstimulation.

Is giving always done to decrease the overstimulation of having one’s cup runneth over? No, it can serve as a partial solution for various kinds of chronic disequilibriations. Giving can be done to quell guilt feelings, to appease frightening figures, to portray oneself as superior, or even as an expression of spite. Although giving for these reasons lessens the distress it is responding to it creates a new, although milder, disequilibrium because it involves a loss. However, giving may be a true solution when it is done as part of a compromise to end discord if the resolution provides a greater gain.

Your Inner Guide can distinguish, by means of its access to your subliminal perceptions, whether someone who is giving you something is doing so with genuine



The Davis Foundation for
Providing Emotional Comfort
30 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 1125
Chicago, IL 60602

Tel: (312) 230-0114
Fax: (312) 230-0168
www.davis-foundation.org
info@davis-foundation.org

benevolence. And as your discomforts are resolved you will find that your cup overfloweth, as Willie's does, and you will take great pleasure in the benevolent giving that you do.

QUESTION:

I have noted several times that you say that the Inner Guide "repeats the new solutions until their novelty wanes sufficiently for them to enter awareness." How does a new solution enter awareness? -OR- How do I recognize a new solution? What keeps the new solution from entering awareness immediately?

ANSWER:

The mental apparatus works to maintain an optimum stimulus level because over- and understimulation are uncomfortable. For any given stimulus it will match the best available solution. Often the only available solution is a partial or false one rather than a true one. Solutions get locked in and are automatically matched each time a stimulus recurs.

In the presence of a complex stimulus a pause occurs following the stimulus allowing a new solution to be locked in if it is preferable. A new solution is often too overstimulating (i.e. too exciting) to enter awareness. The mental apparatus matches this overstimulation with the false solution of negation so the person initially remains unaware of it. For example, if someone gets a piece of very good news they may say, at first, "I can't believe it." They need to deny it briefly until its novelty wanes enough to be accepted. New solutions that are life changing are even more overstimulating and are denied or negated longer.

An Inner Guide repeats the new solution over and over to cause its novelty to wane. Eventually the overstimulation diminishes enough so that the new solution can then enter awareness.

You can't make a new solution enter awareness by conscious effort. The mental apparatus allows it when it is no longer too overstimulating.

Many new solutions manifest themselves very subtly and you may not realize for a while that there is a change. If you notice that something that used to make you anxious, depressed, or angry no longer does, you will realize that a good change has occurred. These changes are often noticed only in retrospect. If you find that something you have procrastinated on now becomes readily completed or accomplished, that is a change. When new ideas come into awareness they do so because an underlying change has occurred.

I welcome your questions and comments, and will publish as many of them as possible. I look forward to hearing from you, either by post or at info@davis-foundation.org. If you would like to be anonymous, just let me know.

Cordially,

Judith M. Davis

Volume 5 Number 1

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