

INTRODUCTION TO SAFETY

"Creative experiences can be produced regularly, consistently, almost daily in people's lives. It requires enormous personal security and openness and a spirit of adventure."

- Stephen Covey

Safety is the condition of being protected from harm or other non-desirable outcomes. Safety can also refer to the control of recognized hazards in order to achieve an acceptable level of risk.

- Wikipedia

LIST 5 WAYS that you feel creatively unsafe

WHY SAFETY?

Imagine you are locked in a dungeon so deep that light hardly ever penetrates. You are subjected to neglect and then abuse, alternating with no consistent logic. You are often set free and asked to do certain important things. No matter how well you try to do them, you are told it's not good enough, abused and neglected again. It seems you can do nothing right. But you keep your spirits up. You keep trying. The rules seem to change every day. And you keep trying. No surprise that those high castle walls that the King and Queen see as giving them safety and security are for you just another sign of terror that will never end.

This is the experience of the subconscious mind of most of us. It's not walls our subconscious needs to find the safety to transform. It's love.

Some people describe meeting their life partner as evidence of destiny. They saw him or her the first time and they knew. This gives them an onrush of excitement and in the same breath, a feeling of safety. The excitement comes and goes. It's the safety that really makes the difference.

The COVID crisis has shown us more radically and directly than ever the importance of mental and PHYSICAL safety to Innativity. The process of revising yourself is threatening, sometimes terrifying. Most people find being forced to transform inside an external crisis

straight-up impossible. In a crisis we fall back on our escape-the-lion techniques – which most of the time we should. But when the crisis itself poses challenges that have never been seen before, never been battle-tested, radical creative thinking and self-renewal may be the only viable solution. Even then, creating a feeling of safety for ourselves makes transformation easier. We become comfortable with the fact of arriving change and this allows us to accept the change with less, or without, resistance. Those who were willing, even enthusiastic, to embrace the changes COVID has brought on found it easiest to adapt.

As we have seen, uncertainty is not dangerous - it is a reaction to danger. Uncertainty causes excitement and then even peace. What determines our next reaction to our first reaction of uncertainty is the strength of the relationship between our conscious and unconscious minds. Another word we use for this is “resilience.”

Crisis cannot last long. It's exhausting. From crisis we move to struggle. To get through long struggle demands that resilience. What moves us from crisis to struggle is a choice to seek - or better, establish - safety.

Another way of looking at the concept of Safety here, is that putting Safety in place makes up for our gap in creative resilience. There is nothing wrong with a lower rate of resilience, by the way. We will be building it up in this process. For now, putting Safety measures in place moves us out of crisis and into struggle, where we can work to build our own creative strength.

Please note this - there is no space in crisis for Innotivity. We have seen that already with the lion example. The entire goal of crisis, for us, is to get out of it. To a safe space. Even struggle is a safe space. In struggle, creativity becomes pre-eminent.

Emotional pain and trauma only happen in your mind, and yet they feel like tangible experiences. Subconscious safety is theoretical and intangible, which, coming from the subconscious, it has to be. So it's hard to force a feeling of Safety to overcome trauma!

We have examined how our attachment to our perception of ourselves limits our flexibility of thought and our ability to innovate. And we have seen that releasing this attachment and reconstructing ourselves is the most effective route to Innotivity.

What is needed now is a truce.

You need to call this truce. To take charge of your own mind. Insist that your conscious and subconscious stop being so stubborn and selfish and co-dependent. That they kiss and make up. That they do their jobs finally.

In other words you need to start to be the boss of your own Innotivity, Inc. Your team is small but potent. You will build your new company on their shoulders. First teach them to work together. You may find this harder at first than dealing with real employees. But soon it will be easier. Because they know their jobs, actually. They were born into the family business. You're not bound by legal office protocols. You can be a gentle tyrant. You can take charge. The games at the end of this chapter will help.

Your conscious mind must become an adult now instead of a parent. It must offer the white flag and the friendly elbow (no longer “hand” as in the pre-COVID draft). It must stop fearing the subconscious and abusing it. If it resists, you must endorse and encourage its leadership as your direct subordinate. Your conscious mind wants to be in charge, so let it think it is, while also making it clear, at last, that you are on the job too. Let it forgive you for your having been on holiday all these years. Let it forgive the subconscious, even though there is nothing to forgive there. The conscious mind should beg to be forgiven, after years of unbidden dungeon-keeping. But forgive your conscious mind, quietly (don't tell it). Offer it absolution.

Your subconscious, remember, prefers images and feelings to words. Encourage the conscious mind to mount a quick, kind, clear, massive and gentle onslaught of acceptance and love to the subconscious. All the subconscious wants is freedom. So give it freedom.

Yep – Free Your Mind from Itself.

Give them both names. What name best exemplifies the qualities you want your conscious and subconscious to embody? Give them job titles, and offices of their own to work from. Take a piece of paper and crayons and design the offices. Design the boardroom where they meet. You are beginning the process of liberation from self-tyranny. Like any soap opera, this merits a proper arena for the drama to play out. So create one. What names will you give them?

WHAT IS SAFETY?

Safety occurs to most people as the absence of danger. The absence of pain and trauma. It isn't. Safety is tangible and positive, not the opposite of something. High castle walls make the King feel safe, but not the prisoner. Our first aim, yes, is for your subconscious to recognize the disappearance of harm. But Safety involves assuring it to trust this new feeling. Or even feel it. It might overlook it at first. It might not even notice a thing.

Your conscious begins the healing by offering the subconscious the chance to regain its citizenship. It offers a key to open the prison bars or the basement door. It leads the subconscious to a newly-built playground and stands back to let the subconscious play like the child it is. This child will play anyplace it is permitted to. It doesn't need fancy toys. A metaphorical stone or stick will do. Yet the playground, being in your mind, can be structured however you want it to. So why not make it a birthday party? Overdo it!

Actively create safety now as tangible and positive. Bring compassion like a ninja nun, radical empathy like a woodlands seer. Tell your subconscious clearly that you intend to do more than just relieve it from fear. It wants to believe you. It always wants to believe. Like most dogs that have been kicked many times, your subconscious will rebound very quickly when it starts to see a change. It's too loyal. It wants to trust you.

Offered Safety, the subconscious rediscovers freedom. Even the whiff of the scent of safety is enough to pique its interest in taking its role back as the source of innovation. Your job is to entice it, and then follow through. In a moment we will look at ways to do that.

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Harm puts the organism into the 4F response: fight, flight, freeze, fix. Which of the four is your subconscious in? Take a moment to note it below.

FIGHT

FLIGHT

FREEZE

FIX

Your subconscious fighting means being on the brink of insanity and in great turmoil. It's unlikely for most people reading this. If somehow you have a subconscious that is making this kind of noise and you are able to sanely live your life and read books, you need to act fast. Call that truce! Refuse to fight back. Let it think it can win.

Fleeing means receding, hiding. The subconscious has decided that the situation is serious. It's gone into hibernation. It's not frozen – it's shut down completely. You might be depressed. You might be perfectly content and not realize your subconscious is missing. Messages sent to the subconscious too loudly and too abruptly could wake it into a panic. But the opposite is more likely: not managing to wake it up at all.

"Freeze" as it relates to Innotivity is like the surprised lion, still calculating. It wants to take action but does not have enough evidence on one side or the other to make it move. The subconscious is alert and ready to participate.

Your subconscious doesn't know how to fix without the partnership of the conscious so being in "fix" state will have you in a state of confusion and probably anxiety. It may look "frozen" but this is different. This is your subconscious being active, but lost. You are most likely very edgy or even on medication, or feeling like you need it.

"Freeze" is the best state of the above four, by far. "Freeze" means the subconscious wants to act and is not convinced that you mean it damage. But you are unlikely to find yourself in a freeze state as you read this passage. You can't sustain this for long stretches, for obvious reasons. The lion saga lasts for minutes, not months.

Although the standard thought is "fight or flight", most of us are either in flight or fix. Flight is by far the most common in us as humans today. The subconscious has given up. It has fully agreed with the conscious mind's interpretation of yourself

What you may find is that as you begin your efforts to create safety, your subconscious will wake up or slow down into "freeze" – willing to consider changing but not convinced yet. That's great! It's progress. Keep going. There is nothing to be afraid of here. The more you call on your subconscious to notice your efforts, the faster you will make progress. Just keep it kind and gentle.

We are not going to eliminate risk in one go. We can be satisfied to reduce the risk to acceptable levels. We do not have to be edgy to guide our subconscious immediately to comfort. To reorient its existing terror or confusion or loneliness **toward** comfort is a great feat. One step at a time.

What's critical is to remember that our conscious mind can easily trick us. It will say "I know." It will say "I got it." It will say, "I'm excited, I'm in on this!"

Conscious knowledge and acceptance is not sufficient. Keeping our boxes in place all this time has been the conscious mind's biggest victory. To get it to understand that ending this same situation is the best way to discover itself free and safe is not an easy sell. So the very first step with both minds is to appeal to how they feel.

Your subconscious will be delighted to feel actively soothed. No adult can calm a five-year-old with logic.

The subconscious, like the small child, can best be soothed by love.

But the truth is, this applies to the conscious mind too.

Protection is the core of expressing love. Protection can come via concealment, safeguarding, sheltering, liberation, or many more approaches. Protection can be one-sided or it can be a partnership. At its core, it is the impulse to ensure that something I consider valuable and vital, something or someone that I cherish is not lost.