

Human Development

It is only when we can muster the courage to face the challenges that have affected our environments that we can begin to move forward into a different place that will bring full self-expression, power and freedom. We must do this in order to create a strong foundation for future generations. The challenges we face as individuals, leaders, communities and organizations are calling upon us to be rigorously honest about who we are “being” in our lives and in our work and to accept the fact that we are responsible for what is happening now and that we are really the only ones who have the power to make the needed evolution. Likewise, we must take full responsibility for the future we are creating for others and ourselves.

Human development is a key function in strengthening the world we live in. While I am not an academic in this field I have a wealth of experience that I bring to this conversation. Leadership for instance is something that can be learned but is unlikely to be developed by reading books or studying in a classroom setting. Leadership is a skill that is learned on the job and can be accelerated through interventions that cause one to pause and reflect upon the responsibilities that are necessary skills of a leader.

“Conflict is often about underlying stories that are not heard or understood by the other person in the conflict.”

Our society has developed into one that relies heavily on science and the concept of cause and effect. However, modern physics tells us that the world that we know is a world that we create by observation. Each of us observes and interprets the world differently even though we all participate in the same events. It is the stories we create about how the world works that begin to bedevil us, not when we recognize that they are only the stories that we make up to explain ‘the way it is’ but when we start to believe them to be true and necessary for our survival. It is then that we find ourselves interacting with others and the world through the fears and the selective blindness that our stories create for us.

In such a world, each individual, in order to ‘survive’, struggles to validate the ‘truth’ he or she believes is real and to try to overpower the seemingly conflicting ‘truths’ of others. Power struggles in relationships are often a function of such opposing stories at work in an organization or community. But suppose that there is another way to look at all this and to empower ourselves in the process. Suppose each of us understands that the story of ‘how it is around here’ is of our own creation, our way of explaining a vast and possibly unknowable world and we can choose any interpretation of the events we want. At that point we can create a world that works in a powerful way to achieve Impossible Things. This is a world in which our old disempowering stories no longer limit what is possible, and new powerful and inclusive visions create unprecedented possibilities for all concerned.

(continued...)

My life experiences as an Aboriginal man in Canada have enabled me to observe what really works in terms of human development. I know that most often the standard management training programs which focus on changing our actions and behavior in our daily lives and in the workplace seem to work for a day or so but have little long term impact. What is needed is for individuals and organizations to examine their ways of 'being' in their lives and in the workplace and to take responsibility for the negative and debilitating "stories" that form the culture of both our communities and our workplaces. Leadership has the role and the responsibility of blazing new paths and creating new and inspiring stories (frequently called 'visions) that strengthen and empower their people and their organizations. How is a leader or group of leaders to do this, by giving time, commitment and energy to it. By coaching individuals to eliminating old habits and ways of "being" through training and support.

I bring a huge capacity for compassion and relatedness to the training, mediation and coaching that I do. For a long time I have also been a leader in modeling the path of sobriety, balance and wellness as an Aboriginal man who has truly lived many of the terrible stories that have burdened our people in the past and continue to do so today.

Supporting others in their journey to wellness and empowerment is my mission in life. Having lived the journey myself, I have powerful insights into how to do this in a way that truly makes a difference and produces real results. As well, I continue to evolve as a man and as a coach for others. As I continue to push the envelope in my own life in areas of relationship, communications, self-expression, creativity, balance and responsibility, I am able to test these insights in my own personal and business practices and to demonstrate the results of this approach.

Results are what matter to me.

In Unity,
M.Thorpe & Associates Inc.
Per:

Matt Thorpe, Senior Director