

DOING WHAT'S RIGHT—FINDING AN OBJECTIVE MEASURE

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Excerpts from *THE LEADERSHIP INTEGRITY CHALLENGE*

What is the right thing? By whose standard? By whose interpretation? From what perspective? Judgments of right or wrong, good or bad, ugly or beautiful are subjective. They are opinions, not facts. To reiterate, at each emotional level, individuals have different subjective, but generally predictable, sets of associated attitudes and behaviors. By knowing these sets, we can assess a person's corresponding level of emotional maturity. Similarly, by knowing the emotional level at which the person is functioning, we can reliably describe that person's basic attitudes and perspectives as well as predict likely behavior.

At any level, individuals are able to provide arguments as to the rightness of their perspectives. How persuasive they are depends on how closely those arguments align or resonate with the perspectives of their audience, which, in turn, depend on the audience's emotional level. At any level, behavior is cross-context; that is, behavior in one arena of life will be seen in other arenas. For example, individuals who violate/honor agreements with their spouse will likely violate/honor agreements in business.

The levels of emotional maturity represent the degree to which essence qualities and values are being actualized. Those qualities, mentioned in chapter 3, include love, authenticity, honesty, allowance, forgiveness, presence, generosity and compassion, among others. The degree to which those qualities are allowed, encouraged, supported, and actually present is a measure of a person's or an organization's emotional maturity.

The more these essence qualities are present, the higher the level of emotional maturity. The higher the level, the broader and more inclusive the viewpoint; the greater the discernment, the less the influence of biases; and, the more objective and trustworthy any resultant perspective is likely to be. Therefore, the levels of emotional maturity provide a vehicle for better *understanding a person's subjective perspective*. This, in turn, *allows a more objective evaluation* of that person's potential for both knowing what's right and doing it.

Make us choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong and never be content with a half truth when the whole can be won.

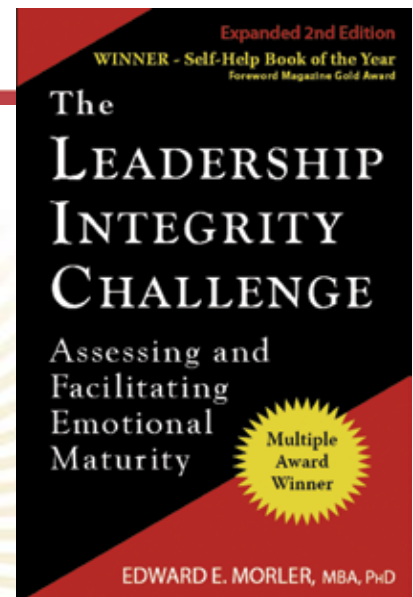
—West Point Cadet Prayer

THE SIX LEVELS OF EMOTIONAL MATURITY

The individual levels of emotional maturity are named as follows:

- Level 6 — Leader
- Level 5 — Doer
- Level 4 — Coper
- Level 3 — Opposer
- Level 2 — Manipulator
- Level 1 — Victim

Level 6 represents the essence of emotional maturity. At this level, an individual communicates and performs with integrity. Levels 5 through 1 reflect varying degrees of



emotional immaturity and a corresponding lack of integrity, with Level 5 being the least immature. As we move down the levels, manifestations of responsible, mature behavior exponentially decline (See Figure 6.1). Below Level 1 is the arena of psychosis (extreme emotional dysfunction). Be cognizant that each level has a range within itself. As we move higher or lower within a level, we begin to see more characteristics common to the next higher or lower level.

True empowerment, with all its positive aspects, only barely begins at Level 4. Positive impact increases exponentially as we move up the levels. The higher the level, the greater the fundamental sense of security. This corresponds to a positive willingness and ability to create—to learn, grow and contribute. The higher the level, the greater a person’s ability to deal with change constructively. Conversely, at the lower levels, individuals predictably are overwhelmed and dysfunctional in the face of change. The farther down the levels a person is, the more they perceive life situations as problematic.

Being a good leader is inseparable from being emotionally mature (see “What Makes Leadership Positive,” page 276). Emotionally mature leaders consistently insist upon and model striving for personal growth and excellence. They neither cut corners nor demand perfection (an unattainable state in a dynamic universe). Rather, they strive for excellence and ensure delivery of quality and performance consistent with promised results.

Effective leaders and responsible associates function at Level 6 or at a high Level 5. These individuals, with their comparatively broad perspective, are aware of and sensitive to others and to different viewpoints. They have an expanded awareness that everything they do has an impact, and that they are responsible and accountable for that impact. For the marginal contributor functioning at Level 4, this sense of responsibility and accountability is rapidly diminishing. For people chronically functioning at Level 3

and below, responsibility is not part of their repertoire, only pretenses of it. These people are dysfunctional and a liability to themselves and others.

Preceding the following descriptions of each of the six levels is a set of Haiku verses. Haiku is a popular form of Japanese verse written in 17 (5-7-5) syllables, employing evocative allusions or comparisons. The verses are intended to provide a sense of the flavor that characterizes each level.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Morler is president of Morler International, a management training and development firm specializing



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