

BOOK SUMMARY

Book Summary: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Summary by Stephen R. Covey



By Fabian • December 22, 2022

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Stephen R. Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* has revolutionized how we think about personal and professional success since its first publication in 1989. If you want to know more about this book, read this *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* summary and learn everything in this book in a matter of minutes.

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The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Summary PDF

Final Words

Stephen R. Covey is one of the most influential voices in personal development, leadership, and business. He is best known for his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, which has sold over 25 million copies and has been translated

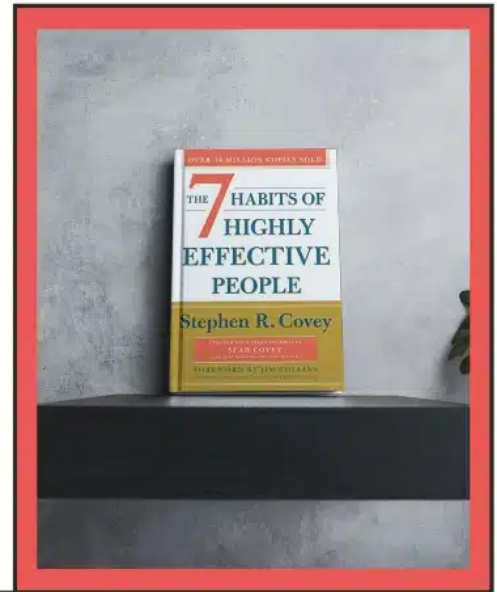
into more than 40 languages. Covey's book has been widely credited with helping people and organizations become more effective, efficient, and successful.



SUMMARY

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

STEPHEN R. COVEY

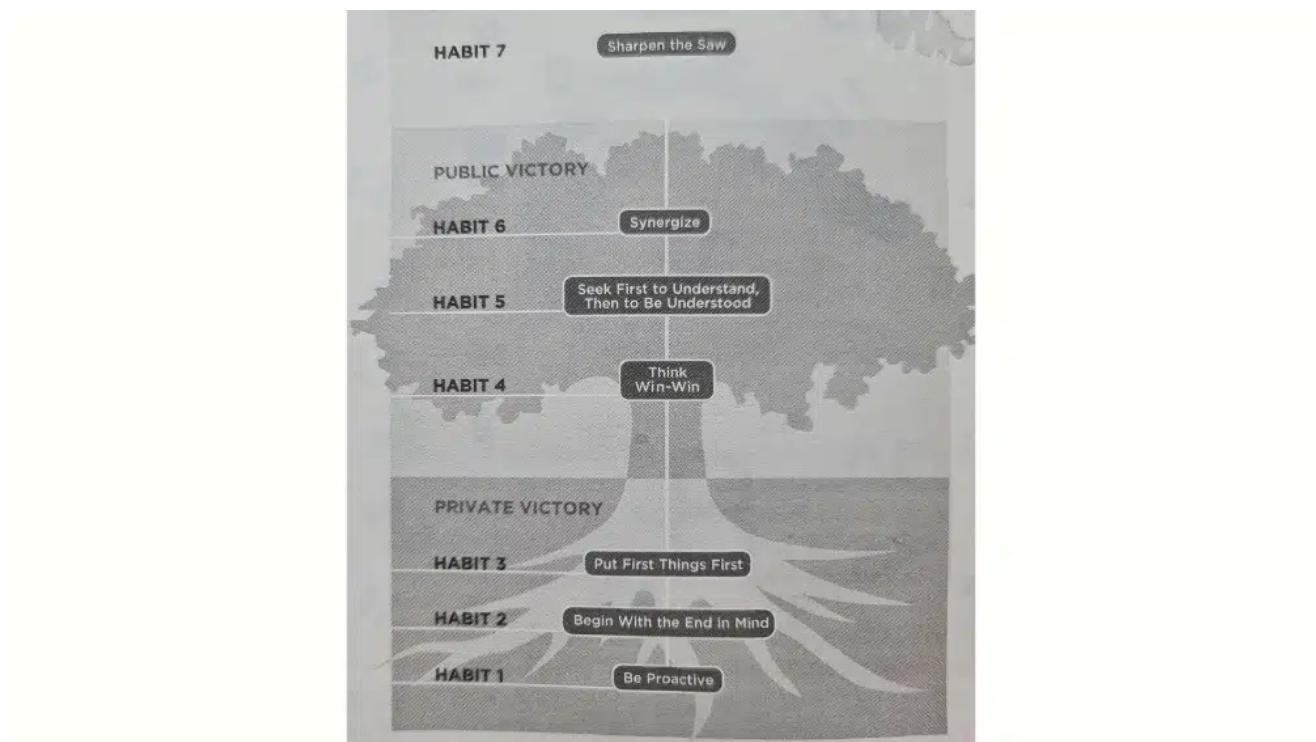


He was also an acclaimed speaker and leadership trainer, and his teachings were rooted in timeless principles. His philosophy revolved around the idea that success is achieved by **focusing on the core values of trustworthiness, respect, fairness, integrity, and honesty.**

Covey believed that by consistently applying these values and habits, people could achieve personal and professional success. His teachings have had a lasting impact on millions of lives and continue to be a source of inspiration in business and personal development.

What are The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People?

1. The first habit is to be **proactive**. This means people should take responsibility for their lives and make conscious choices rather than reacting to events.
2. The second habit is, to **begin with the end in mind**. This means people should focus on their long-term goals and plan for them.
3. The third habit is to put **first things first**. This means people should prioritize their tasks and focus on the most important ones first.
4. The fourth habit is to **think win-win**. This means that people should strive for win-win solutions in their relationships with others.
5. The fifth habit is to seek **first to understand and then to be understood**. This means that people should listen more than they talk and try to understand the perspective of others.
6. The sixth habit is to **synergize**. This means that people should work together to create better results than they can achieve individually.
7. The seventh habit is to **sharpen the saw**. This means that people should take time to renew themselves physically, mentally, and spiritually.



Paradigms And Principles

Stephen R. Covey starts his book by explaining what paradigms and principles are. They are the foundation of The 7 Habits of Highly Efficient People, and it's essential to understand these two words and their meanings.

Paradigms



"You always reap what you sow; there is no shortcut."

STEPHEN R. COVEY

Models, theories, perceptions, assumptions, or frames of reference are known as paradigms. This is the method we use to "view" the world. How we make sense of, comprehend, and interpret the world and everything happening around us.

Paradigms are influential. If you switch your paradigm, your whole life will transform. We believe we observe things as they are, and we are unbiased. But this is not the truth. We observe the world not as it is but as we have been taught to see it. **When we portray what we see, we effectively portray ourselves, our ideas, and our paradigms.**

The more conscious we are of our basic paradigms, maps, or beliefs, the more we can take responsibility for them. We can evaluate them against reality, pay attention to others, and be open to their perception. This way, we get a broader picture and a much more neutral outlook.

Stephen narrates an incident in his book that demonstrates a significant change in perspective: He was in the metro car on a Sunday afternoon, where everything was tranquil. Then, a man with two youngsters stepped in. The kids were noisy and unruly, and the atmosphere in the carriage quickly shifted.

The father took a seat and closed his eyes. The children shouted, threw things, and even took other passengers' possessions. It was difficult not to become frustrated. Eventually, Stephen spoke to the man: "Sir, your kids are really agitating a lot of

folks.

Would you mind exercising some control over them?" The man opened his eyes and said gently: "You are right. I should do something. We just arrived from the hospital, where their mother passed away approximately an hour ago. I don't know what to make of it, and I believe that they don't know how to process it either."

At that moment, Stephen's concept of the situation completely altered. He started to look at things differently, think differently, feel differently, and act differently.



"If we want to make significant, quantum change, we need to work on our basic paradigms."

STEPHEN R. COVEY

Principles

Principles are natural laws that cannot be broken. Take, for instance, the rule of fairness. Equity and justice are based on this concept. **Though there is a dispute about how righteousness is understood and attained, almost everyone is aware of it.**

Integrity and honesty are also fundamental principles. They are the basis of trust, necessary for collaboration and long-term individual and interpersonal growth. Another principle is service, which focuses on making a contribution. Evolution is another principle – tapping into potential and honing skills.

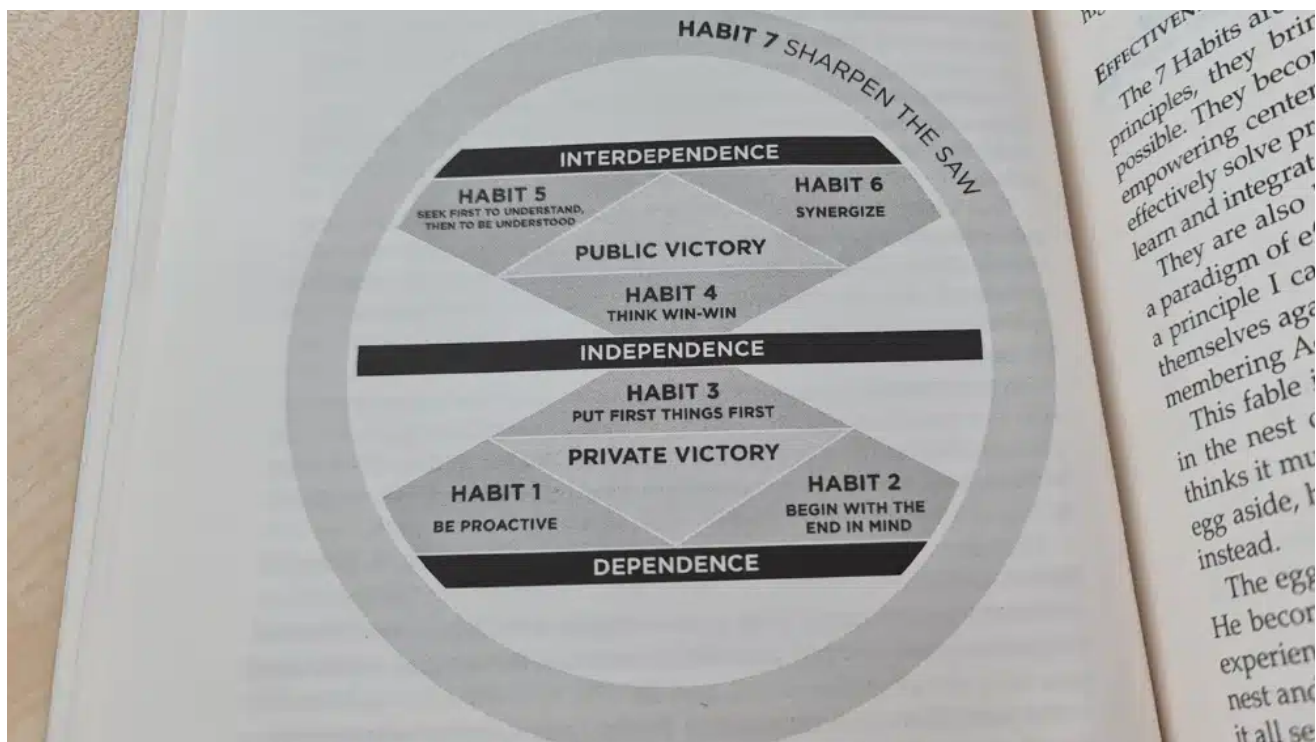
There are different principles, but they are unlike practices and values. Practices are particular to a situation, and a principle is a profound, fundamental reality that can be applied universally. **Principles are standards of human behavior that have been shown to have lasting, permanent value.**

Privat Victories

It's essential, to begin with the first habit and move up to the seventh. Habits 1, 2, and 3 are personal successes, while habits 4, 5, and 6 are public accomplishments. Before achieving public victory, you have to focus on yourself, score in the inner game, and then, when you are ready, move on to the public victory.

To illustrate, when you initiate building your muscles, it takes a while before they start to grow. However, being determined to go to the gym and build your muscles is a private victory. **After a few weeks of continuously going to the gym, it becomes a public victory. People will begin to recognize your enhanced fitness level.**

There's no way to bypass this. You must have private victories first before you can have public wins. Let's begin with the personal victories, habits 1, 2, and 3.



Habit 1 – Be Proactive



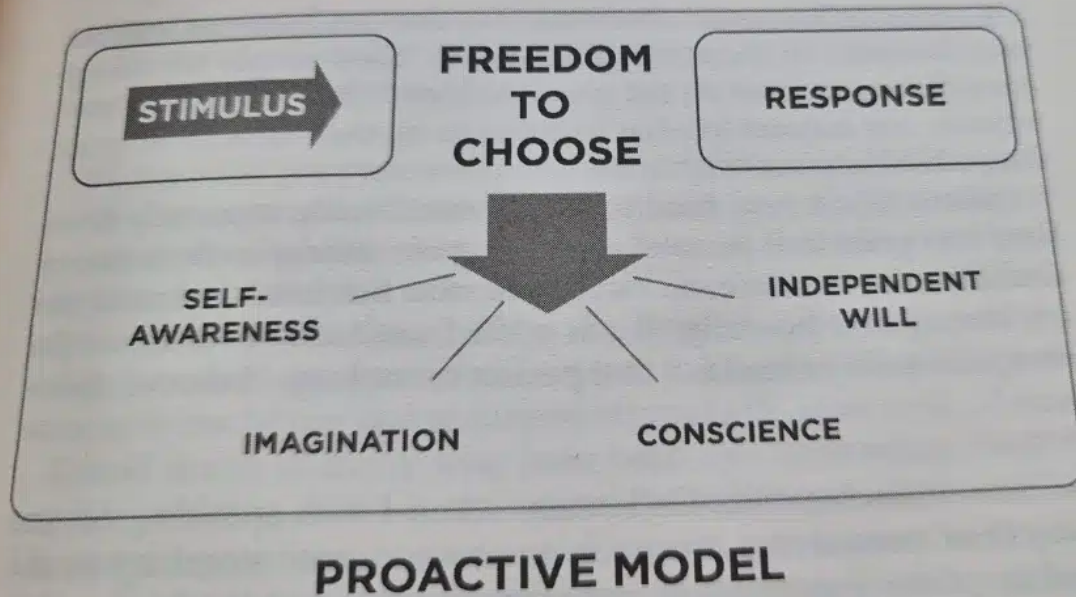
“Between stimulus and response, man has the freedom to choose.”

STEPHEN R. COVEY

As individuals, we are in charge of our lives – that’s what being proactive is all about. If we look at the word responsibility, it contains the word “response” – the capacity to pick our own response. Highly effective people realize this concept.

They don’t blame their conduct on environmental factors, situations, or circumstances. For instance, reactive individuals tend to be affected by their surroundings. If the weather is nice, they feel good. If it’s not, it influences their state of mind and their productivity. Proactive individuals, however, take their own weather with them – they are the same no matter the conditions. There are other things we can’t control, like when someone offends us or how other people behave in general.

However, we can choose how we will act when someone says something to us or when it’s raining. We have the power to pick what we want to say or how we want to respond in the window of opportunity between the prompt and our response. **The prompt is when someone offends us or when it’s raining. Our answer is whether we get upset or remain tranquil. Our answer is entirely within our control.**



Proactive people focus their energy on the aspects they can control, the circle of influence. In contrast, reactive people concentrate on the circle of concern, giving attention to other people's flaws, the issues in the environment, or matters they cannot control. This leads to blaming, accusing, and a sense of being a victim.

Moreover, the language of proactive people differs from that of reactive people. For example, proactive people will say things such as: "I choose, I prefer, I will." Whereas reactive people will use phrases like "That's just the way I am," "I have to do that," or "if only...". Such sentences and beliefs remove their power, leaving them vulnerable to their environment.

Our capacity to stay true to our words and commitments lies at the center of our area of power. This is an integral part of our development. **Having the capacity to remain committed to ourselves is the key to forming effective habits.**

Acknowledging that we have power over our lives is fundamental to our effectiveness and the other six habits of highly successful people. Embrace your role as an actor instead of a victim. Don't let life pass by, be proactive and make things happen. Take control of your life, don't just be a passenger. Create your future, not be bound by the past.

Habit 2 – Begin With The End In Mind

Starting with the goal in view is based on the concept that everything is created twice. There's a mental or first creation and a physical or second creation to everything. Consequently, when you begin with the end in mind, you gain a fresh view.

For instance, when you build a house, you devise every detail before putting the first nail in place. As a result, you are definitely aware of what sort of house you want. **The most efficient way to start with the end in mind is to make a personal mission statement, a philosophy, or a creed.**

By placing our lifestyles in line with correct principles, we create a reliable base for the growth of the four life support factors. These four factors are security, guidance, wisdom, and power. These four factors are connected. And an interrelated individual is also someone who follows principles.

The underlying fundamentals, classic principles, and shared values are the foundations of a principle-based or interdependent lifestyle. A person living in this manner will try to be impartial and look at all the options available while making a choice. **After they make a decision, they can be confident and proud of their selection.**

Writing or examining a mission statement will profoundly affect a person because it requires them to contemplate and adequately arrange their values and ensure their actions align with their convictions. To write an effective mission statement, one could ask themselves such questions as:

- Describe a time when you were deeply inspired.
 - What are 10 things that you absolutely, positively love to do?
 - Think of a person who has made a positive difference in your life. What qualities does that person have that you would like to develop?
 - If you could spend one day in a great library studying anything you wanted, what would it be?
-

Exercise Begin With The End In Mind

Stephen R Covey proposed a thought-provoking activity where you can envision yourself at your own funeral. Grab a pencil and paper and **think about being at your own funeral with four speakers**. One speaker is a family member, such as a brother, sister, or other relatives. The second speaker is a friend.

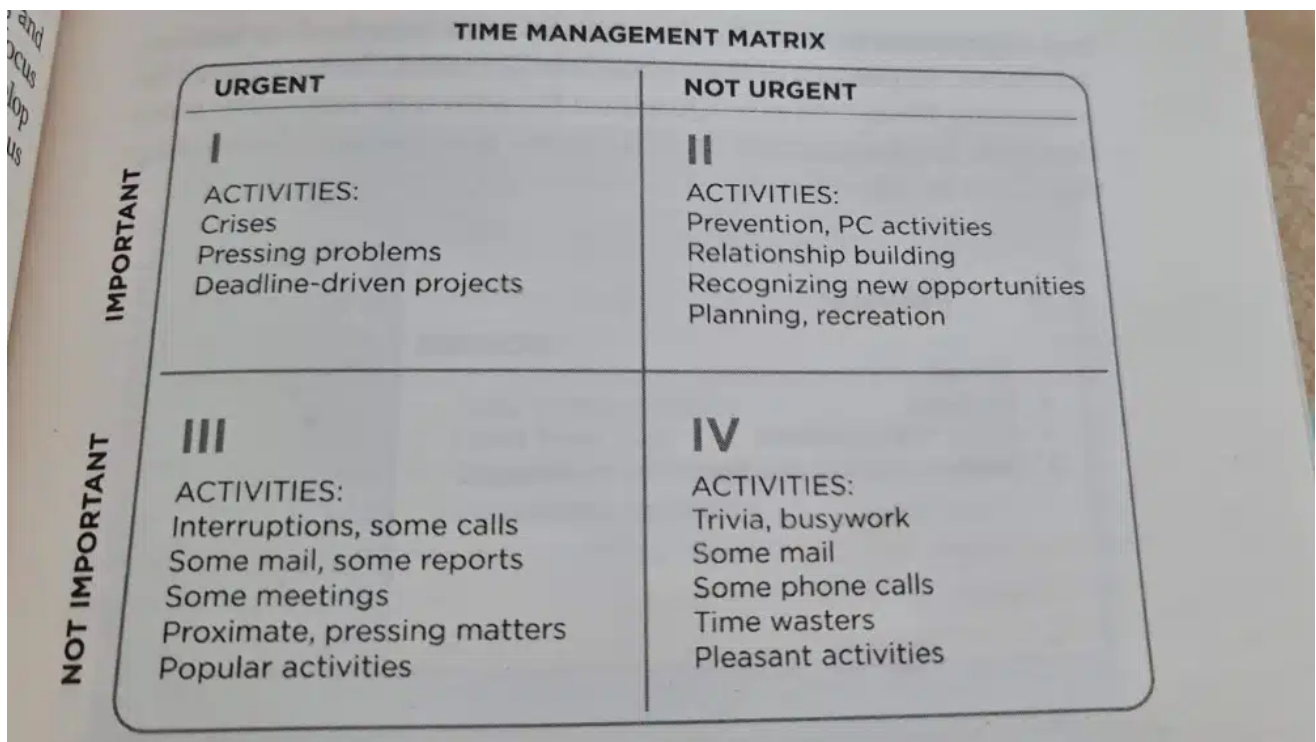
The third speaker is from your job or professional life. The last speaker is from a community organization or church. Consider what each speaker would say about you and your life. How would you like to be remembered as a husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, cousin, friend, or co-worker? **What impact would you like to have made on their lives?**

Habit 3 – Put First Things First

Habit three is a concept related to managing time wisely. Stephen R. Covey emphasized the importance of putting the most important tasks first. He organized activities into four quadrants, recognizing there is a **difference between something urgent and important, important but not urgent**, etc. Therefore, it is essential to consider a task's urgency and importance before prioritizing it.

When something is urgent, it needs to be addressed without delay. It's an immediate call to action that tends to be noticeable. **But the thing is, it usually isn't that important. For example, the ringing phone is urgent but not important.** The significance of something lies in the results it produces.

It will be related to your ambitions, values, or goals of priority if it is important. We usually react to urgent matters, but important ones that are not urgent need us to take the initiative and be proactive. This is the realm of Quadrant 2. What kind of action do you spend the most time on in your everyday life?



When you agree to do something, you are, at the same time, declining another activity. Keep this in mind and ensure you only agree to the most crucial tasks. Many people think that their lack of discipline is their main issue. However, Stephen has a different opinion.

The dilemma is that they haven't made their priorities a part of their conscious and subconscious mind. They haven't really followed the second habit. The way to go is not to prioritize what's scheduled but to arrange your priorities. One of the best ways to prioritize your responsibilities is to establish a weekly plan. For instance, to stay physically fit, you should block out an hour in the next three or four days to work out.

Many individuals are unwilling to entrust their tasks to someone else because they think it will take too much effort and they can do the job better themselves. Nevertheless, there is an effective way to delegate. This technique rests on the idea of recognizing the self-knowledge, creativity, awareness, and free will of others.

"One of the best ways to prioritize your responsibilities is to establish a weekly plan."

STEPHEN R. COVEY

When they are allowed to take control and feel as though they are held responsible, people tend to put in more effort and take more pride in the task. Guide them by showing them the possible mistakes that could occur, but do *not* tell them what to do. Let them be accountable for the outcomes and allow them to experience the consequences, and **they will work better and have more fun with the job.**

Public Victories

After you have become adept at being proactive, having the final aim in mind, and prioritizing, you are ready to move on to public accomplishments. There is no way to bypass the first three habits. Habits 4, 5, and 6 are think win-win, seek to understand before seeking to be understood and synergizing. You can only work on the last three habits once you have already mastered the first three.

Habit 4 – Think Win-Win

“You can’t be successful with other people if you haven’t paid the price of successful with yourself.”



STEPHEN R. COVEY

Win/win is not just a strategy but an entire philosophy of how people interact with one another. The alternatives are win/lose, lose/win, and lose/lose. Win/win is the idea that there is a better, higher way to go about things.

It is essential to remember that No Deal is always a viable option. This allows you to remain open to possibilities without persuading or manipulating others. Ultimately, **the only way to create a win/win situation is to be mindful of what the other person is thinking and feeling.** To achieve true success, both parties should be content with the outcome.

To engage in principled negotiation, one must **differentiate between the person and the issue, concentrate on interests** and not on stances, create options beneficial to both parties, and demand impartial standards.

1. **Initially, it is essential to comprehend the problem from the other person’s point of view.**
2. It is also vital to recognize the primary issues and worries, not just perspectives, regarding the matter.
3. Moreover, one should determine what results would be satisfactory for all involved.
4. Lastly, develop possible new alternatives to accomplish those outcomes. Research indicates that cooperative approaches typically produce better results than competitive ones.

Habit 5 – Seek First To Understand, Then To Be Understood

There are four main communication ways: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The proverb, “seek first to understand, then to be understood,” suggests that we should focus on understanding the other person’s point of view. **Unfortunately, most of us do not take the time to do this; instead, we only listen to respond.**

However, the highest form of listening is known as **empathic listening**, which involves understanding the other person emotionally and intellectually. This kind of listening doesn’t require agreement. **Instead, it utilizes all of our senses to comprehend the other person, looking for their feelings, meanings, and behaviors. Empathic listening is all about understanding.**

It is imperative to have the willingness to comprehend what is being said. Listen from the viewpoint of the other individual instead of your own. The most effective way to do this is to restate what is being said and try to comprehend their emotions. For example, if your child says to you: “Dad, I’ve had it! School is for the birds!”.

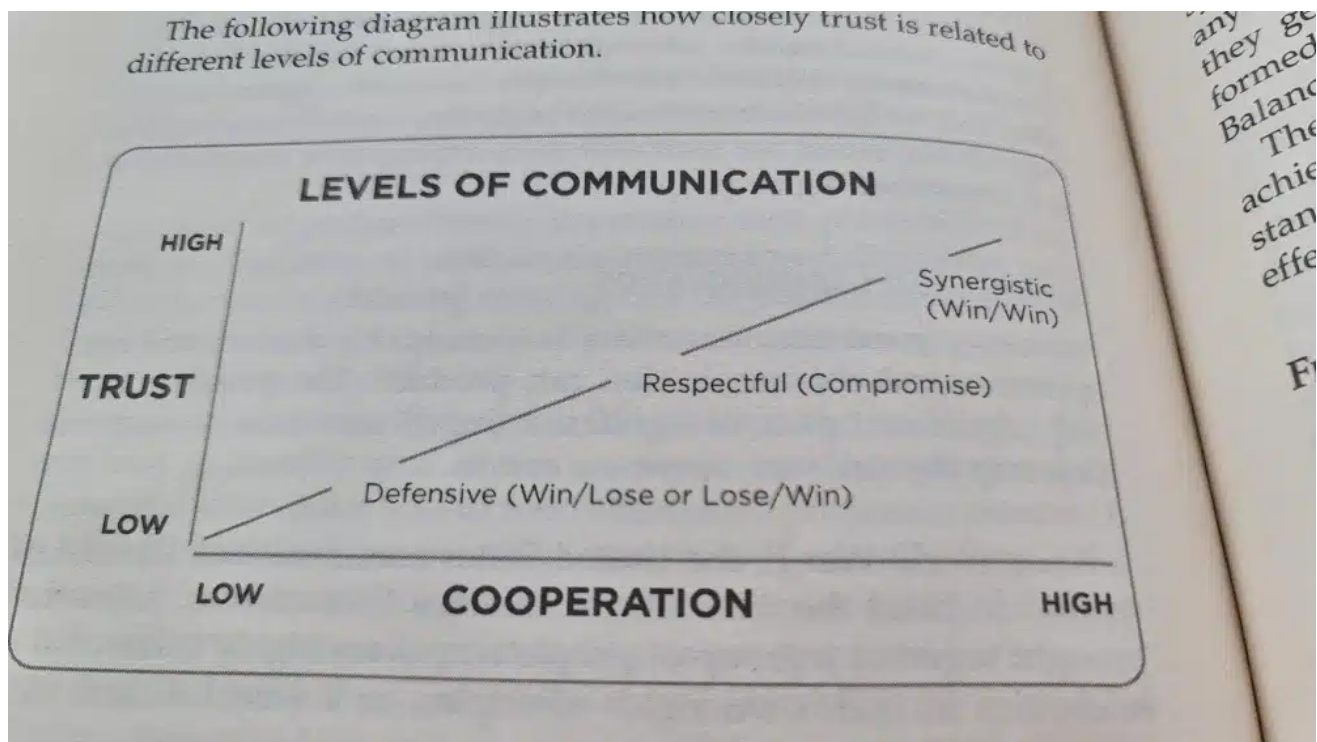
You can repeat what they said while reflecting on their feelings by responding with: **“You are really frustrated about school.”** By listening carefully and attempting to understand what the other person is feeling, people will be more likely to open up to you.

Habit 6 – Synergize

Synergistic behavior is widespread in the natural world, and the task is to use these same principles of cooperative collaboration in our social encounters. **When you engage in synergy, you invite a broad range of new potentialities, different options, and alternative possibilities into your thinking and feeling.**

Synergy is a highly effective way of achieving success for all. This means that two people working together can produce a much more significant result than the sum of their individual efforts. A synergy is a high form of win/win. Synergy means

that 1 + 1 may equal 8, 16, or even 1600.



Acknowledging diversity among individuals is the fundamental concept that makes synergy possible. The cognitive, emotional, and physical variations between individuals are the basis for understanding and appreciating the distinctions.

The key to enjoying those distinctions is recognizing that all people have their own way of viewing the world and accepting that this is the way they are. We have to identify the different perspectives and have respect for one another. We should also allow for the possibility that **both points of view can be correct instead** of viewing a situation as being either one thing or the other.

If you wish to introduce synergy, you must use the drive of habit four, the expertise of habit five, and the communication of habit six to tackle the opposing forces. You must set up an environment that is secure in discussing these forces.

This will result in the formation of shared goals, and the entire organization will move forward, usually in a manner no one expected. You are unable to control the viewpoint of others during an interdependent meeting or the synergistic process itself. Still, the synergy inside of yourself is something that you have total control over.

Habit 7 – Sharpen The Saw

The seventh habit in the seven habits paradigm sequence is to **set aside time to work on improving oneself**. This habit is particularly important as it is the foundation for the other habits and can ultimately lead to the most rewarding investment of all – investing in ourselves.

Investing in ourselves should include four distinct areas: physical, spiritual, mental, and social/emotional. To stay physically fit, devote around three to six hours a week to exercise. The spiritual dimension involves connecting with your values and being inspired by sources that lift you up. Mentally, challenge yourself by learning new things instead of mindlessly watching television. And lastly, the social and emotional aspect involves how we interact with and treat others.

The actions taken to hone your skills in one area will benefit other aspects because they are intertwined. Your physical well-being has an influence on your mental health. Your spiritual capability affects your social and emotional stability. **As you advance in one part, your talent in another area also increases.** These combined create a positive cycle, making you stronger with time.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Summary PDF

Download the “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” pdf summary today! The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People summary in PDF offers a quick look into the seven key principles that will help you achieve your goals, overcome challenges, and live a better life.

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Final Words

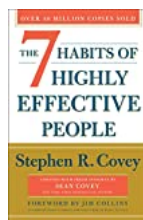
Establishing a moral character and living a life of love and assistance is challenging. It is not a simple solution, yet it is feasible. **It starts with a wish to concentrate our lives on the proper ideals, to break away from the models made by other influencers, and the security of inappropriate habits.**

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At times we make errors. But by centering our lives on accurate standards and generating a balanced concentration between doing and developing our ability to do, we become reinforced in our cause of making successful, advantageous, and harmonious lives for ourselves and our prosperity.

Private victories must be earned before public victories can be accomplished. It is not possible to switch the order. **Every change begins with you.** Every time you start considering the issue is outside, that very thought is the issue. But you can do it. The capability is within you. But you know this by now after reading The 7 Habits of Highly Efficient People summary.

SALE



11,855 Reviews

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: 30th Anniversary Edition (The Covey Habits Series)

- Covey, Stephen R. (Author)
- English (Publication Language)
- 464 Pages - 05/19/2020 (Publication Date) - Simon & Schuster (Publisher)

\$12.26

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The key is to honestly have the will to change, and you will achieve success and live a life of integrity.

Best, Fabian

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