

Gently Creating Future Patterns

I had the delightful experience of being an observer of a young family, and it caused me much delight. A father was with his 3 or 4 year old daughter, waiting outside a store for the mother who was shopping. The little girl asked her father, "When is mummy going to be finished?" Perhaps carrying some of his own boredom, he responded, "I dare you to go in and ask mummy when she will be finished." That struck the little girl as a fantastic idea and off she headed. Instantly the father called, "No, don't do that. I was only joking." The little girl returned, clearly confused, and asked why she shouldn't say that. The father then said, "Go and ask mummy if she needs any help. Ask her if there is anything you can carry for her." Less inspired the little girl sat there, mulling this over. A little while later she got up and headed into the store. Where was her head? What was she going to say to her mother? How had she sorted her confused world.

Author

[Stephen Harrison](#) BSc (Hons), PMP, FPMINZ

Abstract

A real-life example of how simple it is for us to pick up patterns and behaviours that become our norm for life.

Keywords

Childhood patterns, learning

First Published

3 June 2013

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Great to see a happily functioning family

Shortly after the mother with the little girl and a toddler brother emerged.

The little boy then went exploring and in his wanderings he turned, saw me sitting and playing on my iPhone, and rushed up to me grabbing the phone. The initial response from his parents was shock and an element of panic. The obvious question of how would this stranger respond was quickly answered as I smiled at him and had a friendly chat. He did not get my phone but he also got positive reinforcement that he was okay. The parents seemed relieved.

It is lovely to see happy families together and acting as a functioning unit, and in this instance they were. However, even in that short episode a number of future patterns and beliefs were being established. There was clearly "Interrupting strangers is not safe." "Caution

around unknown people is sensible". The little girl learned, or at least started to, that her father does not always speak plainly or communicate what he means. Adults don't always speak what they mean.

Is it any wonder that by the time we are adults we speak and others don't trust us, question what we mean, or even challenge whether we are being real, or a host of other possibilities. Each little confusing change of direction; each expression of concern or fear; each redirection away from something we were doing, taught us what was acceptable and what was not, or shaped our beliefs and patterns of behaviour. They are not all a problem except when we unconsciously repeat the learned behaviours and fail to rewrite the scripts given to us as children. What scripts, beliefs, patterns of behaviour do you still use that no longer serve you?

For more information related to themes in this article, refer to chapter 6 (Deciphering Your Internal State) of: Harrison, S. G. (2012). [*Appreciate the Fog: Embrace Change with Power and Purpose*](#). Auckland, New Zealand: Xlibris Corporation.

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