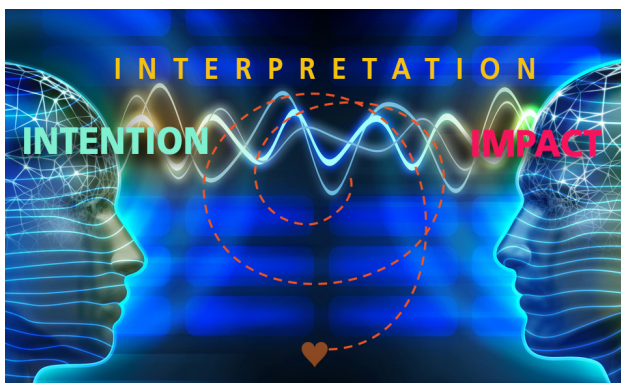


USING THE THIRD EYE

When conversations trigger the primitive brain, we lose our executive functions.

Leaders who only focus on their intention, and do not see their impact, are living in an I-centric world. They are not aware of how their words can cause others to react with fear, and are often seen as insensitive to others' feelings. When we are able to link intention and impact we are using our Third Eye. The ability to link intention and impact is hardwired in all human beings. Yet some people spend much time focusing on their intentions, and do not see the impact they are having on others. Their sensitivity and awareness of others go down. The Third eye is more than sensitivity. When we focus on developing the Third Eye, we also gain higher levels of wisdom, insight, strategy, empathy/compassion, foresight, integrity and trust. This is because our Third Eye capacities live in the prefrontal cortex and heart connection – and they go hand in hand, or as I say, 'heart to heart'. When we are able to link intention and impact we develop a high level of sensitivity to others, and we pay greater attention to our words and conversational impact. That also means the part of our brain containing our ability to connect, navigate and grow with others opens up exponentially, giving us more foresight.



When we only focus on our intention, we can often have a negative impact on others, and activate their lower brain – where the Amygdala hijack takes place, and where we can also activate our 'fight, flight, freeze, or appease' impulses. When all goes well in a conversation, we have an intention to communicate—and we connect. The impact is positive, which enriches both parties.

In addition to being positive, when we are communicating from Level III interaction dynamics, we are more honest and candid about our communication, and we are more vulnerable and open to sharing. That is why we call Level III the 'share and discover' dynamic. At Level III, we are feeling so much trust with others that we are able to open up and share what is on our minds at the deepest level, and we can explore and discover what's on others' minds without judgment. When, instead of triggering a state of trust, a conversation creates a sense of threat, and stimulates the primitive brain, we converse from that limited reservoir of skills. To make matters worse, we make stuff up – interpretations – about what's going on and we disconnect from others even more.

The antidote for falling into permanent disconnection and distrust is to learn to activate your Third Eye. When I work with leaders, I ask them to envision an eye in the middle of their forehead. This eye is where wisdom resides. This part of our forehead is where the executive brain also lives. My intention is to engage leaders in activating their prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain that can reflect on what is happening from a neutral point of view, see other ways of viewing a situation and choose alternatives that will serve their relationship better.

As you've learned, trust lives in the prefrontal cortex, and engaging this part of our brain neutralizes threats and allows us to see alternatives in the moment – alternatives that have not been available before. You may be saying: "What if my intention is to make someone feel really bad about what he did?" I'm going to ask you, as your coach, "Why would you want to do that?"

If your answer is "It will make me feel better", you are living in Level I and II. To be a truly effective leader, you must learn to master Level III conversations. **Start now.**