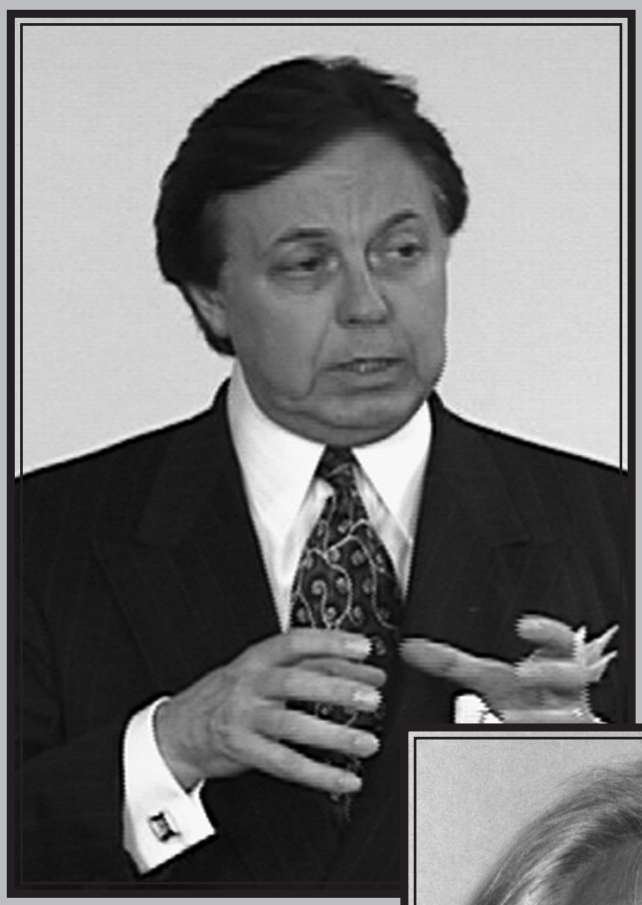

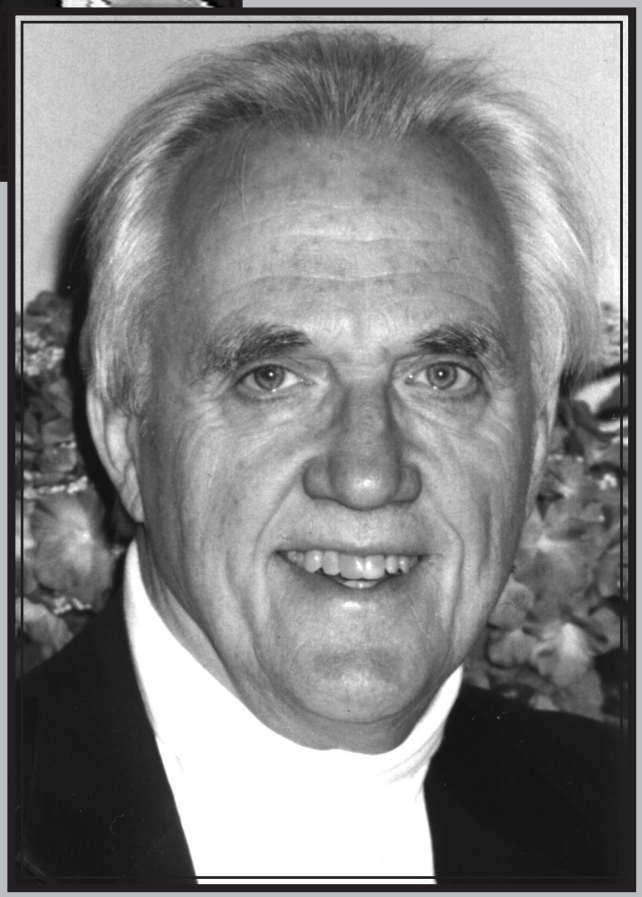

Douglas Yeaman & Noel McInnis:

The Science of Causing Outcomes

One morning when single parent Susan Bradford entered her kitchen to make breakfast for herself and her three-year-old daughter, Amanda, she found the child lying semi-conscious on the floor. Amanda had been awakened by a now subsiding storm, and had come to the kitchen to play. An open, empty pill bottle lying beside her told the rest of the story.

Susan quickly read the bottle's label, which warned that death from an overdose could occur within half an hour of loss of consciousness. Though Susan was still dressed in her negligé and her hair was in curlers, she scooped Amanda into her arms and ran to her car with the empty bottle in hand.

When the car would not start, Susan dashed back to the house to call a neighbor. The phone line was dead, as service had been disrupted by a fallen tree. Rather than lose precious time by going to her neighbor's house, Susan raced back to the car, grabbed her now unconscious child, and ran to the nearby freeway. Despite being so

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Douglas Yeaman and Noel McInnis co-authored *The Power of Commitment* (Science of Mind, 1990). Examples of their Quantum Management Model appear at www.ProveItToYourself.com.

scantily clad, she was unconcerned about either the chilly and still blustery weather or her semi-naked appearance. She stepped onto the freeway to wave down a car, and immediately got a ride. Amanda was at the nearest hospital emergency room in just a few minutes.

Susan Bradford's masterful demonstration of the science of causing outcomes stands in stark contrast to the two million persons who undergo coronary bypasses and angioplasties each year—only one in nine of whom make subsequent lifestyle changes consistent with maintaining a healthy heart. Those who are fortunate enough not to have a heart attack before another intervention is required must nevertheless undergo additional bypass or angioplasty procedures, and often a continued series thereof.

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Experience is not what happens to us it is rath erwhat we do with what ahppens to us
—Aldous Huxley
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Why do some people act consistently in their own self-interest, as Susan Bradford did, while so many others do not? Why do some people manage to cause positive outcomes, while others persist in causing outcomes that are inconsistent with and often directly contrary to their deepest self-interest? Why, when the science of causing outcomes is the same for everyone, do so many apply it dysfunctionally? What accounts for the success of those who do choose to cause self-empowering and life-enhancing outcomes? How may those committed to life-diminishing outcomes become empowered to cause life-enhancing outcomes instead?

Answering these questions requires an understanding of how the science of causing outcomes works. This understanding begins with the realization that every outcome is caused, that all self-outcomes are self-caused, and that every person is at all times causing his or her own outcomes, whether consciously or unconsciously. With this comes the realization that all causation of outcomes is from within, which means that all power of causation is within. The potency of this realization was cited by Rudolph Steiner:

> If it depends on something other than myself whether I should get angry or not, I am not master of myself…I have not yet found the ruler within myself. I must develop the faculty of letting the impressions of the outer world approach me only in the way in which I myself determine.

It seldom occurs to most people that they have the power of personal authority to determine how the impressions of the outer world approach them. Yet this is precisely how Susan Bradford arrived at the ER in time to save her daughter's life, as evidenced in her answer to the question of what went through her mind as she read the warning label on the empty pill bottle. "I saw myself in the

emergency room with Amanda," she replied. Thus guided by her intention of being in the ER, she never entertained the thought of not arriving in time. Non-divertibly programmed with an outcome, her mindset moved her to take every possible step until it was accomplished. She managed her journey to the ER from her projected outcome of already being there. Her trajectory was managed from the perspective of its already successful accomplishment.

Had Susan's mind instead been set on getting to the ER, rather than on being there, the stalled vehicle and dead phone might have impeded her progress with persistent attempts to start the car or to reach a neighbor. It was her mindset of already being at the ER that got her there so efficiently and effectively in spite of all impediment to her doing so. It was the accomplished presence-in-mind of her intended outcome—the state of already being at the ER in her own mind's eye—that assured her getting there while sensitizing her to every pertinent detail, such as carrying in her purse the pill bottle required to inform the ER doctors.

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We don't see things as they are We see things as we are
–The Talmud
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When Susan was further asked during one of our management trainings what she would have done had passing motorists ignored her, she declared, "I'd have undressed and laid down naked on the freeway—or whatever else it took—until someone did stop." Her mindset of being at the ER prevailed over all obstacles and reasons not to succeed. By thus exercising her personal authority (Steiner's "inner ruler") over her outcome, she succeeded in making the outer world's impressions approach her in the way that she herself determined.

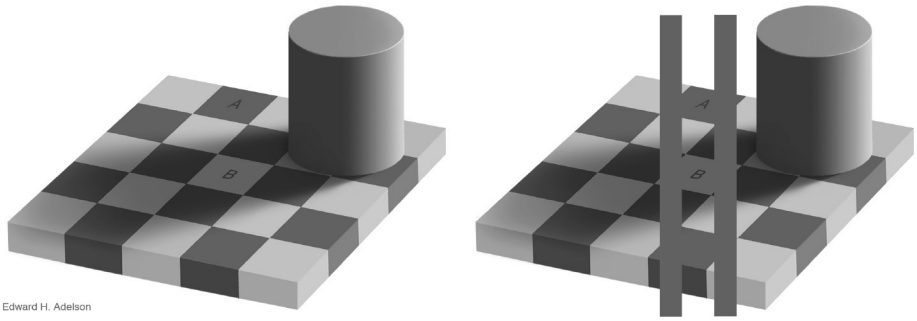
Reality Is an Inside Job

Access to our personal authority is via our perception, which integral psychologist Ken Wilber warns is susceptible to what he calls "the myth of the given." This myth is our belief that the world as it appears in our consciousness is the equivalent of the real thing, even though what our awareness delivers to us is deeply embedded in cultural, linguistic, and other contexts that structure our perceptions prior to their reaching our awareness. Accordingly, Wilber concludes, "what we call real or what we think of as ***given*** is actually ***constructed***." In other words, what we assume to be presented to us as "reality" is actually fabricated by our perception, and is thus an estimate rather than a full reproduction of reality.

Nineteenth century American humorist Artemus Ward acknowledged the impact of our self-constructed givens in his

proclamation that "It ain't so much the things you don't know that get you in trouble. It's the things you know that just ain't so." Our ability to perceive things that "just ain't so" is revealed by optical illusions like the one below.[1]

In the checkered board on the left, the center square is perceived as being of a shade intermediate between those of the dark and light squares surrounding it, because of the shadow cast by the pillar. Yet when it is bracketed between two columns of the same shade as



Edward H. Adelson

the dark squares, the center square appears to be equally dark. This discrepancy of viewpoints is made up entirely in our own minds, as technically explained on Adelson's website.

Optical illusions deceive us because our perceptual faculties are hardwired to see them a certain way. Similarly, as we grow up we become hardwired to see things from the perspectives of the family, social, political, and other contexts that construct our perceptions of what is given. Professor of cognitive science and linguistics George Lakoff calls our perceptual constructs "frames," which he characterizes as arbitrary "mental structures that shape the way we see the world," and signifies their alteration as "reframing." Princeton University scientist Dean Radin adds in an interview:

Our perception of the world is our own construction. We don't see the world the way the world actually is, we see the world the way we construct the world. Yet numerous experiments have demonstrated that the way we experience the world, both in time and in space, really is a construction, and that when you make very slight changes in your expectations of what you are going to see you will see completely different things.

Steiner, Wilber, Adelson, Lakoff, and Radin are just a few of legions of scholars and scientists who know that causing outcomes is a science of managing one's perceptions. It was Susan Bradford's successful self-management of her own perceptions that caused her timely arrival at the ER. As her commitment to being there overrode

all barriers and obstacles to her getting there, she perceived neither the stalled car, the dead phone, nor her physical appearance as an impediment to her progress. Constructing them as such would have been the equivalent of being tricked by an optical illusion. Instead of that she exercised her personal authority to pursue alternative solutions. In doing so she epitomized the science of managing one's perceptions to accomplish an outcome.

Another example of the application of this science was demonstrated by Tim Atkins, a father who likewise participated in our management training. Tim was a skilled and competent manager who worked with hundreds of employees every day. Yet he was plagued by an ongoing conflict with his son over the boy's "horribly messy and constantly dirty room." No amount of reasoning, persuasion, or reasonable punishment had succeeded in motivating the boy to keep a neat, clean room. The resulting chronic stress was making their relationship just as messy, even though neither of them wanted their relationship to be stressful.

Father and son were caught up in the conflict or stress that occurs whenever dissonance exists between what one expects (*expectations*) and what one accepts (*acceptations*). All relationships are managed in either accordance or discordance with their participants' standards of expectation and acceptation, and dissonance prevails whenever anyone's expectations are out of alignment with his or her acceptations. This is because our standards of expectation are among the "constructs" with which we create our estimate (rather than full reproduction) of reality, and the failure of our estimated reality to meet our standards leaves us with only three choices: to let go of our standards, to let go of those who don't meet our standards, or to continue living with both our standards and those who don't meet them in stress, struggle, and conflict.

Accordingly, as long as Tim's standard of a neat, clean room was not being met by his son, and Tim continued to accept his son's presence in their home, Tim was committed to a relationship based on stress, struggle, and conflict in which he perceived the boy to be bad, wrong, and awful and therefore in need of fixing. Yet it was Tim and not the son who was the cause of their stress, by holding on simultaneously to a standard of expectation and to a person who wasn't meeting that standard.

So we told Tim several things: that having his son's room neat and clean was entirely his own standard; that the room's messiness was therefore entirely his problem and not the boy's; and that until he resolved his standard in his own mind rather than continue to project it outward on the son by trying to fix him, their relationship

would continue to be conflicted. Finally, we told him that it was *his* commitment to being in conflict that was stressing his relationship with his son. Tim became quite angry at this, denying that he was committed to their ongoing conflict, declaring that the only option we were giving him was to clean the room himself and defiantly exclaiming "I most certainly won't do that!"

We all have both standards and people in our lives, but we cannot have both our standards and people who are noncompliant with them at the same time and not have conflict as well. The source of the conflict is the experience of resistance to either the standard or to the person. We must either lower our standard while keeping the person(s) in conflict with the standard or, or else let go of the person(s) while maintaining the standard.

Still angry when he got home from the training, Tim busied himself in the garage with repairing some broken furniture. While he was thus distracted, it occurred to him that his actual problem with the son's room was seeing the mess whenever he walked by it, rather than (as we had told him) the messy room itself. As soon as this was clear to him, he devised a solution. He removed the door from his son's room and sawed off the lower third. He nailed the upper two-thirds into the doorway so it would be permanently closed, then remounted the doorknob in the lower third of the door so that his son could still enter and leave the room. He then explained to his son that since he would never again see the mess it wouldn't bother him, and that the room would no longer be the occasion of constant contention in their relationship.

Many weeks later his son came to him and said, "Dad, we've got to talk. When I bring friends home from school, it is so embarrassing to have to get down on our hands and knees to crawl into my room. I'll keep my room in order if you'll fix the door."

The "first law" of causing outcomes is that all causation is internal. Accordingly, every expectation is internal to and causal from the person who has the expectation, in keeping with causation's "first law." As soon as Tim fully owned the fact that the stress in relationship to his son was a product of his own inner causation, and was being driven by his not wanting to see the messy room rather than by the outer symptom of the messy room itself, he was empowered to adopt a workable solution. He did this by managing his standard for their relationship instead of attempting to manage his son.

Principles and Standards

The "second law" of causing outcomes is that our actions must be consistent with the principles that govern our outcomes. As

defined by twentieth-century polymath R. Buckminster ("Bucky") Fuller, principles govern outcomes by causing the conditions that generate life and experience. All actions that are inconsistent with the principles that govern our outcomes therefore tend to be degenerative and unworkable.

Life-enhancing outcomes are accomplished only when the ends and means of our actions, as well as our expectations and acceptations, are aligned in mutual consistency with the principle that governs all workability:

§ Nourish spiritual values in yourself and others.

§ Doing what doesn't work does not work.

§ Doing more of what doesn't work does not work.

§ Trying harder at what doesn't work does not work.

§ Improving what doesn't work does not work.

§ Getting better at what doesn't work does not work.

§ Mastering what doesn't work does not work.

§ Committing to what doesn't work does not work.

§ The only thing that works is what does work.

The workability of action whose expectations, acceptations, ends (projected outcomes), and means (of getting there) are mutually consistent with the principles that govern outcomes is demonstrated in the science of airborne navigation, which allows little margin for error. Flight is governed by the Bernoulli principle's effect of "lift" in cooperation with the gravitational principle's effect of "fall." The projected outcome of flight is a safe and harmless landing at a predetermined destination, or elsewhere if necessitated by mechanical problems or weather conditions. The means to this outcome consist of actions that are consistent with its governing principles: impeccable equipment maintenance, traffic control, and aircraft piloting. When a flight's projected outcome and the means thereto are consistent with the principles that govern flying, a safe landing is correspondingly accomplished.

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In matters of style swim with the current; in matters of principle stand like a rock
–Thomas Jefferson
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So is it likewise with the "safe landing" of any intended outcome, be it a geographical destination, a vocational accomplishment, or the completion of some task. Acting consistently with governing principles, while keeping our actions (expectations, acceptations, ends, and means) mutually consistent with these principles and with one another, is the foundation of all life-enhancing outcomes.

Governing principles do not require that we be consciously aware

of our actions in order that the principles work, they require only that we act consistently with them, although the more we are aware of them the more we can exert our personal authority over them. Our greatest problem with determining outcomes is action that is inconsistent with governing principles.

Maintaining one's expectations, acceptations, ends, and means in constructive mutual alignment is a function of the standards that govern the ***quality*** of our outcomes. A dramatic example of establishing such alignment is physician and professor of medicine Dean Ornish's success in getting heart-bypass and angioplasty patients to adopt life-enhancing lifestyles rather than continue with their life-diminishing habit patterns. seventy-seven percent (rather than a mere one in nine) of his patients made this change, as a result of his introduction of changes of expectation (á la Dean Radin's comment above). Expectation of longer life is insufficient to motivate changes of behavior in patients who associate a longer life with additional years to be lived in fear of dying. So Dr. Ornish persuaded them to reframe their expectations by convincing them to focus on the quality of their life by extending it for the sake of their family or by realizing that they could feel better while living longer. Ornish gave them a chance to prove this to themselves by adopting new lifestyle practices of eating, exercise, and recreation that immediately increased their experience of well-being.

Establishing constructive alignment of expectations, acceptations, ends, and means that are in organizational chaos is a daunting yet achievable task, as demonstrated by a real estate firm that was struggling to survive during America's severe 1990 housing market slump. The firm's sales force was totally entranced by the prevailing perception of a "bad market," and its co-owners were blaming each other for the downward spiral of the firm's sales productivity. I (Yeaman) convinced the firm's employees that they could outperform the sales forces of rival firms by resuming the work habits they had observed during good times, leaving behind competitors who continued to be entranced by their perception of bad times. I also mediated the co-owners' conflict by channeling its energy into a commitment to pursue the same "good times" strategy. By 1999 the firm had reframed its 250-employee culture of mediocrity into a 4,000-employee culture of excellence, thus becoming the largest privately owned firm in the industry.

When we manage our outcomes from the perspective of their already being accomplished, as Susan Bradford did, while also maintaining standards that align our expectations, acceptations, ends, and means, we are practicing the most powerful of all principles: the principle of commitment.

The Heart of the Matter: Maintaining Commitment

Because our lives can be lived only forward, being alive is the equivalent of navigating into a headwind. Successful outcomes therefore become possible only as we act in ways that successfully engage such life-challenging headwinds as a medical emergency or a severe market slump. No matter what our current outcome may be—arriving at an ER or obsessing about a messy room—it is the result of either a conscious or unconsciousness commitment for it to be however it actually is.

Being committed to an outcome consists of pursuing it without being deterred by obstacles and barriers to its accomplishment—which we define as "maintaining a non-divertible intention." ***Every*** accomplished outcome is the end result of maintaining a non-divertible intention. No matter what outcome we are experiencing, it has been produced by a non-divertible intention (not always conscious) to experience it just as it is. When we are unsure of what our non-divertible intentions actually are, we can determine this by considering our current outcomes and asking, "What kind of intentions does one have to maintain in order to end up with the outcome I presently have?"

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Life can only be understood back wards It must be lived forwards
–Soren Kierkegaard
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This doesn't mean that persons committed to life-enhancement are never off course toward their intended outcome. It rather means that they conduct their lives the way a pilot flies an airplane. Since airborne vehicles tend to be drifting off course as much as 98 percent of the time, the job of a pilot (whether human or automatic) is full-time course correction. As the foregoing examples have all demonstrated, a consistent conscious commitment to continually return to a course from which we are being diverted is essential to the accomplishment of every intended outcome.

A major scientific precedent for managing our outcomes was set by quantum physicists who, when seeking to determine whether light consists of particles or waves, discovered that light invariably behaves in compliance with their experimental expectations. Light always and only behaves like waves in experiments designed to detect waves, yet just as consistently shows up as particles in experiments designed to detect particles. In both cases, experimental outcomes conform to the experimenters' expectations.

The consistent correlation between expected and accomplished outcomes led quantum physicist Werner Heisenberg to postulate, "What we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our

method of questioning." In other words, the questions we ask about the world determine the answers we get from the world in return. The world shows up for us by mirroring the way we choose to experience it, because our outcomes conform to the expectations that structure ***and*** give them substance. In other words, we manage the world of our experience from the perspective of our expected outcomes. This realization holds equally true for our unconscious expectations as it does for our conscious ones. Armed with this awareness, we realize our immense ability to shape the world to create the life-enhancing outcomes we choose.

1. Used by permission. A neuroscientific explanation of this illusion's deceptive dynamics is provided on the website of its creator, MIT Vision Science Professor Edward H. Adelson: http://web.mit.edu/persci/people/adelson/checkershadow_illusion.html.