

## Enhancing Self Value through High Self Awareness



by Ir. Lau Yuk Ma, June

SUB-COMMITTEE ON WOMEN ENGINEERS

**ON** 10 November 2010, Ms. Choy Boon Ling conducted an evening talk entitled "Enhancing Self Value through High Self Awareness". Ms. Choy is the General Manager of Clove and Clive Sdn Bhd, and has been a corporate trainer for the past 15 years. She specialises in the area of train-the-trainer, communication, interpersonal skills, self development, competency development and curriculum development.

The session started with a simple left and right hand exercise. The hand exercise looked simple until the participants attempted it. Most participants had fun and laughed at themselves while attempting the exercise. The essence of the exercise, which is part of the Brain Gym, is to promote interaction between the left and right brain. This enables a person to use the entire brain instead of predominantly using the preferred side of the brain.

Ms. Choy delivered an interesting two-hour session that tickled our senses. The participants were actively involved as they were "hungry" for ideas on enhancing self value.

Most of us have a clear definition on self value and the many roles an individual play in their daily life. However, although we understand that our self value and roles are interconnected and thus affect one another, we hardly question the need to enhance our self value. With the help of Ms. Choy, the participants began to realise that cultivating a high self value leads to a life that is lived more joyfully and with wisdom. This, in turn, leads us to play our role more proactively.

Very often, we live our life feeling inadequate, and most of the time, we play our roles so automatically that we do not question much about why we are reacting to our experiences the same way all the time. This leads us to become less creative, preferring to remain within the status quo. We tend to solve problems and react to people in the same old ways. As this pattern becomes our norm, it inhibits us from living life to the fullest, from being open to new ideas, from trying new methods of doing things, from voicing an opinion, etc. Hence, this induces low self esteem or low self value. By nature, everyone wants to be happy, effective and enthusiastic about life, but we cannot do so without knowing what is powering our lives. We are easily engulfed by the daily stresses of life and our old patterns.

By being aware and developing high self awareness, we are empowering our life. Through this practise of knowing and being aware of what is happening to us as it is happening in a non judgemental way, we are actually collecting data about how our life is being lived daily. With this awareness, we can then determine what we need to change in our life. Our thoughts, feelings, behaviour and speech are just like the tip of an iceberg. What is really powering our lives are the ideas, perception and intentions that we have which governs how we react to any situation that we encounter.



Session Chairman of the talk giving away a token of appreciation to Ms. Choy Boon Ling



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By observing our thoughts, feelings, behaviour and speech, we are giving a moment to ourselves, a space in our mind that will reduce our tendency to react hastily. Having this space will give our mind more clarity, alertness and oxygen to the brain cells, thus cultivating the ability to respond with wisdom instead of reacting automatically. In short, when we start being observant of ourselves, we start to discover the causes (ideas, perception and intentions) that are constantly running our lives.

Ms. Choy introduced the concept of ROAR which consists of four steps to develop high self awareness. The first step is Relax; for us to be able to observe the mind and body, we need to be in a relaxed mode. She also guided us through a simple exercise of switching our breathing to abdomen breathing and observing what is happening around us throughout the breathing exercise. This exercise is fascinating because, as we practise it, we immediately have a sense of curiosity about ourselves and our surroundings.

Ms. Choy also guided us through a short body scan session, which is another method of relaxing our body and calming ourselves. These exercises allow us to switch to the observation mode anytime and anywhere, even in front of our bosses. This exercise allows a space to be created

in our mind for us to respond to situations instead of merely reacting to it all the time.

Next, Ms. Choy introduced the second step which is to Observe our thoughts and feelings. While it is easy to do the latter, it is difficult to separate the two. We know when we are experiencing a feeling because we feel a movement or sensation in our body and we know when a thought comes into our mind in the form of pictures, words, dialogue or sound. Thus our thought is the determinant of our feelings.

The third step is about Asking questions, and this can only happen when we continue to observe ourselves to gain an understanding of the patterns of our thoughts and feelings. We then ask ourselves, "How is this affecting me?", "Is it affecting me negatively or positively?" and "Is it necessary to continue with this pattern?". From this line of questioning, we can Respond with wisdom, which is the fourth step.

In summary, once we develop high self awareness, we are constantly in the process of understanding ourselves and this, in turn, allows us to constantly operate from wisdom. The result is that we empower and enrich our life while cultivating a high self value. ■

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Conference : 11 (tentative)  
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