



Paying Attention to Self and Others: Developing Mindfulness and Engaging the Process of Rapport

We shall not cease from exploration.
And the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we started and
know the place for the first time.

✚ T. S. Eliot

Deep dialogue and discussion and associated accomplishments by a group are facilitated, according to Garmston and Wellman, when each member is conscious of both self and others (2013). The importance of this consciousness is the foundation for the Norm of **Paying Attention to Self and Others**. The intention and skills to harness the power of attention in this way require strong commitment and consistent practice. “The faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention, over and over again, is the very root of judgment, character and will,” wrote William James. “...But it is easier to define this ideal than to give practical instructions for bringing it about” (*Principles of Psychology*, 1890).

Facilitation, whether by a named facilitator or on the part of facilitative group members, is about managing processes so that a group can plan, share information, problem-solve, evaluate, and make decisions effectively and efficiently. Facilitation is also to improve group members’ capacities for working effectively together, and to develop the group’s processes (Garmston and Wellman, 2013). Herein lies the importance of **Paying Attention to Self and Others**: to support a group’s developing capacities on the dimensions of task, relationship, and process.

Four capabilities serve paying attention to self as well as paying attention to others. The term capability, adapted from the work of Robert Dilts (1990) for use here, includes behaviors, the strategies they serve, and the mental maps that guide these. **Paying Attention to Self and Others** calls for the capabilities of mindfulness, sensory acuity, reflective action, and congruence.

Mindfulness is a particular approach to focusing attention on sensory experience, thoughts, and feelings while withholding judgment. Mindfulness can be applied both to oneself and to others.

Sensory acuity permits us to increase the level of detail that we perceive through our senses and process with our minds. We all exhibit some level of sensory awareness. Facilitators and facilitative group members need to be informed about their own and others’ engagement with tasks, processes, and one another. Developing awareness into acuity supports informed facilitation and participation.

Reflective Action is one's resourcefulness to act, observe results, and consciously sustain the course of action when the results align with the outcome in-mind, or to shift course when the chosen action is not yielding progress on the dimensions of task, process, and relationships. The outcome in-mind might pertain to any of the three dimensions; the importance of reflective action applies to all three.

Congruence is expressed in rapport, both intrapersonal or internal, and interpersonal or external. Internal rapport is the process of continually aligning intention, attention, and action. Attaining a high degree of internal rapport requires investment in learning to be fully self-aware. It is natural, for example, for many human intentions to remain unconscious. Developing *internal rapport* calls for increasing and sustained consciousness of our intentions, so that our attention and actions can be aligned. Developing *external rapport* calls for aligning ourselves in synchrony with others by matching or mirroring the verbal and nonverbal behaviors that we may observe when paying attention to others.

These four capability sets thread throughout the following text, whose purpose is to offer input about the concepts and skills that comprise **Paying Attention to Self and Others**.

Paying Attention to Self: Focusing Self-Awareness

This field of interest is known as mindfulness, an area of developing knowledge and practice with roots in Buddhist and other contemplative traditions in which attention and awareness are cultivated intentionally. Mindfulness is practiced in medicine (e.g., Kabat-Zinn, 2005), education (e.g., mindfulschools.org), and at corporations such as Google (Tan, 2012). It has been the cover story of *Time* magazine (Feb. 3, 2014). One definition of mindfulness is offered at the website *Mindful Schools*.

Mindfulness is a particular way of paying attention. It is the mental faculty of purposely bringing awareness to one's experience. Mindfulness can be applied to sensory experience, thoughts, and emotions by using sustained attention and noticing our experience without reacting (mindfulschools.org, 2014).

Mindfulness focuses on developing fuller and more sustained consciousness of ongoing events and experiences – both internal and external to oneself. Mindfulness means “paying close attention to the present in an open and accepting way” in the words of David Rock (2009, p.89). This is in contrast to such mental activity as rumination, absorption in the past, or hoping about the future. Practiced skillfully and with discipline, its intention is to offer a direct awareness of what is taking place internally and externally, unedited by judgment or other mental processes. It calls for pausing or setting aside automatic, reflexive, and habitual ways of thinking, feeling, and acting.

Mindfulness serves both paying attention to self and paying attention to others. Learning the discipline begins with self-awareness, “stepping outside your own skin and looking at yourself with as close to an objective eye as you can,” writes researcher Kevin Ochsner (Rock, 2009), “In many cases it means having a third-person perspective on yourself: imagine seeing yourself through the eyes of another individual” (p. 89).

Neuroscience of Mindfulness

Becoming mindful calls for strengthening specific circuitry in the brain. Humans are born with the capacity to create internal representations of our experience and the outside world; they are called maps, or networks. They are based on what we pay attention to over time. A lawyer’s brain would reveal maps for legal cases and their connections. The brain of an Adaptive Schools practitioner would display maps of the concepts and methods and how they relate to one another. Neuroscience research is discovering that we have two distinct ways of interacting with the world, both internal and external.

The brain’s predominant way of interacting with the world is known as narrative circuitry, as it taps the brain’s collection of already existing neural maps that reflect our experience. When this circuitry is operating, the brain is reflecting on past experience, ruminating about present experience, and day dreaming about or planning for the future. When we experience the world with our narrative circuitry, explains David Rock (2009), “...we take in information, process it through a filter of what everything means, and add [our] interpretations” (p. 93).

A second way the brain interacts with the world is known as direct experience circuitry, engaging different parts of the brain. When this circuitry is operating, we are *not* focusing on past or future, people or events. Rather, in Rock’s words, “...we are experiencing information coming into our senses in real time – without the screening, editing, and interpreting functions found in narrative circuitry” (p. 93). We experience the world more directly, as if in real time relation to events, feelings, people.

Our narrative circuitry is engaged throughout most of our waking lives. It predominates, requiring little energy to operate – always important to the brain, which consistently seeks to hold energy in reserve for unanticipated needs. From an evolutionary standpoint, this circuitry has been essential, as it is how we bring our survival experience to bear on interpreting present experience, and anticipating the future.

Requiring higher energy to operate, our direct experience circuitry operates differently. Until we invest in learning to notice the difference between the two types of circuitry, we are not adept at recognizing the two, or at switching from one to the other and back. Research is demonstrating that people who regularly practice noticing narrative and direct experience circuitry, such as meditators, learn to differentiate more

reliably and to switch back and forth. Practice actually changes the structure of the brain.

Developing Mindfulness

“Mindfulness is a habit,” notes John Teasdale (Rock, 2009), a leading mindfulness researcher, “It’s something the more one does, the more likely one is to be in that mode with less and less effort...it’s a skill that can be learned” (p. 97).

Try a brief experience to support your developing understanding. Select some information to focus your attention on for just ten seconds. As you sit reading this text, you might focus on the feel of the chair against your back, your seat, your legs. Or you might focus on the sounds around you, observing each that you can hear. When other input intrudes, just notice and suspend it without judgment. Choose a focus, then direct your attention there now, for ten seconds.

As you engaged in this experience, you might have noticed a number of things.

- You might have noticed how challenging it can be to focus your attention on just one thing, even for ten seconds.
- You might have noticed the shift between narrative and direct experience circuitry.
- You might have noticed more than one sense distinctly perceiving your input.
- You might have noticed the difficulty of efficiently noticing and suspending distractions, without dwelling on them.

Meditation is a core means of learning the mindfulness skills needed to deepen how one Pays Attention to Self and Others. Resources for learning meditation and supporting ongoing practice can be found with ease on the Worldwide Web. There are many contemplative traditions, and many ways to meditate. You may already have identified a favorite method. The key to developing mindfulness through meditation is to develop a regular, daily practice – no matter how brief.

In the meantime, the following text offers a basic mindfulness meditation.

A Mindfulness Meditation

with Gratitude to Contributors

People meditate for differing lengths of time – as long as you like. Most people start with brief periods such as 5 minutes. As your meditation time extends, the meditation itself deepens. Some people meditate for up to an hour. You can either decide how long to meditate before you begin, or play it by ear. You may glance at a clock, or set a timer to keep track of time. Some people light an unscented candle to accompany their meditation; some light incense. These accompaniments are matters of individual choice.

Find a comfortable quiet space where you can focus and not be disturbed. Mindfulness Meditation can be done while sitting, standing, walking, or lying down. For this session, sit with your backside and feet comfortably grounded. Center your feet, about shoulder-width apart. Lay your hands on your knees, palms up or down. Choose a posture in which you can both relax and be alert, with your back straight and comfortable and your shoulders relaxed.

Take 3 cleansing - deep belly - breaths in through your nose, out through your mouth. Release tension in your body. Relax your muscles. Your eyes may either be closed or open.

Breathe normally, in through your nose then out through your nose. Pay attention to your breath. Do not try to control your breath; just let it flow naturally. Sense the cool air coming in, then warm air going out. You might picture your breath in winter if it helps your focus. [2-3 minutes]

As you continue breathing, explore your breathing more deeply, letting go of everything else. Feel your breath traveling down as you inhale, then back up as you exhale. Experience the simple pleasure of breathing.

It is normal for your mind to wander to other thoughts; this is OK. You may become aware of thoughts, feelings, wishes, plans, memories. Observe them and let them be whatever they are. Release them; don't get caught up with them or struggle with them, or be fascinated by them. Observe them as they enter your mind, and let them pass. Return gently to paying attention to your breath. [2-3 minutes]

When you like, bring your meditation to an end. Take two or three cleansing breaths. Be aware of finishing your meditation.

Intuition: A Cutting Edge

"This just feels right."

"My gut tells me that..."

"I have a feeling that..."

Recognize these statements – perhaps as self-talk, or as remarks that you have made? They bring us to the topic of intuition, commonly defined as understanding something immediately, almost instinctively, without the need for conscious reasoning. We think of it as perception or knowing in a way that is beyond the five senses. It is an area of cutting edge neuroscience research with important potential for Paying Attention to Self. While most indigenous societies have relied on intuition for centuries, this area of internal capacity is of relatively new interest to the scientific world.

The human gut, technically known as the enteric nervous system, is frequently referred to in the scientific world as the "second brain." This system is home to more than 100 million neurons, more than either the spinal cord or the peripheral nervous system. While some of this neural capacity is for digestion, what perplexes scientists is that the system is just too organized and complex for digestion alone.

Additionally, many of the enteric neurons are not receptors for information from the brain. They are one-way, communicating only to the brain. While our second brain is not the source of conscious thought, it does communicate directly with the temporal lobe – which processes sensory input and emotion, and the brain stem – which regulates the central nervous system and controls basic involuntary functions such as heart rate and breathing.

The enteric nervous system is responsible for releasing approximately 95% of the body's serotonin, the chemical responsible for the feeling that *"all is well."* Our "two brains" typically function cooperatively. When they fall out of cooperation, a typical result is chaos in the gut and misery in the head, that we may experience as *"butterflies"* or *"something just feels wrong here,"* or cramps, diarrhea or constipation.

Intuition and the enteric nervous system remain open for further scientific inquiry. Given the emerging data, we are interested in contemplating ways that Paying Attention to Self might be enriched. The well-known Facebook adage, *"Follow your heart, but take your brain with you,"* may morph into something like *"Follow your heart, but take your brain and your gut with you."*

Paying Attention to Others: Focusing Awareness of Others

We develop mindfulness by attuning to our experience in direct and focusing ways. Mindfulness of others also relies on attunement, as we develop the capability set of sensory acuity. The tools of this capability set enable us to pay attention to both large and small verbal and nonverbal responses of others, as well as intuiting emotion and tension as it surfaces. Skillful facilitators and skillful group members develop sensory acuity for such signals, identify them, pay attention to how each of these affect the group members and their progress toward defined outcomes. The meanings they derive from these cues inform decisions about when and how to interact with individual group members in support of their engagement with the group's task and other members.

Verbal Cues

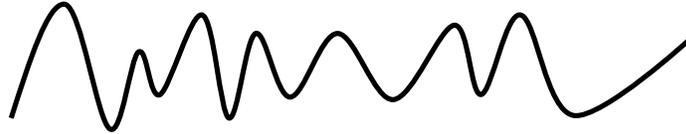
Pitch is defined by a continuum from high – soprano, to low – bass. Sound is produced as air passes over the vocal folds and causes vibration; the faster the vibration, the higher the pitch. A second influence on pitch is the tension of the vocal folds themselves. The more tension, the higher the pitch. We can experiment with this phenomenon by stretching a rubber band between our hands, then asking someone to pluck at the rubber band to elicit a sound. As the rubber band is stretched tighter, the pitch rises. Similarly, as a person becomes tense, the vocal folds actually thin causing the pitch to rise.

Pace is the speed at which a person speaks, also known as tempo. Tempo ranges from slow to fast, with or without pauses. In a typical conversation, we speak at approximately 100-125 words per minute. Raised adrenaline levels contribute to faster speech patterns that can leave a speaker, and even other participants, almost breathless (Hopkins, speakanddeliver.blogspot.com/2011/01/pick-up-pace.html).

Volume is the level of loudness, measured in decibels. Failure to breathe properly is a leading cause of poor speaking volume. Watch an infant or a dog or cat lying asleep. The entire body is relaxed and the abdominal muscles work with every breath. The muscular movement is almost entirely below the ribs. You can judge correct breathing by watching your own or another person's shoulders. If they are raised when inhaling, the natural deep, abdominal breathing is missing. When tension takes over, a typical pattern you will note is the use of throat muscles to power the voice, which may cause a person to run out of breath toward the end of a sentence, gasp, or even feel light-headed. Breathing deeply removes the effects of the stress.

Inflection. The change of the pitch and/or tone of a voice is defined as inflection or modulation. If you listen to someone speak a language that is unknown to you, you can probably discern whether the speaker is making a statement or asking a question just by the inflection used at the end of the phrase.

When there is significant inflection, often concluding on an upswing, it signals approachability, a lighter mood. Such speech might be represented by this pattern.



When inflection is less frequent, and of more limited range, the curve is flatter with fewer highs and lows. This signals credibility, or a more serious mood.



Representational Systems. Sometimes referred to as sensory modalities, these equate to the senses: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustatory. These are the ways we perceive, code and process, and express our experience of the world (Laborde, 1998). We all have preferences, while no one relies entirely on one alone, and circumstances may play a part as we employ one or another.

We are most familiar with visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. A person's language provides a window into current representational system. "*I'm seeing this situation...*" reveals a visual preference whereas "*I'm sensing these circumstances...*" reveals a kinesthetic preference, and "*It sounds like...*" reveals an auditory preference. Words that align to these representational systems are common. Following are some examples.

Visual	Auditory	Kinesthetic
see	call	firm
view	say	concrete
reveal	resonate	get hold of
observe	rhythm	contact
transparent	amplify	grasp
picture	harmony	handle

Cognitive Style. As individuals we tend to think and process information at differing levels of specificity. Those who think more concretely tend to focus attention on facts and details. These thinkers frequently register and store specific, situational data that they see, hear, feel, or otherwise experience. Those who tend to think in a more abstract, global way often attend to and reflect on patterns, generalizations, and attributes that may be shared across different situations or domains. These more abstract thinkers tend to visualize and conceive of ideas that cannot be seen. All of us possess both concrete and global perceptual skills, while we differ in our preferences. (Gregorc, 2006)

Nonverbal Cues

Posture. When people listen attentively, it may be expressed in their posture. They may lean forward slightly toward the speaker, tilt their heads, or rest their heads on their hands. Leaning forward with open body posture may indicate interest or agreement. Leaning back, when combined with an open body posture, may indicate contemplation.

On the contrary, leaning back can also be a sign of disengagement. When combined with closed body posture, it may reflect lack of interest or disagreement. On another hand, leaning sideways and slightly back with asymmetrical arm and leg positions and loosely held hands may be a sign of relaxation.

These are all possibilities; it's important to remember that there are no absolutes associated with any of these scenarios. In fact, interaction effects are possible. When a speaker leans backward with crossed arms, unconscious rapport may result as participants align their postures accordingly.

Gesture. The use of gestures in communication varies from one culture to the next. In some cultures people use their hands freely and expressively when they speak. In other cultures gestures are more subtle. Gestures are fundamental to communication, regardless. Even blind children gesture to other blind children when communicating, in ways resembling the gestures of sighted children (Iverson & Goldin-Meadow, 1997). That gesture is integrally woven together with speech seems supported by subsequent brain research findings that the language areas of the brain, the frontal and temporal lobes, process both spoken and gestural communication (Gannon & Hopkins, 2009).

Gestures can serve two purposes. First, gestures may be used to represent concrete items, like books, agendas, or charts. Second, gestures may also represent actions, images, or abstractions. Think, for example, of using your hands to demonstrate driving a vehicle or to demonstrate the balancing an equation (Garmston, 2005).

Gestures can also provide insight into intentions. The way we stand in front of a group can signal our intentions. An approachable stance usually includes fluid gestures, relatively slow compared to the speaker's norm. Holding the palms up often signals the intention to give or receive - openness. A credible stance incorporates more still gestures. When movement is involved, it tends to be faster than an individual's norm. Holding palms perpendicular to the ground or facing down may suggest completion or even suppression (Zoller & Landry, 2010).

Proximity. In our often crowded society, most of us have experienced the press of someone standing too close for comfort – on a train, in a line, or on an elevator, for example. We commonly refer to this as invasion of our personal space. Proxemics is the study of our perception and use of space (Hall, 1955).

Building on the founding work of Edward Hall, Carol Kinsey Goman (2008) offers that the amount of space an individual requires in order to feel comfortable varies from individual to individual, as well as culturally, but that in general, space needs vary depending on the amount of trust in the relationship – the greater the space needs, the lower the level of trust. Anyone that comes too close to another person actually triggers psychological and physiological reactions. A person's heart rate increases, together with the galvanic skin response, or GSR – the electrical resistance of the skin in moments of high stress or fright. GSR measurements are used for lie detector tests. Additionally, proximity issues can surface when group members arrange themselves around a table. Their respective locations can shape interactions by blocking eye contact and other nonverbal cues (Gorman, 2008).

Facial Expression. Paul Ekman, whose work is the basis for the television show *Lie To Me*, originally identified six hardwired human emotions – anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise – that are universally represented through the same facial expressions (Ekman and Friesen, 1971). Certain muscular movements create these facial expressions that are relatively easy to identify. When these emotions overcome us, they typically last from 0.5 to 4 seconds and involve the entire face. However, if a person has a need to conceal the emotion, a "tug of war" ensues between the emotional area of the brain and the cortical "control" region. In that case, the emotional region wins and for a quick fleeting moment the emotion is displayed on the face. (Ekman, 2003).

Eye Contact. Human eyes are neurally connected directly to the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC), one area of the prefrontal cortex. The OFC connects in turn with the cortex, the amygdala, and the brain stem – areas of thinking, feeling, and acting respectively. "This tight linkage," observes Daniel Goleman (2006), "suggests a rapid and powerful linkage...that facilitates instantaneous coordination of thought, feeling, and action" (p. 64).

Given the OFC's linkage to other areas of the brain, eye contact is a highly sensitive way to engage another. When people fail to look you in the eye, notes author Kendra Cherry (2014), it can appear that they are being evasive or trying to hide something. Yet too much eye contact, she also alerts us, can seem confrontational or intimidating. She suggests that balancing direct eye contact for intervals of four to five seconds.

The meaning of eye contact is significantly mediated by culture. In the United States and Canada, intermittent eye contact tends to convey interest and attention, as Cherry suggests above. In some Middle Eastern cultures, intense eye contact between individuals of the same genders may be an indicator of trust and sincerity. However, any eye contact between opposite genders, especially in Muslim cultures, may be considered inappropriate. Additionally, in many Asian, African, and Latin American cultures, extended eye contact may be interpreted as challenging. The Japanese tend to consider even brief eye contact uncomfortable (Dean, 2014).

Illustrating the Shift from Awareness to Reflective Action

Both skillful facilitation and skillful group participation require the sensory acuity to observe and make meaning of these verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Further, skilled facilitators and group members apply the meanings they construct from their observations to engage individuals in the group, or the group as a whole in specific ways to improve effectiveness. Here, the capability set of reflective action is key; it develops as we acquire the resourcefulness to *pay attention to others*, assessing their engagement, choosing actions to support the active and engaged participation of all, and reflecting and adjusting as needed.

Reflective action is also required to avoid over-focusing on one particular behavior to the neglect of others. When observed in isolation, focus on any one cue may lead to inaccurate inferences about what a person is communicating. Skillful facilitators and group members observe and reflect on a variety of behavioral indicators. Let's look in on some illustrations. As you join the illustrating scenarios, you might use the "Cues to Catch" reminder here to check on what you "observe" as you *pay attention to others* in each scenario. You will observe both cues that inform assessment, and those that guide subsequent action choices.

Paying Attention to Others: Cues to Catch

Verbal Cues

- ✓ Pitch
- ✓ Pace
- ✓ Volume
- ✓ Inflection
- ✓ Voice
- ✓ Representational System
- ✓ Level of Abstraction

Nonverbal Cues

- ✓ Posture
- ✓ Gesture
- ✓ Proximity
- ✓ Facial Expression
- ✓ Eye Contact

⇒ Sydney, who is facilitating a group, notices that Quin is leaning back in the chair, arms folded across the body, eyes down, forehead furrowed in a frown. Sydney has focused on several nonverbal cues. Leaning back may indicate a lack of trust in the last group member to speak, or in the group as a whole. Arms folded across the chest may indicate a lack of openness. A frown might indicate some level of discomfort or uncertainty. Sydney contemplates which Norms of Collaboration might offer an entry into Quin's thinking. After pausing first to consider options, Sydney offers data to the group by way of an observation, "*Quin, I notice you have not spoken for awhile.*" Then, an invitational question, "*What are some of the points being made that you might be concerned about?*"

⇒ Taylor, a skillful group member, scans the group and notices some facial expressions that might be interpreted as bewildered. Additionally, listening to comments being made around the table raises Taylor's awareness that sometimes the people doing the talking are running out of breath as they conclude their sentences. Are they nervous? Are they feeling out of the loop?

Reflecting on the preceding conversation, statements have included: "*The overarching theme here is...*" "*The main idea we want people to come away with is...*" and "*The big picture is that...*" Taylor wonders if the topic has become too abstract and offers an abstracting paraphrase to shift the conversation from abstract and global to more concrete to make sure everyone is engaging. "*So a couple of examples of what we might expect to hear from the community are 'this meets both our goals and the school's goals,' or 'this is good for kids and also meets state requirements.'*" The puzzled looks ease, the speech slows, and the people around the table begin to look more relaxed.

- ⇒ During a meeting, Jordan offers a comment that comes across at a higher pitch than normal, and at a more rapid pace. Another group member, Micah, takes note of it. As Jordan continues talking, Micah notes a palms-down gesture. Micah concludes that Jordan may be on edge, then begins to reflect on the language that Jordan uses to represent the content. Noting that the language seems kinesthetic, Micah offers the following paraphrase: *"You are feeling a little on edge and want to be sure the group is prepared to walk their talk."* Jordan continues speaking with the same high pitch and rapid pace as before. Micah, now recalling that Jordan often focuses on the big picture, offers a second paraphrase to the entire group. *"It's important that we continue to be seen as trustworthy and reliable."* Jordan's hands relax, and Micah notices a less intense body posture overall. Micah then offers the question, *"So what are some of the concerns we might have about how these actions could impact our own credibility?"*
- ⇒ Facilitating a meeting, Bobby notices that Chris is very close to Andie – almost in Andie's face. Andie's voice is continuing to escalate in volume and sounds almost commanding. A quick scan of the group shows that others are beginning to look down, avoiding the impending argument. Bobby tries Posing Questions: *"What behaviors might we all want to exhibit in order to move forward as a team?"* A deafening silence ensues. During the silence, Bobby reflects on the facial expressions displayed by some of the group members as the topic was first introduced. Reassessing that there may have been some underlying fears at the table, Bobby poses an entirely different question: *"What might be some of the stumbling blocks that we fear could get in the way of our work?"* Again, no response. Bobby tries a third time, this time selecting the Norms of Providing Data and Pausing: *"In this unified group, this conversation is causing people some level of discomfort. Let's all take a break and return to our conversation in 5 minutes."* After a few minutes, the group reconvenes. Bobby notices that body posture around the table seems to be more relaxed, and members begin to re-engage in a calmer conversation.

Congruence: Internal and External

Congruence is expressed in rapport, both internal or intrapersonal, and external or interpersonal. Rapport is commonly defined as a relationship characterized by harmony, alignment, and accord. Internal rapport is found in continuous alignment of intention, attention, and action. Attaining a high degree of personal congruence requires investment in learning to be fully self-aware. It is natural, for example, for many human intentions to remain unconscious, for attention to be wandering, for action to be spur of the moment. Developing congruence calls for increasing and sustained consciousness of our intentions to support focus in our attention, and planful alignment of our actions.

External rapport is found when one's connections with another or others are characterized by shared patterns of thinking, feeling, and interacting. In the words of Daniel Goleman (2006), it exists "whenever a connection feels pleasant, engaged, and smooth. But [external] rapport matters far

beyond those fleeting pleasant moments. When people are in rapport, they can be more creative together and more efficient in making decisions” (p. 29). In fact rapport, a process rather than a state of being, has been identified as “the most important process in any interaction” (Laborde, (1998). The process of rapport among people operates on what Goleman (2006) refers to as the low road of communication, where people’s sense of connection develops, hinging “less on what’s said than on the more direct and intimate, unspoken emotional link” among them (p.33). In rapport, people are immersed in what is being said and what they have to say. They are open to considering the information being presented and are not defensive” (Zoller & Landry). So the congruence of this form of rapport links people in ways that can significantly impact a group’s accomplishment on the dimensions of task, process, and relationships.

We engage the process of external, or interpersonal, rapport by intentionally emulating another person’s use of the very verbal and nonverbal cues for which we have been observing. Intentional emulation, not mimicry, is key to developing interpersonal rapport. The point of rapport is for another to feel engaged and understood. Subtle shifts toward alignment with another person can yield dramatic results.

The unexamined life
is not worth knowing.
 Socrates

Establishing rapport, both internal and external, draws on all three of the other capability sets for **Paying Attention to Self and Others**. It calls for mindfulness about self and others, sensory acuity for careful observation, and reflective action toward intentional outcomes. **Paying Attention to Self and Others**, calls for a synergy of the four capabilities. The resulting consciousness of self and others facilitates skillful dialogue and discussion, and the task accomplishment that results. The intention, focus, and skills to harness the power of attention in this way call for strong commitment and consistent practice.

References

- K. Cherry (n.d.). <http://psychology.about.com/od/nonverbalcommunication/tp/nonverbaltips.htm>.
- J. Dean (2013). www.spring.org.uk/2013/07/how-eye-contact-works.php
- R. Dilts (1990). *Changing Belief Systems with NLP*. Meta Publications.
- P. Ekman (2003). *Emotions Revealed* (2nd ed.). Times Books.
- P. Ekman, & W. Friesen (1971). "Constants Across Culture in the Face and Emotion." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.
- P. Gannon & W. Hopkins (2009). *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, online.
- R. Garmston (2005), *The Presenter's Fieldbook: A Practical Guide* (2nd Edition). Christopher-Gordon.
- R. Garmston & B. Wellman (2013). *The Adaptive School: A Sourcebook for Developing Collaborative Groups* (2nd Ed., Revised). Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- D. Goleman (2006). *Social Intelligence*. Bantam Books.
- C. K. Goman (2008). *The Nonverbal Advantage*. Barrett-Koehler Publishers.
- A. Gregorc (2006). *The Mind Styles Model: Theory, Principles, and Applications*, AFG Publishing, 2006).
- A. Hadhazy (2010). "How the Gut's 'Second Brain' Influences Mood and Well-being." *Scientific American*.
- E. Hall (1963). "A System for the Notation of Proxemic Behavior". *American Anthropologist* **65** (5): 1003–1026.
- R. Hanson (2009). *Buddha's Brain*. New Harbinger.
- J. Iverson & S. Goldin-Meadow (1997). "What's communication got to do with it? Gesture in children blind from birth." *Developmental Psychology*.
- J. Kabat-Zinn (2005). *Coming to Our Senses: Healing Ourselves and the World Through*
- G. Laborde (1998). *Influencing With Integrity: Management Skills for Communication and Negotiation*. Crown House Publishing.
- Mindfulschools.org, 2014
- D. Rock (2009). *Your Brain at Work*. Harper Business.
- D. Siegel (2010). *Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation*. Bantam Books.
- C.-M. Tan (2012). *Search Inside Yourself*. Harper One.
- K. Zoller & C. Landry (2010). *The Choreography of Presenting*. Corwin.

