

Dr Lisa Lang

From: Dr Lisa Lang Theory of Constraints [drlisa@scienceofbusiness.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 25, 2009 3:30 AM
To: Dr Lisa Lang
Subject: POOGI - Part 52 - Goldratt's book The Choice is better than The Goal

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POOGI #52: We are continuing our series based on [The Goal](#) by Eliyahu M Goldratt and the [Theory of Constraints](#). {This series was co-written with [Brad Stillahn](#)}

Most of you have read [The Goal](#). Most of you enjoyed reading it. And most of you have lent or given a copy to someone you think will benefit from reading it. Today, it still sells as many copies a month as it did when it was first published.

Dr. Eli Goldratt's newish book [The Choice](#) (his newest you will also find on this link) is even better than [The Goal](#). It's about thinking clearly and having a full life.

For those of you that follow Eli and the Theory of Constraints, you may know that when he was about twenty years old he chose as his goal in life "to teach the world to think". What you may not know is that his daughter, Efrat, now a psychologist, chose as her life goal "to teach people how to be happy".

Once again, he chose the format of a novel. In this one, Eli and Efrat have an ongoing conversation. Now 63, in this book Eli is summarizing their collective progress toward their respective goals.

In their conversation, Eli and Efrat chart the course for anyone and everyone to think clearly and have a full life. And in doing so, they reveal Eli's unusual beliefs:

1. People are good. Rather than thinking that people are good, people tend to blame other people, or as Eli says "I want you to realize how careless we are in relating derogatory characteristics and intentions to people". Once you blame someone, your ability to think clearly is blocked. "Blaming another person is not a solution... Blaming points us in the wrong direction, into a direction where we will not find a good solution. Even if the person is removed, in most cases the problem will stay. You will be able to refrain from blaming people when you are convinced there is no reason to blame them. Harmony exists in any relationship between people."

2. Every conflict can be removed. "People's perception is that conflicts are a given and the best we can do is to seek a compromise. When we face a conflict, especially when we cannot easily find an acceptable compromise, let's do exactly the same thing scientists do when they encounter a contraction; let's insist that one of the underlying assumptions is faulty. If, or should I say when, we pin down the underlying assumption that can be removed, we will remove the cause of the conflict; we solve the conflict by eliminating it."

3. Every situation is exceedingly simple. "There is nothing wrong with people's brainpower; there is something very wrong with people's perception of reality. People believe that reality is complex, and therefore they are looking for sophisticated explanations for complicated solutions. Do you understand how devastating this is? The key for thinking like a true scientist is the acceptance that any real life situation, no matter how complex it initially looks, is actually, once understood, embarrassingly simple."

4. Every situation can be substantially improved. "The undesirable effects people complain about are the result of a conflict—a conflict between the parties in cases of relationships, and an internal conflict in cases of individuals. People, and companies, lower expectations when they use protective mechanisms to camouflage from themselves the big chronic problems; the problems that they already gave up on resolving. Those who are not prepared will be blind to the stream of opportunities life presents them."

5. Every person can reach a full life. "You claim that the only things

standing in the way of me thinking clearly are some specific obstacles and practice. Rather than leaving it to chance-what people call good luck-my chances of living a full life will be much greater if I learn to think clearly. I'll be able to generate, or at least to recognize, the right opportunities for me, and I'll be better able to have more stamina to persistently follow enough of them to fruition."

6. There is always a win-win solution. "For every relationship there is a change that will cause the parties to each achieve what they need from the relationship. Compromise is the attempt to share a finite cake. When do we find an acceptable compromise? When the perception is that the cake is not very important, or that it's not too small to start with. But when the cake seems too small, seeking a compromise is a situation in which the more you win, the more I lose; seeking a compromise is, by definition, a win-lose approach. If we want our win to be bigger we have to ensure that the other side's win will be bigger."

To get [The Choice](#) at a price even lower than at Amazon, click on the book title. After you read the book, you may be interested in learning the [TOC Thinking Processes](#). These are the tools Eli developed to help the rest of us systematically develop solutions to problems through rigorous cause and effect logic, just like he does in [The Choice](#). The [Management Skills Workshop](#) will help your management team to learn and apply the Thinking Processes to your company. We'd be happy to point you in the right direction, so just call or reply to this email.

Here's to maximizing YOUR profits!

Happy Thanksgiving.

Dr Lisa

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