

## FINE POINT

### Feeling the Untruth

Thinking Environment

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## FEELING THE UNTRUTH

September 2015:

This had all the signs of being another first-time moment. It was on day two of a TP course. The Thinker had set an 'Understanding Why I' further goal. It was 'to understand why I am not doing it.'

The key limiting assumption was: 'If I do it, it won't be good enough.'

After the Thinker thought it through, she and the criteria agreed that the assumption was not true. This had taken a little doing because, as often happens, she said that she felt that the assumption was true, but she could see that factually and logically the assumption could not be defended. So in the end she recognised cognitively that the assumption was untrue.

She had achieved her further goal: she now knew why she was not doing this thing that she wanted to do. Classic 'Understanding Why I' goal. And beautiful.

But there was more time, so I asked the Part II question again: 'What more would you like to achieve in our session?'

I was expecting her (as one should not) either to have no other further goal, or to choose an action version of her

'Understanding Why I' goal and get on with doing this thing in her life. In fact, I took a moment (as one should not) to teach the group that probability.

Beware the poised pull of precedent.

She said, 'I want to feel that that untrue assumption is untrue.'

Feel an untruth.

Really?

I was skidding.

But I was also excited because a new discovery is inherently a thrill. Even if you have no idea what you are doing. So I tried to convey my excitement, but the Thinker kept apologising for being a pain, and the other four people looked vaguely abandoned.

Undaunted, I thought about it this way: when the Thinker wants as their further goal to feel something, we recognise it as a 'Feeling' goal. We then proceed to find the untrue assumption that is stopping them from feeling that thing. Then we find the true liberating assumption and create an Incisive Question with it. We ending the Incisive Question with, 'how would you feel'?

So, I reasoned, this was a weird new kind of 'Feeling' goal. She did not want to feel good or confident or something. She wanted to feel the untruth of an assumption.

In this case we already had the untrue assumption. So all that was left was to find the liberating alternative and put that into an Incisive Question, ending in, 'how would you feel?' Could be good.

So we did that. Her liberating alternative, soundly reasoned, was, 'It will be perfect whatever it is.'

And the Incisive Question was magic. I asked it many times, and she felt many kinds of good and had wonderful ideas about and energy for her project. Super.

I should have let it be.

But my OCD got the best of me, and I soon had doubts about whether the goal was being precisely enough reached given that what she wanted was not to feel in a general sense, but to feel the untruth of a limiting assumption.

So I changed the question to this: 'If you knew that it will be perfect whatever it is, how would you feel in relation to the untruth of the limiting assumption?'

That sucked the energy right out of her. She said, 'Oh, that. That's gone. That's over. Yes, I feel that the untrue assumption is untrue. But I have for several minutes. I don't need that question.'

I went back to the original version, and she pepped back up.

So the Incisive Question had achieved both a general state of optimism about her project and the precise goal by ending it just with, 'how would you feel?'

I stayed excited. And for several days I have been describing her weird goal as a new kind of Feeling goal, one using an already found untrue limiting assumption.

But this morning I realised that this is not a brand new type of Feeling goal at all. It is just another presentation of the FreeFrom goal. It is the converse of the 4th presentation. It is not to 'know/feel that an assumption is true'; it is to know/feel that an untrue assumption is untrue!

Not quite so exciting.

Or maybe. Maybe it is just as exciting to notice that there is a sixth presentation of the FreeFrom.

And maybe the real value of this noticing is in seeing that Helena is right (again): we must eventually recognise the current 'rag-bag' nature of the FreeFrom goal collection, facing the fact that presentations 3, 4 and 5 (and now this new number 6: 'feeling the untruth') are actually 4 presentations of a different type of goal altogether.

If so, whatever would we call it?

November 2015:

We did it.

We deconstructed the FreeFrom goal. We saw that 4 of the now 6 presentations of it were about relating to an assumption that had been stated in the goal. The other 2 were not.

We put those 4 presentations, because they were direct requests to do something with assumptions, into the already existent 'Looking at Assumptions' goal. We renamed it as the 'Assumptions-focused' goal, making five in that type of goal. It is still pink in the diagram.

We kept the other 2 presentations as FreeFrom presentations because they explicitly do ask to be free from something ('Remove the blocks to something' and 'Stop doing or feeling something'). It is still purple in the diagram.

So far this change in grouping is working well: Assumptions-focused, and FreeFrom.

Whew.