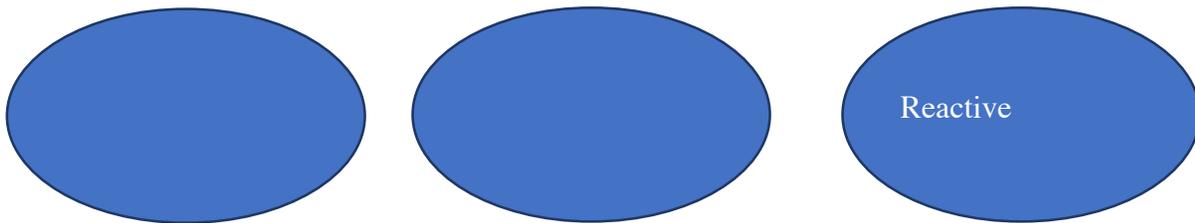


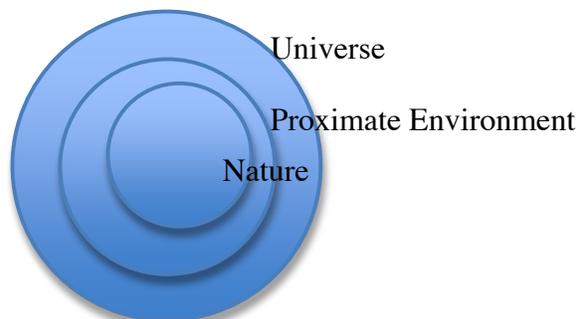
Strategic Frames of Mind

When we are engaged in strategic thinking, there are several frames of mind or frames of reference that can be held and the quality of results will vary significantly depending on our frame of mind. Our frame of mind does not tend to be something we are aware of and yet has a significant impact on the quality of thinking we can produce and the ability to exercise critical thinking skills. We generate the strategic thinking from a particular frame of mind and then the quality of thinking that results, becomes imbedded in the strategic thinking and is carried forwarded into the execution of our strategic thinking. Therefore, to ensure the highest quality of strategic thinking, we need to become aware of our frame of mind or reference and manage it to produce the highest quality results.

There are three overall frames of mind or reference, which result from being in one of three different modes of behavior. We use the concepts of Reactive, Ego, and Purposeful to differentiate them. As you work from the purposeful modes or frames, you can experience that you tend to be able to satisfy the values of ego and reactive without losing or sacrificing the values inherent in being purposeful.



The tend to be correlated with how we process different world in terms of their pre-imminence.



Reactive Frame of Reference

On reflection, we can see that many strategies are developed from only a reactive frame of reference and therefore a reactive mind. The business tends to be trying to protect or defend territory from threat and to be aggressive in keeping up with interventions by competitors and changing customer requests. In looking at the state of being of the company as it works, the leadership frequently feels a sense of “falling behind” or need to “do everything” that is being asked by customers or offered by competition and tends to lose focus. We tend to be activated by the proximate environment and react. We tend to follow trends and lose our connection to the Universe and our place it via our essence and global imperatives. We may also fear our own nature and seek recuing from external sources such as ill prepared outsourcing agreements. Or we may “hunker-down” and do what we feel confident in our nature.

Ego Frame of Reference

On reflection, we can see that many strategies are developed from an ego frame of reference and tend to be marketed in such a way. There is a positioning based not on the value of the offerings but more from a mindset of beating everyone else to market or being the number one in any number of categories or metrics. The focus becomes the image of the company, or more often the image of the leadership of the company, and sometimes causes people to lose sight of the essence of the buyer classes and what the business is bringing that uniquely fills a value-based position that is more life-giving to those buyers. The business may develop product offerings that are designed to “show-off the company and may offer product offerings and solutions that are creative and interesting but do not match or fit the imperatives of the market or represent the core of what the company is able to offer. It is more about “us” than about our value-adding ability to provide what is possible to our stakeholders-

Purposeful Frame of Reference

On reflection, we can see that a purposeful frame of reference starts with seeing the business in a systems context and being accountable for and contributing to, a set of stakeholders to the business, with the intention of enabling the success of each, simultaneously, without trade-offs. It is possible to work from the idea that supporting our customers’ extraordinary success in their businesses, our consumer’s in their lives, our investors in achieving enduring returns, our co-creators in meaningful and equitable work, our work practices toward managing people building a higher order regenera-

tion of humans and ecosystems; and as leaders of the business to be good citizens in our communities—all are related aims, We need to examine each stakeholder for the capital they invest and return sought.

In reactive mode and ego mode, we most often trade off some stakeholders for the benefit of others, based on whether we feel threatened or feel a desire to foster a particular image with one or another stakeholder. When we work in a purposeful mode, it becomes apparent that we cannot serve one, without them all being served. It is an indivisible eco-system tied together.

The foundation for purposeful work comes from always reconciling to the Universe, understanding the unique differentiation of the business—its essence—and from that understanding, its ability to generate value-adding offerings for existing and potential customers and consumers in a dynamic market driven by social and planetary imperatives. Connecting self-directed employees and their uniqueness to this universal understanding provides the base for meaningful and equitable work. Being a good corporate citizen engenders support from the community and a rich source of workers and resources. Being a conscious user of planetary resources and enabling the workforce to do so has an economic return from efficiencies that benefit investors. And, of course, investors are best served by earnings gained from revenues that are enduring over the long term rather than only managing costs. On reflection, many more interconnected relationships become apparent.

When a leadership team is able to work purposefully, it tends to achieve non-displaceability in the market and thereby satisfy the ego needs of the business. It also becomes far more difficult to be placed in a reactive position and lose focus. Being purposeful places the business in a place where threats are more difficult for competition to mount or threats to the unique position in the market most difficult to achieve.

It is helpful to a leadership team to remember that the modes of behavior and frames of reference also operate at the level of a team and at the level of the individual. We can foster purposeful behavior in others by keeping them connected to the stakeholders of the business. We can provide purposeful leadership by increasing our own reflections on our personal behavior and reference points in our thinking.

Holding the Universe and the questions and principles it offers as the primary sourcing mechanism can prevent us from searching the proximate environment for offering ideas or reacting to that environment in ways that generate less strategic choices. Holding the proximate environment as the restraining force, e.g. checking out ideas developed from the Universe of buyers contained by our corporate direction, tends to mitigate against product offering development that distracts us from our essence, global imperatives and enlivening the essence of our buyers. It protects us from being another competitor. And considering how to grow our ableness in these regards, tends to protect us again buyer ableness than anyone can buy, making us more displaceable.

Purposeful strategic thinking initiates all endeavors from the Universe, checks for restraints in the proximate environment and activates what is needed in our nature to rise to the challenge.

Exercise:

1. Develop examples of how our company has a tendency in regard each of the modes of behavior and the results you see from these different frames of reference.
2. How have the modes of behavior/frames of reference effected your business decisions over time? Think of examples. You are not always in one or the other.
3. What will be helpful guidelines for using these modes of reference as we work here and beyond?