

SOP: Responding vs. Reacting

Reacting: fast, impulsive, emotional acting or speaking. It is driven by the brain's primitive, survival instincts. Often—an automatic response—which can lead to regret. It is activated in the amygdala—the part of the brain that develops our survival responses. Because it tends to be an instant response—there is no time for conscious thought. It is the reason that conflict can escalate very quickly.

- If emotions trigger before a conscious thought—it springs from the amygdala—where fight or flight thinking is triggered—and is not always truthful or reliable. Amygdala processes emotions, forms memories and attempts to control our response—Storing them based on experience more than conscious thought or understanding.
- This emotional processing center often recalls memories that we have no conscious thoughts about.
- Our bodies can remember—Traumatic memories are usually stored in the part of our brain that is responsible for fight or flight—the amygdala.
- When trauma is remembered—it is often with feeling and bodily sensations without cognitive explanation.
- Fear and anger are often the 'felt' defensive emotions

Responding: slow, deliberate, thoughtful process that is guided by the prefrontal cortex. It allows for reasoning and consideration of consequences. There is a conscious choice made that aligns with your character and values. It is deliberate, intentional and mindful.

- Hippocampus-regulates learning, memory, emotion and motivation.
- Prefrontal cortex (located behind the forehead) is responsible for planning, prioritizing, and decision-making. This is the executive control center, handling high level cognitive processes like decision-making, planning and emotional regulation.
- Habits can damage the prefrontal cortex

Relaying a New Foundation for our Thinking

- Before Christ—our mind and way of thinking were formed intentionally by our interpretation of a set of experiences or emotions connected to them

Romans 8:5-6

- It is a skill to learn how to 'set our minds'—(think about, have the corrupt nature's attitude, have their minds controlled by what human nature wants, have their outlook shaped by)—before our emotions inform or deform/distort them.
- According to James 1:19—We are to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. This is counsel we can only heed if we take the time to 'set our minds.'

Romans 12:2

- Renewing the mind is a process and a skill that we must learn
- renewing=342=a renovation which makes someone different than who they were in the past
- It is the idea of God bringing something back to its intended freshness (Ps 51:10—Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me
- The believer, once they are justified is called to continuous transformation in thought patterns, values and conduct.
- It is the reversal of Adam's corruption by sin—to be renewed by the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 55:7-11

- There is an invitation to learn to distinguish the way the Lord thinks about something—from the ways we tend to think on our own.

Do not lean on your own Understanding

- Jesus models how He navigated—submission of His own mind to the Father—only said what He heard the Father saying—I will listen before I think. I will think before I speak. He postured Himself to reflect the Father's true identity. You must be 'still' enough to hear His still small voice
- Learning to pause before speaking or acting is critical. There must be enough time to reflect on the source of your response. (My experience does not define the truth. I must learn to submit my thoughts to His thoughts)
- If you react, instead of responding—the other person is in control.
- Being overwhelmed—leads to forgetfulness, confusion and low energy
- Let the Word and the Spirit set the parameters (a factor, limit or rule that sets the way something or someone operates in that context)

II Corinthians 10:5

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ....

=Set Your Mind

=Submit Your will

=Reign in your emotions

=Think and Speak from the Holy Spirit