

# Teaching For Success

## Faculty Success Center

### *Success Insights*

#### The Genesis Point

Success originates with a choice between reactivity or proactivity. Have you ever met a person who immediately stood out from the crowd as being cool, confident, and relaxed even under pressure. If you have, chances are you encountered a person who consciously or unconsciously has chosen to be more proactive rather than reactive.

This simple but ultimately important choice has become more important to consider during the past two years. These have been years of a very rapid and to most of us negative external change. If you've tried to take in all the petty and trivial issues in the news, you probably have experienced being almost shoved to the reactive side of the thought continuum. This drift has likely occurred without making a thoughtful choice; it just happens over time.

Allowing the reactivity response to dominate, at least in my experience, drains energy, slows innovation, increases anxiety, builds stress, kills humor and laughter and interferes with participating in productive relationships with colleagues, students, friends, and family.

Granted, reactivity is necessary and helpful to successfully navigating through everyday life. Somatic or experience-formed markers in our brains allow us to react quickly to avoid dangerous events and circumstances, steer through daily social encounters, and make a myriad of complex purchase decisions quickly and efficiently.

However, here I'm considering the best state of mind to be in when working with higher level concerns, goals, and plans. The question of which is the best thinking mode to use to determine a life course, choose a purposeful career path, plan personal and professional goals, implement those plans, and evaluate the results is genesis point question. So much is affected by this choice that it can only be described as a foundational decision.

The Genesis Point question to ponder, for those interested in working on success issues, concerns the level of reactivity versus proactivity that dominates your higher level thinking processes. It's the point where you simply decide if you are going to keep your life on track by setting goals, reviewing goals, while limiting reactivity to events or inputs of low importance or no importance. Being very selective with your thoughts and actions will free up time and energy to accomplish the really important things that will make a positive difference.

A common success concept says that choosing to be more proactive about your thoughts and actions and basing them on carefully thought-out goals equals success, and all else is commentary. Proactive, goal-oriented teaching decisions hang at the Genesis Point of teaching for success.

*~John H. (Jack) Shrawder, Exec. Director,  
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