

# The CHOICE Connection

Positive strategies. Practical solutions.



constructive  
**CHOICE**  
Jean Strosinski, PhD, PCC, CI

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### Quotable Quotes

"The strongest principle of growth lies in human choice." ~ George Eliot

"Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing." ~ Albert Schweitzer

Dear Jean,

Our featured writer this month is Ed Muzio, CEO and President of Group Harmonics, Inc. I was first introduced to Ed at a professional conference. As we both hailed from Albuquerque at the time, we deliberately set up a date to connect when we both got back home. The connection since then has been a professional learning gift for me now for years. What I admire about Ed, is his unflagging energy, enthusiasm and his most amazing gift of taking the complexity out of organizational concepts and instilling a breath of simplicity. I find that I often refer others to his short video clips - do check out his website - [www.groupharmonics.com](http://www.groupharmonics.com). You need a topic for team building - he has them for you. Ed comes with not only the provocative questions - he also provides some rather surprising insights and recommendations that move us from operating as we always have to considering something new. It is more of a gentle nudge (okay, sometimes it is more of a push) to consider how we can move toward our end goal with a very different approach. I love the questions and love the learning that comes with having Ed as a friend and professional colleague! We here in Albuquerque, miss him since his move to the land of Texans!

Ed Muzio is the author of the award-winning books *Make Work Great* (McGraw-Hill, 2010) and

Four Secrets to Liking Your Work (FT Press, 2008). He is a leader in the application of analytical models to group effectiveness and individual enjoyment. Originally trained as an engineer, Ed has started organizations large and small, led global initiatives in technology development and employee recruitment, and published articles and refereed papers ranging from manufacturing strategy to the relationships between individual skills and output. Ed's analytical approach to human productivity has been featured in national and international media, including CBS, Fox Business News and The New York Post; he is a regular guest on CBS Interactive. With clients ranging from individual life coaches to the Fortune 500, he serves as an advisor and educator to professionals at all levels, all over the world. Prior to founding Group Harmonics, Ed was President and Executive Director of a human services organization, and a leader, mentor, and technologist within Intel Corporation and the Sematech consortium. A Cornell University graduate, Ed's accomplishments include the creation and stewardship of a worldwide manufacturing infrastructure program, a nationally-recognized engineering development organization, and a non-profit organization providing residential services to at-risk youth in his home town of Albuquerque, NM.

Thank you, Ed!

In the spirit of sharing our gifts,  
Jean

## What's Driving You: Agenda, Behavior or Mood? *by Ed Muzio*

We all live within the context of our agendas, moods, and behaviors. Each takes a turn driving the other. With a little reflection and a little effort, we can give a lot more time in the driver's seat to what we really want there.

Take a blank piece of paper (or whiteboard) and draw three circles on it equally spaced apart. Label the first one "Agenda." This is what you're trying to accomplish and achieve at any given moment, be it as broad as your life's mission or as narrow as your goal for a specific conversation. Label the second one "Behavior." This is what you're actually, observably doing at any given moment, be it eating a candy bar or arguing with your spouse. Label the third one "Mood." This is how you're feeling at any given moment, be it happy, sad, angry, or anything else.



Now, draw arrows between the circles to indicate what drives what. You can use solid arrows for "driving" and solid arrows for "influencing." In other words, if you think your mood strongly drives your agenda, draw a solid arrow from "Mood" to "Agenda." If you think your agenda somewhat influences your mood, draw a dotted arrow from "Agenda" to "Mood." What did you discover?

## Tools and Resources FROM THE BOOKSHELF

[Make Work Great](#) by Ed Muzio

Supercharge your team, reinvent the culture and gain influence - one person at a time.

[Mind Over Mood: Change How You Feel by Changing the Way You Think](#) by Dennis Greenberger and Christine Padesky

[The Prosperous Heart: Creating a Life of "Enough"](#) by Julia Cameron and Emma Lively

[Addicted to Unhappiness: Free Yourself from Moods and Behaviors That Undermine Relationships, Work and the Life...](#) by Martha Heineman Pieper and William J. Pieper

## **THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS**

[Music's Effect on Mood and Helping Behavior](#)

[Rules for Changing Behavior](#)

### **Reflection**

It occurs to me that many people around us today will draw this picture to indicate that their mood influences their agenda and drives their behavior - "When I'm in a bad mood, I don't want to accomplish anything - and, I'm argumentative." It also occurs to me that what we'd like to see in organizations (and beyond) is a picture indicating that agenda drives behavior, and perhaps even influences mood. "Based upon what I'm trying to accomplish, I select behaviors most likely to succeed - and the feeling of working on something important to me sometimes helps my mood."

What do you think? I can imagine some might respond that they don't have a choice. "I feel what I feel," you might say, "and I can't help what it does to me." Maybe a rock dropped on your toe, and now the pain makes you blind to anything else. That can certainly happen. I can think of times when I was too angry, tired, or overwhelmed to think straight or act appropriately.

But to draw the picture with mood at the helm, directing your agenda and behavior, is to completely miss the point of human choice. If you reflect honestly on your own dour moods, I'd wager that you've not only been the recipient of them, but a party to their creation. Maybe parts of what happened were outside your control, but parts certainly weren't. You weren't the one who dropped the rock, but wasn't it you who dressed in sandals and put your foot in harm's way?

### **Choose To**

Today, I invite you to ... seek, find, and acknowledge your contribution to all of your moods ... In what ways have you been known to set yourself up for enjoyment? ... In what ways have you been known to set yourself up for misery? ... Reflect on those actions - on your conscious, intentional acts - that have had a tendency to lead to certain experiences of mood ... ask yourself: Which of those were most consistent with your agenda? ... Which were helpful? ... Which were not? Are there any that, in retrospect, you'd avoid or change? ... Make a commitment to repeat one positive behavior ... and change one negative one, at your next opportunity.



### **Administrivia**

My Constructive Choices Audience...

- \* Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,
- \* New managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities,
- \* Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, life their voices, and...
- \* Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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