



The Inherent Simplicity of TOC/TP

A road travelled

by Ted Hutchin

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About me!

After 30 years of working with TOC and the TP, in all manner of organisations right around the world, it would appear that some people think I might have something to say. Currently I would describe myself as semi-retired, a writer, and essayist with a blog, a Benedictine Oblate, a coach and mentor, a spiritual director, chaplain to both Police and Fire Service but most often, husband, father and grandfather - truly wonderful. Eli once said to me that grandchildren are the gift you get for not killing your kids! I would agree with him that holding your first grandchild exceeds that of holding your first child. A legacy truly passed on.

I might also mention being an ex sailor, ex rugby player, ex academic, ex soldier as a radar engineer but they are all behind me now. It's what lies ahead that is exciting, living life in crescendo!



About this webinar

This webinar is the result of a comment I made on the TOC Practitioners Worldwide forum on Facebook. It was suggested that others might like to know a little more about my observations about using TOC/TP for organisational and personal relationships. To do that requires a little more background, and even more about my evolving use of the TP and why I find it to be an excellent tool for understanding and communication. So, something about my journey, something about my use of the TP to tell the story of those I am working with, a story they tell and I capture. And some reflections about where I am and where I might think I am heading with new ways of using the TP for understanding and communication.



The inherent simplicity of the TOC/TP

A road travelled by Ted Hutchin with
thanks to the poetry of Robert Frost



My introduction to Eli marked the beginning of the road I have travelled

- That first meeting with a truly great mind in 1987, but just a little scary!
- Then the awful realisation that I was always going to struggle to know just where Eli was coming from, and just as often, where he was going to!
- Then the wonderful discovery, I was always going to be able to stand on the shoulders of giants:
 - Oded, Alex Meshar and Alex Klarman, Tali, Avraham M, Eli s, Bert Husken, Alan Leader, Kathy and Dick, Jerry, Dale and so many many more in the USA, the UK team, the GIG group, AGI from around the world, all these people between 1990 and 2014 when I “retired” guided, challenged, taught and stretched me.
 - That and being invited by Oded to write my personal Frt – and to remember that “I” am not in that document, the Prt and Trt yes, but not the Frt! This I did in 1992, it remains valid even today.
 - Remember, this Frt is important as it is, for each of us, our legacy, the bit of our life that remains after we are gone, however that is defined.



But first: mastering the process

- But you had to learn this process, it was never easy, it demanded time and effort.
- Talmudic scholarship does not just happen.
- Socratic questioning and examination is a difficult yet rewarding road to travel.
- To find the inherent simplicity took hours of time just thinking through what was happening and trusting the tools, mastering the tools, using them every which you could, and then you might still be frustrated, but perseverance always pays off.
- And above all, you needed a team of great mentors, the giants noted above, and more from outside the world of TOC, to guide and to question.
- You might not agree with them, but with both using the tools, you usually arrived at a sound and robust solution.



And second: in order to live I had to sell!

- Kevin Fox wrote a simple article, in 1992 I think, where he outlined the way to sell TOC/TP and I have used it ever since, simple yet long lost!!!!
- SPIN selling gave greater clarity and, with these two combined, selling TOC/TP became straightforward. There was a Trt, but I simply lived it rather than try to keep writing it down. If you want the Trt Robert Bolton might have it as he sat in on some of my selling visits!!
- I survived three recessions and was still relatively successful when I retired, but time had moved on and anyway, I needed a new challenge!
- Except.....I still had to learn one more lesson in order to move forward.



It's not all about DBR, CCPM or even the Jonah programme!

- I was selling something that could not in all honesty last, most of the implementations we lead have shallow roots. Short term success yes, and in some cases it stayed that way for a while however....
- A new person in the organisation could undo all my work and the work of those inside the organisation I had taught, at a stroke in some cases. There is no long term success in selling TOC/TP to organisations. The dominant paradigm of cost metrics coupled with a new owner or new top executive will always have the capacity to stop what we do in its tracks. This is certainly true of the Western Economy.
- But TOC/TP delivered almost always at the level of the individual person – but this realisation took time.



A chance remark that remains with me still!

- Eli once told me (1987) that, for him, the core message of the Goal was the relationship between Alex and Julie, and with the family! Really! I thought at the time that surely it is all about managing the plant, saving the jobs of all the people that work there, and the communities in which they live – that is truly a goal with having, “But Jonah said no”.
- It wasn’t as if I disagreed with Eli – and I did on a number of occasions; it was more the fact that I missed the point that sound, robust relationships start at home and work out from there. There is a world of difference between looking and seeing as the contemplatives remind us, but I had not yet learned how to see.
- It was this remark that also drove my Doctoral research at Cranfield and led to the book Unconstrained Organisations and the psychology of relationships at work and home.



Which led me to personal focus

- To be part of someone achieving their goal in life is humbling, is rewarding beyond all measure, changes you and the person you are travelling with, and thus, the world.
- This aspect had, from before TOC, been part of my goal, but I had no idea how to do it properly. I was fortunate that I was not the first, and people such as Limor, had already opened the door for me.
- We should never underestimate the importance of this, we have a set of tools, not the only set, but a set, combining both Socratic and Talmudic understanding which when done well exceeds all expectation.
- To see people released from the powerful grip of a conflict of paradigms, from the devastating snare of everything that this world deems important, to witness them actually recognise and set out for their goal in life is both a revelation for them and humbling to me. This is a place of compassion, of humility and humanity.



So why use the phrase “Inherent Simplicity”?

- This phrase is the best summation of what Eli taught me and so many others. Whether it be an application, the Jonah Programme, Personal Focus, whatever we chose to use the TOC/TP for, the objective was always inherent simplicity.
- Our use of the tools could look like that of a magician, the application of a snake oil, without the mark of inherent simplicity. “Of course” they should exclaim after the work has been done – usually by themselves.
- It is also the metric of our mastery of the tools, if it is not simple then our work is not yet done.
- And, perhaps this is the best accolade our thinking can achieve when working with someone as we travel for a while beside them and guide or mentor is for them to say “of course”.
- And inherent simplicity is never more important than when dealing with a one-to-one relationship.



Here begins the importance of process as part of the story

The telling of the story demands both
rigour and cause and effect
understanding if we are to understand



The importance of story

- For over thirty years I have been fascinated with the ability of the TOC to help in capturing, and then understanding, stories told to me by so many people. It even works with the stories that I read – in particular, scripture.
- Some stories are related to their working lives.
- Some stories are related to their private lives.
- But in all cases, they saw something in the process that I was using which could hopefully unlock them from where they felt they were in their journey in life and allow them to move forward.



The combination of Socratic and Talmudic scholarship for understanding

- Socratic thinking roots us in effect-cause-effect logic and the power of deductive reasoning.
- Talmudic scholarship roots us in rigour, clarity of mind and expression.
- Combine the two and we have the ability to understand complex situations with a level of ease, BUT we have to master the tools.
- Logic is one thing, but if our logic does not tell a story, one that defines a journey then we are still not achieving Inherent Simplicity.



Socratic method

Paul, R. and Elder, L. (April 1997). Foundation For Critical Thinking,

- Here we can question goals and purposes. We can probe into the nature of the question, problem, or issue that is on the floor. We can inquire into whether or not we have relevant data and information. We can consider alternative interpretations of the data and information.
- We can analyze key concepts and ideas. We can question assumptions being made. We can ask those we are working with to trace out the implications and consequences of what they are saying. We can consider alternative points of view. All of these, and more, are the proper focus of the Socratic questioner.
- As a tactic and approach, Socratic questioning is a highly disciplined process. The Socratic questioner acts as the logical equivalent of the inner critical voice which the mind develops when it develops critical thinking abilities.
- Eli invited us all to read “The Last Days of Socrates” – the perfect introduction to what was to come!



Talmudic Method

(Harry Austryn Wolfson – “Crescas” critique of Aristotle
Harvard Press 1929

- In the Talmudic method of text study, the starting point is the principle that any text that is deemed worthy of serious study must be assumed to have been written with such care and precision that every term, expression, generalization or exception is significant not so much for what it states as for what it implies.
- Serious students themselves, accustomed to a rigid form of logical reasoning and to the usage of precise forms of expression, the Talmudic trained scholars attributed the same quality of precision and exactness to any authoritative work, be it of divine origin or the product of the human mind.
- And there is a logic underlying this method of reasoning. It is the very same kind of logic which underlies any sort of scientific research, and by which one is enabled to form hypotheses, to test them and to formulate general laws. The Talmudic student approaches the study of texts in the same manner as the scientist approaches the study of nature.



Moving on...using the Cloud to capture the place where the person is

- You always have to meet people where they are if you want to help.
- This begins with listening, listening with what St Benedict called the ear of the heart. This means listening to every word, capturing each word, understanding the stories the words are telling and including words not spoken, gestures without words, expressions speaking volumes.
- This is where the Cloud comes in.
- We should also remember that in the book “Illusions” , Bach uses the phrase *Vaporising Clouds* and not *evaporating clouds* – there is a world of difference between the two, and I prefer to vaporise clouds!!



Clouds as a set of cameos

- You all know the structure of a cloud. I have redefined that structure in the following way. I use the term 'cameo' to help me: defined as "a short descriptive literary sketch which neatly encapsulates someone or something."
 - **Cameo 1.** This is the D-D' conflict. This is a rich source of information as to where the person is. I get them to wax lyrical about this actual, or perceived, conflict in their life. This tells you so much about where they are.
 - **Cameo 2, part 1.** This is the B-D structure
 - **Cameo 2, part 2.** This is the C-D' structure. Again, for both of these they will really open up, talking eloquently about the situation they are in and without realising it give you a great deal of information assuming you are still listening and not running forward into solution mode!
 - **Cameo 3.** This is the A-B coupled with the A-C structure. All three form a key aspect as to why they are sitting with you because this structure is either in danger of being lost, or they are convinced that it already lost.
 - **Cameo 4.** This is the resetting of the whole cloud with assumptions in such a way that they are happy that you listened.



Cameos tell the story

- Having listened to the story you can now ask clarity questions.
- Here you will start to combine both Socratic questioning coupled with the Talmudic search for rigour and clarity.
- The story takes shape, the journey they are on takes shape, and their predicament also becomes crystal clear. You will see this, but they probably do not see with the same clarity, they are still looking through a fog because they are caught in Cameo 1.
- I have found this approach of capturing the story provides UDEs in abundance, therefore all the DEs you need, and just important the goal is to them, and at the same time, how far away they think it is, even out of reach!



Moving forward

- At this point you have most of the information you need BUT...
- They have no ownership, and so nothing you offer will help!
- So feed back the story to them, use clouds in the form of the spoken word and as the telling of a story, use the CCRT as well if required.
- Get them to intervene, correct, start to add to their own story. Let them take over the telling whenever possible. This confirms to them that you listened to their story. You believed them and in this way you begin to gain their trust.



"No man is an island" wrote John Donne

- And the same can be said of a woman.
- The human race is created for relationships and in my work over the thirty years and more, what I have come across is brokenness, loss, loneliness and so much more.
- The world today does not seem to want us to have relationships, seems to suggest that we are all individuals living without any connection to those around us – which leads to a number of examples as to the most prevalent cameo 1.
 - *Discord vs accord; or maybe, let me be vs be with me.*
 - But we only have real meaning when we open up our lives to others, allow ourselves to be vulnerable, to be hurt, because only in this way can we be loved.

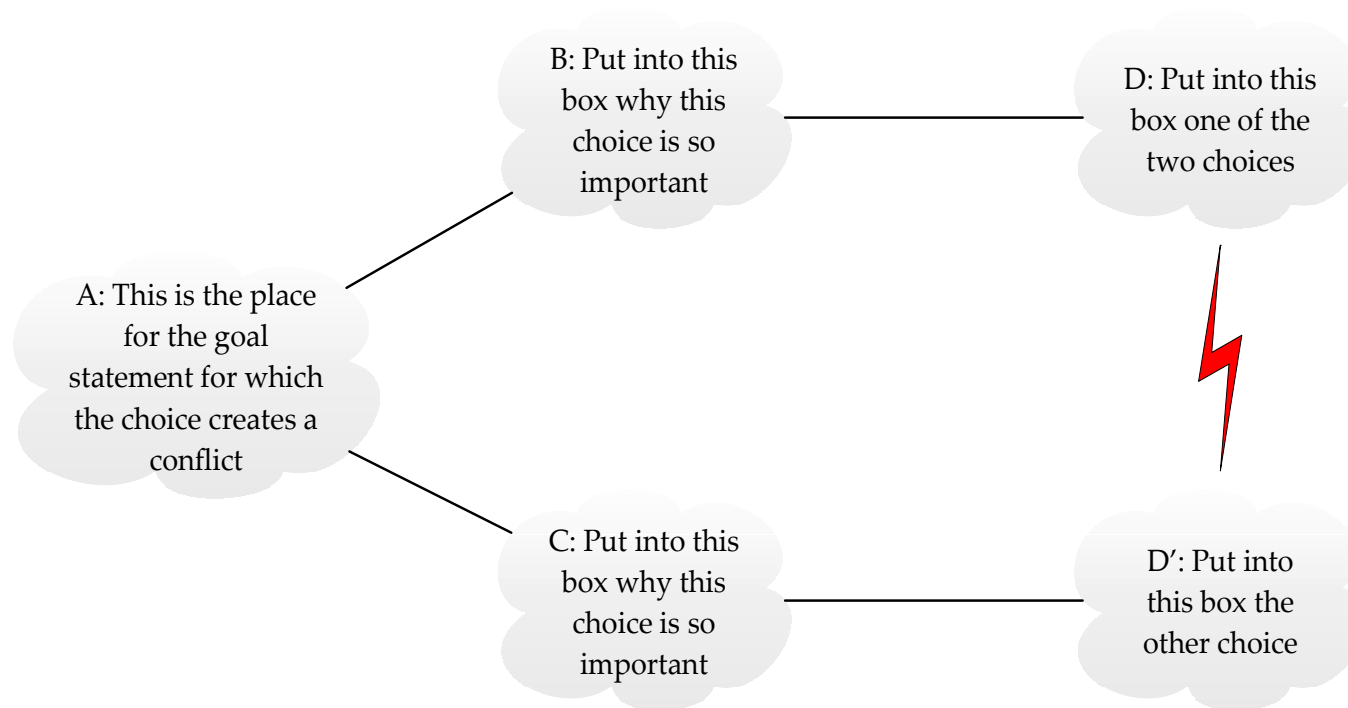


The Desirable Effects of living in relationship

- We learn about humility, we learn about compassion, we learn about humanity.
- These three indicate that we are living in community with others, we have begun to live in relationship with others, not just those like us, but those who need us.
- There is an aspect of both healing and guiding here that the TP can help us with. The TP tools are the diagnostic that can guide us to where we can be of real value to those around us, not in monetary terms but humanitarian.



The basic structure of which you are all aware





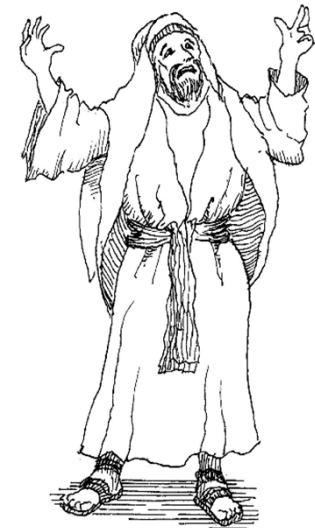
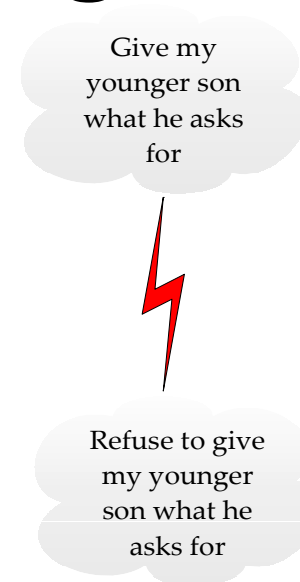
The choice forced upon the father by the younger son – the story begins



These are two related but separate examples of cameo 1.

On the left the perspective of the younger son.

On the right the perspective and anguish of the father.





The younger son departs having chosen the road he wants to take

Let my sons
live their own
life

Give my
younger son
what he asks
for

Cameo 2.1 above and 2.2 below
and from the perspective of the father

See how the story develops and note the cross connection

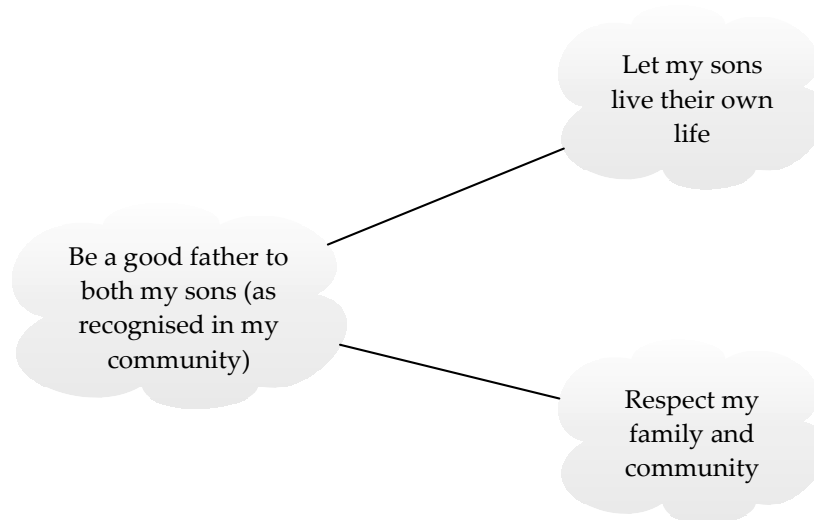
Respect my
family and
community

Refuse to give
my younger
son what he
asks for





Cameo 3 – the goal plus the NCs



Here we see the price paid by the father in allowing the son to leave.

The story now shows the despair of the father but he knows the choice he has to make even if it hurts him deeply.

He feels he has lost both the goal (A) and his own necessary condition (C) in order to permit the necessary condition (B)

This is the road that the father has chosen.



But the journey, and thus the story is not yet complete



Stay here in the
pigsty



Go home and
seek to work as
a worked for
my father





The two roads, that of the father and that of the younger son are brought together

BUT.....what of the elder son?

He is not at all happy with both the return of his younger brother, and the response of his father.

Perhaps he thought that everything would come to him, who knows?

But what we see in the response of the elder son is typical of Paradigm Lock.

The elder son cannot rejoice in seeing the one that was lost be found, cannot accept, or forgive, the hurt caused to the father, has no forgiveness in his heart.

And there lies most of the conflicts I deal with, and why I find the TOC/TP to be of such value.



*Henri Nouwen – The Return of the Prodigal Son for a deeper understanding
Thanks to the late Brian Hollingshead for the illustrations used here*



A few thoughts on process

- The importance of sensitive dependence on initial condition. First described by David Ruelle to highlight the fact that if the initial condition is not robust, there is no way you can predict the outcome.
- This is why I would spend three to four days working on the UDEs as part of any Leadership/Jonah programme in order to obtain a sound foundation for what follows. Interestingly it is the storyline that I require for each UDE where the real UDEs can be found.
- We all have our favourite tool within the TP, for me it was the Cloud, followed by the NBR. The Trt came naturally to me, Prts were straightforward and when coupled with CCPM became very powerful.



The privilege of listening

- When sitting beside someone who is lost, broken, hurting, oftentimes angry, you need to remember they have come for help and you might be their last hope.
- In so doing they show great courage, great fortitude; just asking for help is an amazing first step.
- We are to have compassion for them, compassion – com pati. Latin root for “to suffer with”. In entering where they are we ourselves become vulnerable, we too share that suffering, but we also bring, in my case my faith, and faith in the tools we have been taught to use to help guide them out of the dark place where we found them. There is often healing taking place at the same time.



Which leads us to....

- Seeing what we are able to do as a shepherd in the Middle East searching for the lost sheep and then leading it back to the safety of the flock.
- The people I have met and travelled with have shown in their tribulation and perseverance a desire to be set free – and this is where our help is most productive. This is where we discover what it means to be human, created to live in relationship, in community.
- If I can teach you something of this, then the legacy given to me by the giants is passed on to the giants of tomorrow, and the whole world benefits.



So, this is perhaps the greatest legacy of Eli for me at least

- Through the use of the TOC/TP I began to recognise the devastating impact that comes from the conflict of paradigms and in particular that of Paradigm Lock which I still see reverberating around organisations of all types and sizes, from families to the family of Nations.
- I also learned, with thanks to Covey at the Realization conference in 2007, that we are to live life in crescendo, the best is yet to come, so I prefer to focus on where I am being led rather than where I have come from.
- I would invite you to consider the same, explore the journey, the road you have chosen, savour it, but don't forget to take each moment as a gift, dwell in the moment, do not be ahead, or behind the moment. That doesn't work; no, be in the moment and that way a certain peace comes .



And so to finish

- If the TOC/TP is a solution, what is the problem?
 - Must a significant problem for this to be the solution – not a choopchik.
- The answer is, of course, unique to each one of us.
- Personally, the personal Frt is the lens through which I can see the Crt that lies heaviest on my heart and the cloud teaches me how to capture and understand what I see through that lens.



Life is about seeking the inherent simplicity

- What was, and is, and will be the problem that the TOC/TP solves for me?
- I need the injection that the TOC/TP is in order to help me interpret and understand the world in which I live, with all its issues and problems, and, on a one to one basis, do something about it.



And so...

- My journey, which began many years before I ever knew about TOC/TP was brought into sharp focus by what Eli and others taught me.
- You have seen some of that here today.
- My journey is far from over and remains to be completed.
- But I do not travel alone, and I have the giants, from more than just the world of TOC to keep me from straying, whispering words of comfort and correction in my ear.
- Thank you



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Questions