THE 4 ELEMENTS OF IDENTITY STRUCTURE™

THE INTERNAL OPERATING SYSTEM (iOS)

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SUMMARY: Understanding "The 4 Elements of Identity Structure" requires us to understand each of the elements in more detail. Each of the 4 elements consist of various components that create the structure within the element. In this article the focus will be on the first of the 4 elements: The Internal Operating System.

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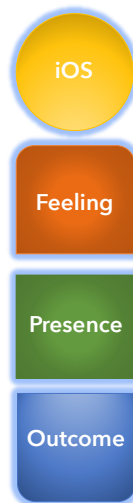
In a previous article, the introduction of "The 4 Elements of Identity Structure" the model referenced herein was presented. Identity structure is a complex and multifaceted construct that reflects who we are as individuals, and how we interact with the world around us. It involves a range of elements that shape our perceptions, beliefs, behaviors, and can influence the outcomes we achieve in life. Identity structure can be described as the internal and external elements that contribute to one's sense of self. These factors are often shaped by individual experiences, environments, relationships, and cultural contexts. These elements serve as the structure for a person's identity and include the internal operating system, feelings, presence, and outcomes.

THE INTERNAL OPERATING SYSTEM (iOS)

iOS

The internal operating system is the first of the 4 Elements. It is the core of an individual's identity and influences how they interpret and respond to the world around them. The internal operating system influences an individual's perception, thoughts, and decision-making process. It is the foundation upon which an individual's personality and behavior are built. The internal operating system consists of self-awareness, beliefs, and values, "one's WHY", purpose, and vision.

By examining each of these components we can gain a deeper understanding of how they are interconnected and contribute to a person's identity structure.

Self-Awareness:

Self-awareness is a critical component of the internal operating system as it serves as the gateway for personal growth and development. According to research by psychologist Daniel Goleman, self-awareness is the foundation of emotional intelligence and an essential element for success in life and work.[1]

Self-awareness involves understanding one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and how they impact one's interactions with others and the world around them.
Studies have shown that individuals with high levels of self-awareness are more effective leaders, have better communication skills, and are better able to manage stress and emotions.[2]

Developing self-awareness can be challenging, but there are several techniques that individuals can use to enhance their self-awareness. These include journaling, practicing mindfulness, seeking feedback from others, and reflecting on past experiences.[3] Through increased self-awareness, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, which can lead to improved communication, leadership, and overall better outcomes. By utilizing techniques to enhance self-awareness, individuals can fortify the consciousness of their structure.

Beliefs and Values:

Beliefs and values are the second component of the internal operating system. Beliefs are the convictions or assumptions that a person holds about themselves and the world around them. Values are the principles or standards that a person holds as important. Both beliefs and values play a critical role in shaping a person's identity. Together, beliefs and values provide individuals with a moral and ethical framework for their lives.

Individuals with a strong sense of personal values are more likely to experience greater life satisfaction, increased well-being, and a stronger sense of purpose in life.[4] Additionally, individuals who align their beliefs and values with their actions are more likely to engage in positive, pro-social behavior and experience a greater sense of fulfillment and happiness in life.[5]

WHY:

The third component of the internal operating system is the discovery of one's WHY. It is a critical component of the internal operating system as it provides individuals with a sense of being and brings significant meaning to their life. Individuals who have a clear sense of their WHY are more likely to play to their strengths, feel valued, and have unlimited energy. Once individuals know their WHY, they have a choice to live it every day.

According to Simon Sinek, author of "Start With Why," discovering your WHY involves understanding your core beliefs and values and using them to guide your decisions and actions.[6] Living your WHY means consistently taking actions that are in alignment with the things you say. When the things we say and the things we do are aligned with what we believe, we are fully living our WHY.

Discovering your WHY can be a challenging process, but there are several techniques that individuals can use to help them identify their purpose. This can be done through the help of a trusted colleague, an executive coach, or through a discovery process with a certified facilitator from an organization such as the WHY Institute.

The discovery of one's WHY is vital to the internal operating system because it can help individuals in the establishment of their created identity and develop a deeper understanding of how they contribute to something greater than themselves.

Purpose:

The fourth component of the internal operating system is purpose. Purpose is the impact an individual makes through their WHY. It is the driving force behind their actions and decisions. The evidence of leading with purpose in one's life and the impact on the outcomes they get are significant.

Here are some of the profound ways in which leading with purpose can impact one's outcomes:

1. Motivation and Engagement
2. Innovation and Creativity
3. Alignment and Focus
4. Resilience and Adaptability
5. Social Impact

Purpose is vital to the internal operating system. As individuals understand their purpose, they can bring life to their WHY, further establish their identity, and develop a more impactful vision. Purpose can help individuals stay focused on their goals and overcome obstacles in their lives. Purpose can have a significant impact on psychological well-being, physical health, and overall life satisfaction. Individuals that lead life with purpose, do it with intention.

Vision:

The final component of the internal operating system is vision. Vision is a mental image of what a person wants to achieve in their life. It is a long-term goal or aspiration that provides individuals with a sense of direction and motivation.
Vision is a vital component of the internal operating system because it can inspire individuals in fulfilling their purpose.

When individuals have a clear vision of what they want to achieve and why it matters, they are more likely to make decisions and take actions that align with their beliefs, values, WHY, and purpose. This can lead to a greater sense of self-awareness, as individuals become more attuned to their strengths, passions, and motivations.

> *I saw an angel in the marble and carved until I set him free.*
>
> *– Michelangelo*

In addition to shaping an individual's identity, having a compelling vision can also have a powerful impact on the people they lead. When leaders are able to articulate a clear and inspiring vision, they are more likely to attract and retain followers who share their values and goals. This can create a sense of community and shared purpose, as individuals come together to achieve a common vision.

Moreover, when leaders lead with a clear vision, they are more likely to inspire their followers to be their best selves, to work collaboratively, and to be committed to achieving their shared goals. This can lead to higher levels of engagement, motivation, and productivity, and can create a sense of belonging and purpose in the workplace.

Overall, having a vision can be a powerful tool for shaping an individual's identity, inspiring others, and achieving meaningful goals. By defining a clear and compelling vision, individuals can lead with purpose and create a positive impact in their life and in the lives of others.

It All Matters:

Each component of the internal operating system is interconnected and builds upon one another. Without self-awareness, individuals may struggle to identify their beliefs and values. Without understanding their beliefs and values, individuals may struggle to identify with their WHY. Without discovering their WHY, individuals may not find meaning in their purpose or establish a compelling vision for their lives.

The internal operating system is the core of a person's identity structure. By understanding and examining each component of one's internal operating system, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of themselves and how their inner game is programmed. Self-awareness, beliefs and values, one's WHY, purpose, and vision are all core to the structure of a person's identity and is foundational for personal growth.

Darren Walker is the principal and owner of SoundMind Leadership. He is an ICF certified executive coach, team coach and master facilitator. Darren is certified in solutions that include The Leadership Circle Profile, WHY Discovery, Crucial Learning, DiSC, The Five Behaviors, John Maxwell, and other dynamic leadership solutions.

If you want to learn more about The 4 Elements of Identity Structure contact me at darren.walker@soundmindleadership.com.

You may also visit me at www.soundmindleadership.com or click on the QR code.

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