

THE **DARWINIAN TREE**

STAGE SIX OF THE IMPACT MODEL: T FOR TRANSFORMATION

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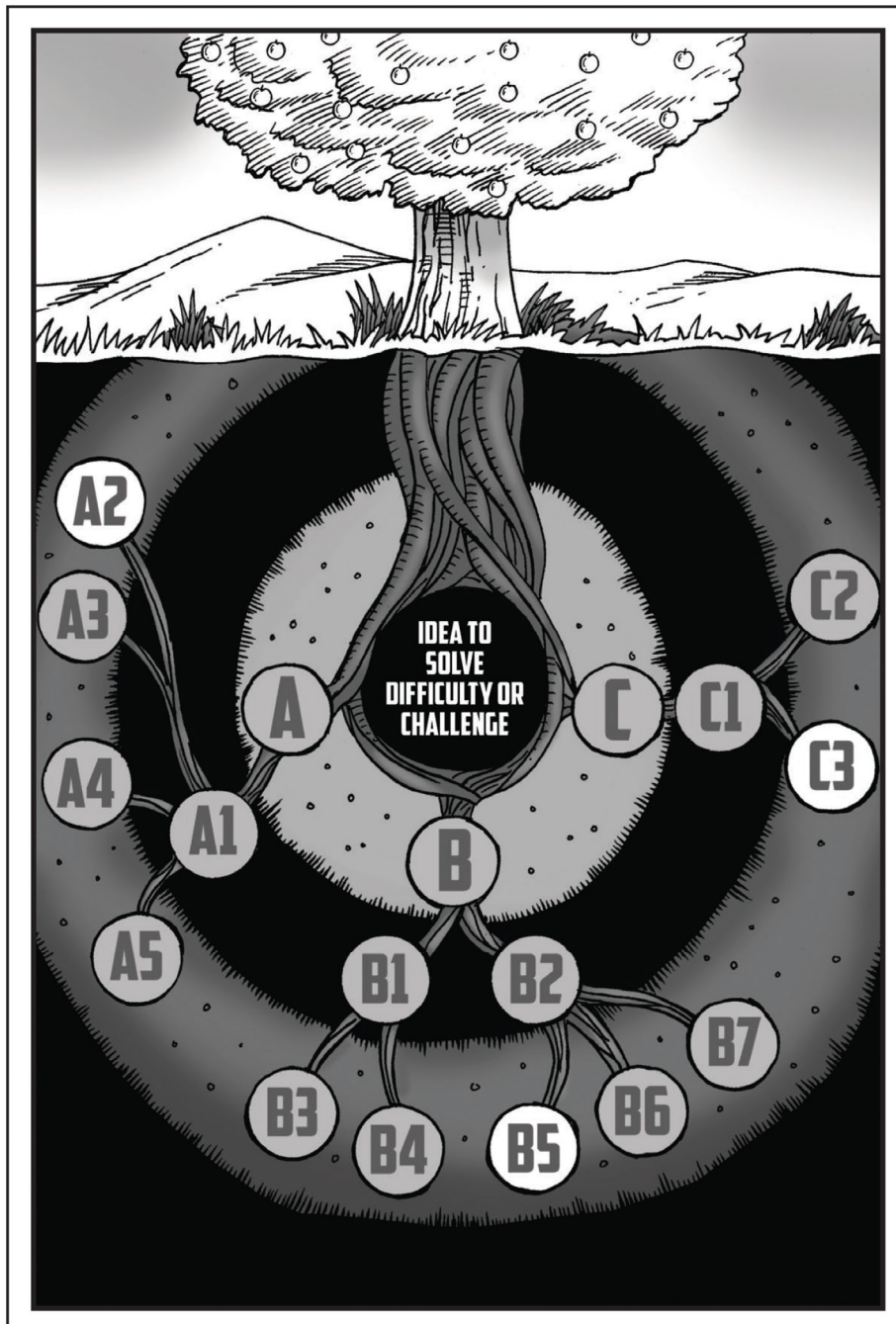
- Help you effectively explore initial ideas with the potential to resolve the challenges you face
- Ensure helpful ideas evolve and become established and unhelpful ones confidently disregarded
- Provide a set of definable, concrete steps to follow to transform helpful ideas into a reality.

THE
IMPACT
MODEL



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THE DARWINIAN TREE



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DARWINIAN TREE

Sometimes, it can be hard to generate the ideas we need to start and complete our transformation. Nothing can be more elusive than a great idea or set of ideas, which is why we came up with the Darwinian Tree activity. As the name suggests, the focus is on developing new or existing ideas and 'evolving' them into ones that can be acted upon so we can get and keep the main areas of our lives (see list) in the best shape possible. In my experience, great ideas are just below the surface, in our unconscious. They just need to be teased and coaxed out into our conscious awareness.

- Yourself: identity, role and status; self-esteem and self-worth.
- Home and family life.
- Relationships – personal and professional.
- Work, career and professional development.
- Health and wellbeing.
- Financial.
- Lifestyle.
- Social.
- Cultural.
- Environmental.



DARWINIAN TREE ACTIVITY

STAGE ONE

In the middle of a blank piece of paper or a new computer document, write down the area you wish to transform e.g., your self-esteem, career, social life or relationship. Use additional pieces or screens if you are working on more than one area.



STAGE TWO

Spend a brief amount of time, no more than ten minutes, recording ideas that come to mind, such as thoughts, observations or questions that seem to offer possible resolutions to the challenges you face in the area concerned. Note these at the end of your first set of 'evolutionary' roots. You must write down anything that emerges, trusting your unconscious to offer you something valuable and relevant. At this stage, there must be no judgement or questioning. Overthinking is the enemy here. The more time we wrestle with an idea, the easier it becomes to dismiss it as unworkable or unrealistic.

STAGE THREE

After a reasonable break – I recommend a day, but go with what works for you – return to your Darwinian Tree. At the end of your second set of evolutionary roots, note anything that arises from your first set of thoughts, observations or questions. Again, limit yourself to no more than ten minutes.

STAGE FOUR

Repeat the above until at the end of one or more of your roots have evolved ideas you can act on.

STAGE FOUR

What you are looking for at the end of each evolutionary root are increasingly evolved, concrete ideas, for example, those with:

- Goals and objectives, decisions, options or next steps
- Names of people or organisations who can support you, whether in-person or online
- Contact details, such as telephone numbers, email addresses, etc.
- Types of resources or equipment you will need
- Names of helpful products and services
- Times, dates and schedules
- Techniques, strategies and plans.

If, after several steps, an ideal fails to evolve into something tangible, then it can be safely rejected.



To help you visualise your Darwinian Tree, have a look at the example below from our client, Marcus, who, due to family separation, found himself with a lot of free time, which he struggled to fill. Initially, Marcus noted a mixed bag of random, disconnected ideas, which he fought hard not to dismiss. However, he followed our instructions and set aside a piece of paper with the following:

- Indian food
- Europe
- The British Museum
- walking boots
- Moulin Rouge, the musical
- His father's name.

Over a few weeks, this list evolved into the following list of short and longer-term commitments:

- A ten-week beginners course in Indian cookery course run by a local chef
- Joining a Peak District walking group that met regularly at weekends
- Booking two walking holidays in the French Alps and Pyrenees
- The establishment of his I.T. consultancy business (his father ran his own business for many years).

Not every initial idea of Marcus' evolved, but those that did formed the basis for the next stage of his life. So, when, like Marcus, you need inspiration but find only tumbleweed blowing through your imagination, don't give up. Trust in yourself and activities like this.