

THE **OBSERVING SELF**

STAGE TWO OF THE IMPACT MODEL: M FOR MEANING

AIMS:

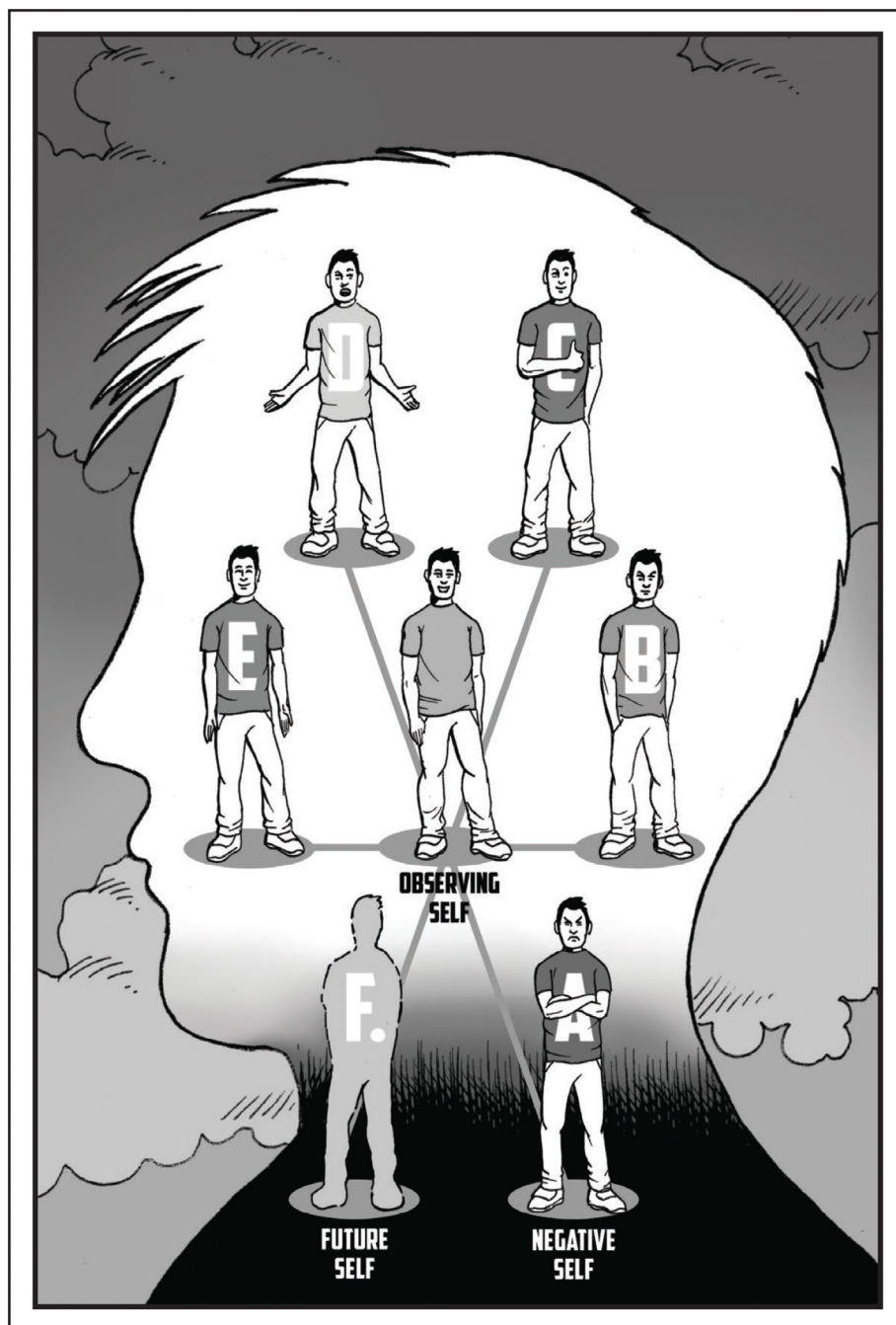
- Help you make sense of the negatives in your life
- Highlight the existence of your Observing Self, their supporting sub-selves and the roles they play
- Show you why a harmonious relationship between your Observing Self and sub-selves is critical for your wellbeing and how to achieve it
- Reveal why one sub-self is responsible for many of the negatives in your life and how to deal with them.

THE
IMPACT
MODEL



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CONVERSATIONS WITH **IMPACT**



THE OBSERVING SELF



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THE BACKGROUND

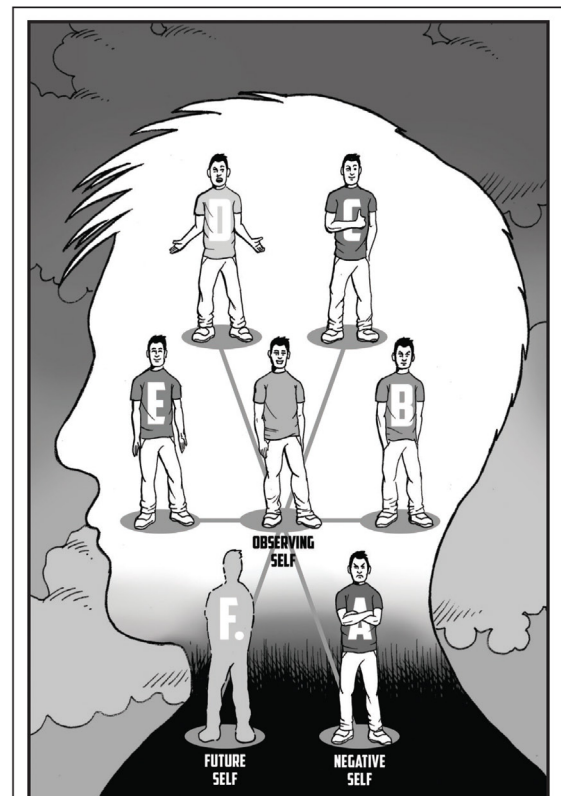
Who or what is the 'Observing Self'? Well, we all have one, although you might know them better as your 'authentic' or 'core' self. In other words, your Observing Self is you, the chief, the boss, the decision maker, the part of you that oversees your life, and who steps back, reflects and sets things in motion. To repeat, your Observing Self is you. And who are you? You are someone who wants to thrive and survive well in life by putting your problems behind you and achieving your goals and objectives, dreams and ambitions.

When you struggle and become trapped in negative patterns of thought, behaviour, feeling and relating, you can make sense of this by understanding that your Observing Self is no longer 'in charge'. Below, we reveal who does take over and why they are responsible for the negatives in your life, but first, we want to familiarise you with our Observing Self illustration.

THE ILLUSTRATION

In the middle of the illustration is your Observing Self (you, remember), and around them are your 'sub-selves', who play specific roles at certain times and in certain situations. As you will see, this distinction is crucial because although your sub-selves are a part of who you are, they are not who you are. The task of your Observing Self is to create harmony between your sub-selves and ensure they are fully supportive of you.

What should happen is this. As the boss, your Observing Self brings on individual sub-selves to play roles in circumstances their personality and characteristics make them suitable for. In doing so, your Observing Self swaps places with the chosen sub-self, temporarily relinquishing control of your life to them. When they have fulfilled their role, positions are reversed, and your Observing Self takes charge once more. So far, so good, but it doesn't always work out this way.



SEE PAGE ABOVE FOR LARGER ILLUSTRATION

INTRODUCING YOUR NEGATIVE SELF

Consider this scenario. One day, during a difficult time in your life, one of your sub-selves, whom we call your Negative Self (sub-self A in the illustration), was brought on by your Observing Self to play an appropriate role. However, when the time came for them to swap places again, your Negative Self refused because they enjoyed being in charge too much.

Try as your Observing Self did that day they lost out, and it was they, not your Negative Self, who ended up on the periphery of your life. From that day onwards, your Negative Self took control of how you think, behave, feel and relate to the outside world and the people in it.

LIFE UNDER YOUR NEGATIVE SELF

From the moment your Negative Self took centre stage, they began a relentless campaign of negativity – using the sizeable arsenal of symptoms and effects below – aimed at stopping your Observing Self from resuming their rightful place.

No one chooses to inflict such misery on themselves—my Observing Self concept hands responsibility for these miserable symptoms and effects to your Negative Self.



NEGATIVE SELF SYMPTOMS:

- Physical symptoms such as chest pain, stomach issues and headaches
- Negative, intrusive thoughts
- Difficult emotions such as stress, anxiety, depression and anger
- Problematic behaviours such as avoidance, procrastination or perfectionism
- Unhealthy lifestyles such as alcohol dependency, drug use and overeating
- Relationship problems such as irritability and conflict
- Personal challenges such as low self-esteem, low self-worth and people-pleasing
- Professional issues such as work-related stress and perfectionism

YOU ARE NOT YOUR NEGATIVE SELF

The greatest trick your Negative Self performs is to convince you that you are them, and they are you. As long as they maintain this delusion, their grip over you remains tight, which is why demonstrating that you are not your Negative Self is so important. Only by recognising this distinction can you regain ownership of your identity, thoughts, behaviours, feelings and relationships. So, how can you know that you are not your Negative Self? You are doing something that your negative self never would: seeking to change your life for the better.

The thing about your Negative Self is they never act against their own interests by doing anything that could result in them being sent back to where they came from: the periphery of your life. Resources like this represent a threat to the dominance of Negative Selves, which is why:

your Negative Self didn't find our website;
your Observing Self did

your Negative Self didn't download this
activity; your Observing Self did

your Negative Self isn't still reading; your
Observing Self is

...you get the idea.

THE OBSERVING SELF ACTIVITY

The Observing Self activity will help you start to regain control of your thoughts, behaviours, feelings and relationships from your Negative Self so you can be who you want to be and live the life you want to live free from their influence.

A note of caution. Negative Selves rarely appreciate being sent back to the edge of our lives, so expect them to protest in the strongest terms and make things difficult for you. Anticipate they will try to regain what they have lost by throwing everything they have at their disposal at you. Remember, they succeeded once and will feel confident about doing so again. The difference this time around, however, is you will be ready for them. From now on,

whenever you think, behave, feel and relate in ways that undermine your thriving and surviving, you will know this is your Negative Self trying to lure you into their trap. Using this PDF, you can outwit them by being more intelligent and determined. So, to get the most out of The Observing Self activity:

- Do the activity on a regular basis initially to get the upper hand over your Negative Self, then to prevent them from taking over again
- Do the activity by yourself and, if possible, with at least one trusted other, someone supportive of your commitment to changing things for the better.

STAGE ONE: CHOOSING AND BRINGING YOUR SUB-SELVES TO LIFE

In our illustration, five sub-selves are represented in addition to your Negative Self, but you can choose as many as you like. Notice that each has a different facial expression to help you decide which part of you they represent. If you want your Observing Self to be back in charge of your life, ideally, you want a group of sub-selves who possess the attributes that will make this possible.

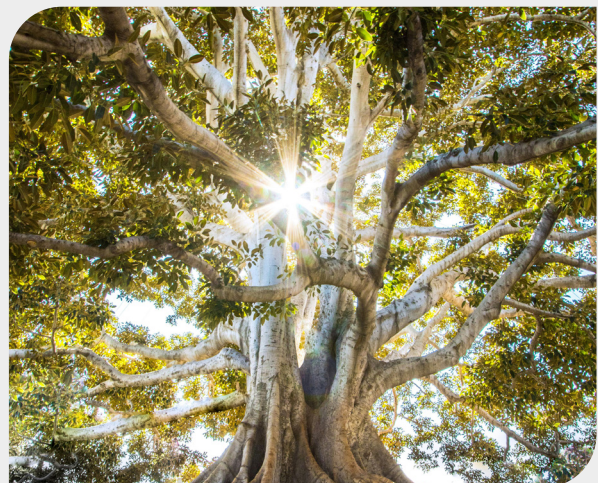
Next, bring your sub-selves to life by giving each of them a name, personality, characteristics, abilities and role. Note that you are doing this for your Negative Self, too, but this time, you will be telling them who they are, not the other way around. The list of sub-selves below is an example from someone we have worked with, but bring yours to life in ways that genuinely reflects who you want them to be.

- A. Negative Self
- B. Optimistic Self
- C. Compassionate Self
- D. Helpful Self
- E. Determined Self
- F. Future Self
- G. Resilient Self.

You are welcome to rename your Negative Self. One young lady we worked with overcame her shopping addiction by labelling her Negative Self as 'The Crazy Bitch'. While we are not suggesting you use such colourful language, personalising your Negative Self can prove highly effective because it can create greater separation between them and you.

A note on 'F'. 'F' is your Future Self and is, perhaps, the most critical sub-self because as you get older, they take on the personalities, characteristics, abilities and roles of the others, including your Observing Self. This is why you must separate from your Negative Self; if you don't, they will ensure that 'F' becomes more negative the older you get. With your Observing Self in charge surrounded by a cast of positive sub-selves, 'F' can become who you want them to be.

Use the space in the next page to bring your sub-selves to life.



STAGE ONE: CHOOSING AND BRINGING YOUR SUB-SELVES TO LIFE

Use this space to bring your sub-selves to life:

STAGE TWO: ALLOCATING ROLES

Taking each sub-self, complete the following activity, paying attention to the tenses used. Notice I use the past tense for your Negative Self i.e., 'got'; the present tense for your other sub-selves; and the future tense for sub-self, 'F'. Using tenses in this way marks the beginning and end of your Negative Self's reign by consigning them to your past.

My Negative Self (enter name) got me to:

- Think like this
- Behave like this
- Feel like this
- Relate like this

My sub-self B is called (enter name), and they:

- Think like this
- Behave like this
- Feel like this
- Relate like this

My sub-self C, D, E etc., are called (enter names), and they:

- Think like this
- Behave like this
- Feel like this
- Relate like this

My Future Self, F, will:

- Think like this
- Behave like this
- Feel like this
- Relate like this

My Observing Self is me, and I now:

- Think like this
- Behave like this
- Feel like this
- Relate like this

STAGE TWO: ALLOCATING ROLES

What did you discover?

We hope our Observing Self concept and activity has helped you to understand yourself better, why negativity can take hold and, importantly, what you can begin to do about it when it does. Use the space below to consider what steps you can take towards building the life you want with your Observing Self in charge, not your Negative Self.