

Health and Happiness for Intelligent People

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John Lentz has addressed the double bind, a tool that can be used as a powerful vehicle to impede or advance progress. Double binds are a form of communication one encounters in every day life, a habitual skill that one learns and can be engaged intentionally and strategically, or without conscious awareness of the process. Known among psychological professionals for the negative ways that they interfere with self perceptions and choices, Lentz takes a broader look and addresses the positive ways that this tool can be used to support healthy changes and lifestyles..

Lentz carefully describes the notion of double binds using terms that are equally understandable to the general readers as well as the professional audience.

Starting with an analogy in which King Arthur found himself with "No other option... (than to agree to a challenge), Lentz uses this entertaining tale to introduce the reader to the complex binds that individuals throughout history have found themselves caught in. They are constructed when words, phrases and ideas are presented in a manner that only *seem* to offer no "best choice" or best response. The rhetorical answer to the challenge of King Arthur turns attention inward, which reflects the evolving message of the book.

Lentz's clarifications of what constitutes a positive or negative double bind, how they are used, and how they can be used is at once an easy read and full of illuminating concepts. Clear explanations of "double binds" and their common usage changes the context in which the reader then becomes attuned to the ways the listener, or recipient of a challenge, then becomes empowered or immobilized through the limitations of their own perspectives.

The structure of this book gives a platform of growing appreciation for concepts and patterns that are part of our everyday lives. Whether the reader is naive about "everyday trance" or new to the notion, Lentz's succinct style of explaining with a tone of patience wisdom is a pleasure to read. The style and tone of Lentz's writing guides reader through a series of building blocks that introduce, support and offer a path of constructive use.

Brought to life with examples, the anecdotes become opportunities to self-evaluate ones own styles of communication and invite self-reflection of habitual interpersonal interactions and internal evaluation . Everyone has experienced times when interactions have created discord when the intention was harmony. The anecdotes, examples and tales echo life around us all, and show direction for how to use communication effectively and therapeutically, and put into service toward intentions

John Lentz's talent for making the complex simple and for expressing things with the wisdom of a master, is once again shown in *Health and Happiness for Intelligent People*. He has tackled an elusive subject, about which too little is written, and made it appear so relevant that one wonders how it has been neglected for so long. By bringing the notion of a "positive double bind" forward, Lentz has reframed possibilities in a strategic way, with Ericksonian precision.

Lentz's style of presentation in this work is not unlike two mirrors facing each other. The ideas and illustrative stories contained within are a series of ever tightening lessons about the nature of communication and choice. Ideas are introduced in everyday language and annotated with examples from Lentz's own life experience. They lead the reader from an explanation of how the illusion of choice presents within everyday interactions and then stimulate a response within our own frames of reference.

This succinct book describes in 18 chapters what takes many individuals a lifetime to appreciate. Expressed in terms that are simple yet deep, it addresses some of the most complex interactions that take place within and between human beings.

Bringing these ideas into our own awareness, Lentz has given us a gift of offering ways to examine difficult communications and opportunities to improve communications in a multitude of ways.