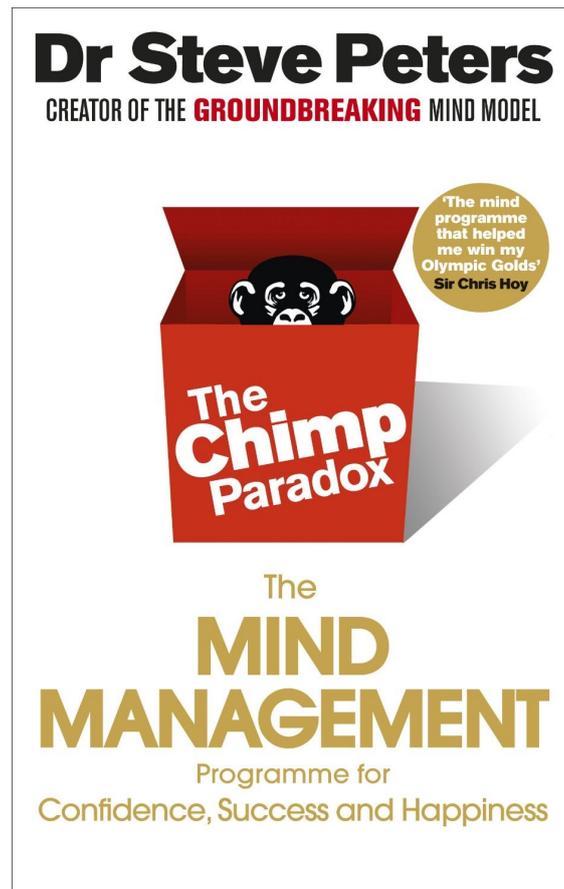




The Chimp Paradox

The Mind Management Programme for Confidence, Success and Happiness

by Dr. Steve Peters



THE BOOK IN A NUTSHELL

Metaphorically we have three 'operating systems' inside of us: The Chimp (i.e. the uncontrolled, emotional child within us), The 'Human' (i.e. the rational adult) and the Computer (i.e. the unconscious part that runs most of our activities).

To live happier and more successful lives, we need to better manage our Chimp. We do this by 1) nurturing and negotiating with the Chimp and 2) recognising the Gremlins (i.e. our limiting beliefs) and then replacing them with more empowering beliefs.

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THE BOOK

The first section is about the principles of the three parts of us (Human, Chimp and Computer). The second half explores the application of these principles to activities such as managing stress, relationships and being successful.

The author uses a metaphor of the solar system, with moons and planets. For simplicity I have left this out.

PART 1 THE INNER MIND EXPLORED

The psychological mind

The Human brain is made up of seven brains working together (Parietal, Frontal, Limbic, Occipital, Temporal, Brain stem and Cerebellum). This book focuses on just three - Parietal (The Computer), Frontal (Human), and the Limbic (Chimp). Although they try to work together they can clash (and often the Chimp will win).

The Chimp

The Chimp is the emotional machine inside of us. Emotions heavily control our decision-making (sometimes for the worse). Having a Chimp is like having a dog (or a child). You are not directly in total control of its behaviour but you are responsible for its behaviour. As such it is therefore necessary to learn how to manage your Chimp. If not, then the Chimp will run your life (and this can often lead to some poor quality of life decisions and behaviours).

The Chimp operates very differently from the Human inside.

The Chimp processes information primarily through feelings and impressions (and is irrational in its decision-making, being more driven by emotions than logic). The Chimp quickly assesses a situation, rapidly reaching (sometimes false) judgements and conclusions. Chimp tends to be more adamant that it is right and so less able to be swayed from its belief. Once it's made up its mind it searches the data to support its point of view and rejects conflicting information. The Chimp tends to be quite black or white in its opinions (so can be quite harsh and unforgiving). It is also quite blinkered in its options of response (usually jumping to some previously run default model of behaviour). The Chimp over-exaggerates things and uses highly inflated, catastrophic language. The Chimp reacts impetuously, with little regard to the longer term consequences of its actions.

The Chimp is sensitive, neurotic and paranoid. The Chimp loves external praise to validate its self esteem. Conversely it feels easily judged and hates criticism. The Chimp senses danger everywhere and so will try to protect itself. It will often protect itself by shifting responsibility and apportioning blame elsewhere. Thus the Chimp can often mis-interpret an innocent comment as being critical, leading the Chimp to 'bite back'. Likewise, the Chimp is



critical, intolerant, impatient and unforgiving in its judgements of others (leading to some quite harsh feedback).

The Chimp has powerful drives (such as sex, dominance, food, security, territory etc). The two key drivers are its need to survive and procreate (a person run by its Chimp often finds it difficult to remain monogamous). Ultimately, the Chimp is selfish and will use the troop to help support its own needs (it sees life as a constant battle of Win-Lose). The Chimp demands immediate gratification and gets angry and frustrated if thwarted.

Chimps still believe they live in the jungle and so sees (un)real threats in everyday situations. It is driven by instinct and primal desires and fears. These instincts are almost from birth so it reacts to a perceived stimulus /threat in a pre-set way (Flight/Fight/Freeze). There is typically over-reaction to an event as the Chimp always sees the worst possible outcome.

We have to accept that the Chimp in us will not change. When a Chimp does decide to act it's difficult to control. 'Self control' will not work because the emotional Chimp is significantly stronger than the Human (a real chimp has 5x the strength of a real Human being). You have to learn to manage it like an emotional child. You must never forget that you always have a choice in how to behave. If the Human inside chooses to ignore the Chimp's 'offer' on how to react, then the Human needs to negotiate, manage and support its frustrated Chimp. You need to find a way of addressing Chimps fundamental needs in a more 'socially healthy' way.

The Chimp can be managed in three ways:

Exercise: You need to help the Chimp release the emotion it is struggling to deal with. You need to find a safe way for the Chimp to healthily channel its pent up emotion rather than to be expressed through some inappropriate behaviour (be it self destruction such as substance abuse or attacking other people). It can take as little as 10 minutes to release it. Likewise, if someone is 'ranting' at you realise it's just their Chimp letting off steam (so don't let your Chimp get hooked by his Chimp).

Box: Having exorcised the emotion, the Chimp will be tired and more open to accept a more considered, calmer conversation. If the Chimp re-fires up it just means it has not fully vented all its emotion yet. It may need a few 'takes' before the Chimp can be put back into its box.

Banana: The third way is to feed it bananas. There are two types: rewards (both physical and emotional) and distractions.

The Human inside

The Human is the antithesis of the Chimp (hence why they so often clash). The Human inside is evidence-based, rational in its 'fact finding' leading to well considered decisions. The Human draws widely in assessing the situation (thus is better able to put events into



wider context). It can also handle ambiguity and accept the 'greyness' of most issues. The Human accepts that there are many influences on an event and as such are more prepared to reassess its perception of an issues if new information comes about (and hence be open to suggestions and personal improvements).

The Human makes slower, more considered decisions by gathering the facts (and so can be positively influenced by new information). The trouble is, by the time the Human has assessed the situation, the Chimp has already reacted (evidence suggests the Chimp reacts five times faster than the Human).

The Human inside of us masters self-control and discipline which the Chimp lacks. The Human also thinks forward through the consequences of its behaviours before making a final decision on its choice of action.

The Human is less judgemental and accusatory. It takes a balanced approach and realises we are all a mix of good and bad points (and thus we should all be equally valued). This often leads the Human to be more gracious and forgiving.

Our Human is social and wants to be part of a group that lives in peace and harmony (thus it is open to negotiate for the greater good of all). It likes order and follows the 'laws of society', relying upon ethics and values such as honesty, compassion, equality, conscience and self control. Sadly the Human can also get frustrated as there are many Chimps in the world who ignore such societal norms.

The Human wants to live in a world where it can flourish. It wants a driving purpose in its life to provide fulfilment, backed up with social and intellectual challenges in order to grow and develop.

The Computer

This is the part of the brain that stores information that both the Chimp and Human use as reference points to know how to respond.

This Computer runs about four times faster than the Chimp and hence 20 times faster than the Human.

The Stone of Life, Goblins and Gremlins – The Computer is essentially an empty drive when born. Over the years we start to write our programme on how to survive and thrive. Many of these become the core beliefs and values that shape our personality, behaviour and life. These are called our Stone of Life. Sadly some of the beliefs and strategies imported at an early age (often below the age of eight) may prove to be false or inappropriate later in our lives. Furthermore, potentially one-off events gets imprinted as global truths to apply to all situations. Just because one person let you down, was abusive, or abandoned you, does not mean everyone will.



The Gremlins are those beliefs that are unhelpful but *can* be removed whilst the Goblins are ones that *cannot* be removed. Gremlins and Goblins run on autopilot so we are often not aware how much they shape our daily behaviour.

Some common Gremlins:

Unhelpful and unrealistic expectations - These set you up to fail (and so trigger negative emotions of frustration, lack of self worth etc). We tend to also set too many traps such as the 'If..then' game. It goes like this: '*If I....(do X or have Y) then...*' (*I will be happy, successful, you will love me etc*). This game sets unnecessary conditions on our self worth and happiness.

'Should's' and 'Musts' - These imply an order (and Chimps hate being told what to do). They become a burden. Remember you *always* have a choice. Merely shifting the '*should/must*' to '*could*' empowers you to make a freer choice (and removes guilt and a feeling of failure).

'Be perfect' - Many people have a misguided belief that you need to be perfect in everything you do. It is impossible to live up to this and sets you up to fail (and hence weaken your self esteem, self value and confidence). We are all fallible and make mistakes all the time. Getting things wrong is human. So instead of beating yourself up or hiding behind excuses and blame, learn to laugh at yourself.

Other Gremlin driven behaviours include over-reacting to situations, eating even when not hungry and not making decisions.

Start to notice some of these limiting beliefs and challenge their veracity. Likewise, you need to put into the Computer more empowering beliefs. Some of these could include: 1) *Life is not fair* 2) *Goal posts move* 3) *There are no guarantees* 4) *You do not have total control over all aspect of your life* and 5) *Nothing lasts forever*. By inputting these, then your are less surprised, less upset and more flexible in your response.

How to manage your Computer

If the Chimp senses any danger, it quickly assesses the level of risk and either reacts immediately if a major threat or if a lower threat then will look inside the Computer for advice (the speed of such reactions is less than 0.02 second). The trouble is the Human inside is often too slow to respond. Thus the quickest way is through the Computer.

We need to identify the Gremlins and replace them with more empowering autopilots to influence the Chimp's perception of an event and hence how it chooses to react. The trouble is you can't just expunge a Gremlin. You need to replace it with another belief. A Gremlin normally leaves a trail of negative emotion. So when you feel bad about something track it back to the belief state of the Gremlin (often Gremlins dance together, so you need to carefully unpick them).



When you have identified the area, ask yourself two questions:

- 1) What do you believe doing/thinking X will imply about you (Identity)?
- 2) What are the consequences of not doing X?

These questions start to unsettle the current belief, allowing you to input a more useful truth.

Like building muscle memory, you need to keep reinforcing it. The more often you can implant (and then act upon) the new installed belief, the greater chance it will become the new default setting.

PART 2 DAY TO DAY FUNCTIONING

How to understand and relate to other people

Remember that when talking to another person, they also have a Human, Computer and a Chimp inside them as well - so they may be responding from their Chimp (so try not to let their Chimp hook yours). We can't change the way other people present themselves to us but you can help them manage their Chimp. Thus we need to know exactly who is in front of us at the time.

Differing mindsets - People can get stuck in their beliefs and behaviours because of the mindsets they hold. There are a number of different mindsets to notice in others (and in yourself). There are two key ones:

1) The Snow White Mindset - (more common with women). Snow white plays at being an innocent, passive victim (who ignores their responsibilities and accountabilities). They see themselves as powerless. They tend to blame others and circumstances for their misfortune (and feel misunderstood by others). If challenged, they become passively aggressive, self defensive, accusatory. and can sulk. They feel 'hard done by' and feel others 'owe them'. When asked, "What's wrong?" they will typically say, "Nothing..."

The Gremlins have disempowered them. Some of the beliefs they unconsciously hold are: '*Life is really tough*'; '*I am a victim of circumstance*'; '*There is nothing I can do to change things*'; '*Others are not helping me*'; '*Others don't understand me*'; and '*The world is a harsh place*'.

Some beliefs worth installing into the Computer are: '*Nobody likes a victim*'; '*Everybody likes a positive person*'; '*Nobody owes us anything*'; '*Life is what you make of it, not what it throws at you*'; '*Everybody has to take responsibility for their own actions and attitudes*'.

2) The Alpha Wolf Mindset - (more common with men). This is the aggressive dominant Chimp in the pack. At the extreme these people are control freaks and dictators. They have big (yet sensitive) egos. They see themselves at the centre of their world (and other people's opinions less relevant than their



own). People to them are a utility to help them achieve their aims - irrespective of the cost. They believe that getting other people to do things for them is justifiable and see compassion and admitting to mistakes as signs of weakness. If people disagree then using aggression is often the best strategy. They do not mind chewing through people, often being highly demanding and critical. Thus they tend to create unhappy and fear driven cultures. As with most wolf packs, when challenged they attack anyone who tries to stand up to them. Eventually at some point a new wolf does win out against them.

How to choose the right support network

Chimps have a powerful need to belong. They feel safer when with their troop. The paranoid Chimp sees danger everywhere and knows there is safety in numbers when in a troop. Its need to belong means the Chimp stores some Gremlins into the Computer such as: *'I must please everybody'*; *'I need to prove myself all the time'*; *'I mustn't fail'* and *'Everything is important'*. If you have the right people around they will stabilise and help build your confidence (and vice versa if surrounded by the wrong people).

The trouble is not every person out there is in the same troop, so the Chimp can get attacked by Chimps in other competitive troops - thus the Chimp remains defensive and on alert. You need to assess who are the people whose views and opinions are important (and then ignore the rest).

How to communicate effectively

Communication is critical to any relationship. Failure to communicate properly can lead to frustrations and conflicts.

The Square of communication - There are four channels of communication: Chimp to Chimp, Human to Human, Human to Chimp and Chimp to Human. The most productive conversations are Human to Human. The least are Chimp to Chimp where both sides get highly emotionally charged.

The key to communication is preparation (right person, right time, right place, right message, right tone). Most are pretty obvious but a few extra notes:

Right person - Beware the mistake of the 'Wrong person syndrome' - where take out the frustrations of one person on another (or discuss the issue about that person with everyone but the person themselves).

Right message - Be aware that two of you are entering the conversation - the Human inside and the Chimp. It's important to recognise the Human and the Chimp will have different agenda's - some of which could be unexpressed and hidden. The Chimps agenda will be fuelled by emotion and typically has a 'win-lose' mentality.



Chimps therefore interrupt a lot, intimidate (with dominating body language and noise), listen little, are intransigent, use little 'logic', blame others, and are insensitive to the feelings of those around them (as they are operating from a place of hurt themselves).

Right tonality - There is a difference between being *assertive* (making your needs be known - a Human trait) and being *aggressive* (where full of emotion and often accusatory - a Chimp trait).

People are often not assertive due to Gremlin beliefs such as '*I am not as good as others*'; '*My feelings do not matter*' or '*My needs are not as important as others*'.

There are three parts to assertive communications:

- Tell them clearly what you *do not want* (using the word 'I')
- Tell them clearly how it makes you *feel*
- Tell them clearly *what you do want*

If you trigger the Chimp it's best to let them rant themselves out before trying to re-explain your position. Then you can say something like "*I would like you to listen and not to interrupt me please. I don't want you to shout at me. When you shout it makes me feelI would like you to respond in a quiet voice please. The facts as I perceive them to be are*"

Right language - Avoid inflated language e.g. '*hate*' (as emotionally charged words are infectious and will easily stir up the Chimp). Even words like '*should*' and '*must*' will create a reaction.

How to establish the right environment

Each brain sees the surrounding world very differently (and hence responds differently).

The Chimp jealously guards its territory which can lead to some disproportionate behaviour around job functions, garden fences, car parks and hence road rage.

The Chimp is often living in a place of high emotional anxiety as it perceives threats all around it. The Human needs to keep the Chimp away from high stress situations and keep reassuring it. Sadly some people live or work in environments that brings out their Chimp too often.

The Chimp feels comfortable when things are certain and in control. So some simple guides to help have a happy Chimp:

Right finances - Live within your means. Whilst the Chimp will want you to spend, it does not like the stress of money worries. It's easier to control the spending than manage the debt.



Right friends - We do not always choose our friends. And some friends serve us for only some times in our lives. So if you have a friend who is constantly an emotional drain, then remember you do have a choice to walk away from that relationship and find new friends who better serve your needs now.

Right job - If you are in a job where you are constantly criticised and feel under threat then leave for one where you are rewarded and complemented (as Chimps need constant reassurance and take criticism badly - often striking out at others - and not necessarily at the right person either).

Right food - Beware the Chimp will eat emotionally.

Right time out - The Chimp needs down time.

Right health - Being healthy helps make you more resilient to life's ups and downs.

How to deal with immediate stress

Stress to a certain level is a positive inducement. It's the bodies warning sign that something needs to be done. We often try to deal with stress through other channels (rather than addressing the issue head on), such as over eating, over drinking, substance abuse, aggression, depression, etc. We need to find more positive ways to deal with our stress. The Chimp will quickly react to stress with no thought of the consequences of its behaviour.

The seven step process for managing instant stress:

1. Recognition - Know the tell tale signs for you when going into stress. What triggers you and how do you typically respond? You then need to 'wake-up' your Computer (e.g. by saying, "Change" or some other word which the Computer recognises as "It's time to change the way I feel").
2. Press the pause button - Slow down. Avoid the Chimp driven spontaneous response. Instead buy time.
3. Escape - If possible, distance yourself from the situation - ideally physically remove yourself. In this free-er space try to relax and think more clearly. You have every right to be assertive and ask for time out.
4. Get a helicopter perspective - Gain a wider perspective on the issue to make a better informed decision. Imagine your whole life on a time line. Float above it and put this event into perspective - How important is it really? Is it going to last forever? Will life go on?
5. The plan - Work out what you can control and what you cannot. It can't be guaranteed that you can make another person do anything as they are a free agent. So change must always start with yourself. Do not forget that how you react will influence how they react. Often it's your own responses and unexpressed expectations that are the real issues.
6. Reflection & activation - Keep focused on the end solution (and not get re-hooked on the problem).



7. Smile - Try to see the lighter side of things. It helps keep things in perspective.

Diffusing stress - the AMP model. This is sometimes easier said than done if the Chimp has become very agitated. You need to calm your Chimp.

Acept - We have to accept the situation no matter how unjust or hurtful it may feel (life is unfair). To help do this you need your Chimp to vent those feelings of betrayal, hurt, rejection etc. Keeping it bottled up is wrong and more damaging to yourself in the long run. So find a safe place to vent - and then try to get it all out. The more of the 'bile' you extract from the wound, the greater the chance it has to heal.

Move on - Now you can ask yourself, what do you want to do now? You have two choices - to stay stuck with it and be locked inside the problem (by keeping it alive and running the old movie time and time again), or letting go and moving on. Often it's best to just cut your losses and move on.

Plan - It's critical that you plan how you will move on. Often just knowing the very first step is the most important to initiate action. To help remain committed, always focus on where you were and the progress made so far. Many people instead focus on where they want to be and this can become demotivating. For example if you plan to lose 20Kg, and just lost 2Kg then it looks an uphill struggle as everyday you are behind target. However if you focus on where you were then 2Kg less is a celebration.

Looking back from the future - To help devise a plan, imagine getting into a time machine and going forward in time past the event when you have achieved your goal. Then look back and creatively think of what you did to get there.

Some common examples of stress:

Decision-making - People get stressed by making *the right* decision. Remember, when there is no more information (even if incomplete) then make a decision with what you have. Often we focus more on the consequences of making decision A vs decision B. Our Chimp over exaggerates these consequences.

To make a good decision, first gather all the information possible to make a decision. Outline the various routes and explore the consequences of each (but keep the Chimp from painting them as too catastrophic). If there is no difference then either decision will work - so just toss a coin!

Trying to keep everything the same - Chimps want things to remain exactly the same - forever. They want their relationships to stay the same (likewise their jobs, and their health). So we need to programme into our Computer such



beliefs as *'Everything changes (on a continual basis)'; 'Life moves on' and 'All things must end'*.

Unrealistic expectations - Chimps hold locked down views about what *should* happen - but we cannot control other people/events - so we need to learn to let go of such unrealistic expectations.

Trying to control the uncontrollable - Many people want other people to do things - but they don't. We have to be clear what is within our power to control and influence and what is not. So there is no point stressing over things you cannot effect.

How to deal with chronic (i.e. long-standing) stress

People are very adaptable and can learn to live with long term stress in their life. However, it can pay a big price on our health and happiness. Some of the tell tale signs are: always feeling tired, being short tempered, lacking a sense of humour, feelings of anxiety over nothing, inability to relax, paranoia, a sense of urgency with everything, tearful, depressed, unable to face friends or work, small tasks seem large and inability to sleep properly.

The root cause needs to be identified to effectively resolve the issue (and often it's linked to the Gremlins we have).

A number of common scenarios:

Creating our own misery - Our actions create the situation - yet are blind that we are doing it (e.g. a person is lonely but is not aware his behaviour to others pushes people away).

Red herrings - We blame others or circumstances rather than taking responsibility. As long as we blame others we disempower ourselves and become victims.

The mushroom syndrome - Once you have sorted out one problem, another grows in its place. A lot of it is to do with seeing problems all around them rather than focusing on the positives that are also there. These people (Chimps) live in a place of constant agitation and become victims. People quickly tire of these types as they sap energy from others. These people need to realise that many worries are small in the grand scheme of life (and often resolve themselves).

Conflicting drives within us - The classic is the working mother syndrome. The Human need to store into the computing better belief systems such as *'It's unrealistic to be perfect in all areas of our lives'*.



Chronic stresses from circumstances or events - There is no value in stressing about things that are out of your control as this will achieve nothing. Instead focus on what *you can* do. Any bridge can only support so much 'load' so ensure you take off of your bridge stuff that does not need to be there.

Chronic stresses from others - This often stems from unrealistic/unexpressed expectation of others. We must become more transparent (to ourselves and others) of these expectations.

Stop beating yourself up - We also hold unrealistic expectations about ourselves. We are all trying to do the best we can (with the resources we have around us at the time). Of course we could do better but focus on what we did achieve rather than what we did not. It's more energising and motivating to help us move on and tackle more of the problem.

Try asking yourself 'How?' rather than 'Why?' - 'Why?' is focused on the past. 'How?' is about the future. 'Why?' disempowers us. 'How?' helps us focus on solutions.

Talk - Not only does talking to others help release the tensions, it often leads to finding solutions.

Some other constructive ways to diffuse chronic stress: Relaxation techniques, delegate/share issues; ask for help, look beyond the problems at solutions, remind yourself that you are in charge of how you feel about anything and discuss your feelings with someone who cares

How to trap a Chimp: A Chimp can outrun, out climb and out swing you. Instead put a stone in a narrow necked vase that has been anchored down. The monkey will reach inside and try to grab the useless stone. However, the Chimps hand with the stone means the hand is now too fat to extract itself from the neck of the vase. Because the Chimp does not want to lose the (useless) stone it traps itself.

The moral for this is to fully assess the true worth of something. Be careful not to hold onto something that has relatively little real value in the long term - as by holding onto it, it traps you, preventing you from going after something more valuable in your life. So have the courage to let go of those 'worthless stones' in your life.



PART 3 - YOUR HEALTH, SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS

How to look after you health

The author creates two distinctions: Malfunction and Dysfunction. When the body is malfunctioning it is properly ill and that needs specialists to help repair and heal the body. When we are in dysfunction, we are not working at our optimum.

Keeping in shape physically - Chimp is driven by immediate gratification and dismisses the long term consequences. We also need to learn to relax and recuperate through taking time out and having proper amounts of sleep.

Don't wade through treacle - Staying with problems all the time will sap you of your energy. Instead of spending your time locked in your problems, start with a blank slate and define exactly what you want, then you can define how you will get there.

Be proactive - Successful people tend to be proactive. They take action. And if their first steps do not work, then they respond again and again and again.

Being in shape mentally - We also need to keep our minds active through intellectual stimulation, challenges and laughter.

The foundations for success

The Human inside defines success differently from the Chimp. For the Chimp it's often about external symbols such as material possessions, achievements etc. For the Human is more internal such as personal qualities (e.g. happiness) and working towards their purpose. So work out what each part of you defines as success.

Teams - There are a number of key principles that help a team perform well. These are the CORE principles:

C = Commitment - People need to identify/be committed to the cause/purpose of the team. Motivation is temporary (a Chimp trait) and will not be sustained when the going gets tough, whilst commitment (Human) endures. Tangible plans helps people believe in the ambitions of the team (and so can commit).

O = Ownership - When you feel a sense of *real ownership* of a project you are much more likely to work tirelessly for that cause.

R = Responsibility - Responsibility introduces accountability. If you feel real ownership then you also hold a sense of responsibility for the outcome of the team or project. If you hold responsibility, you feel accountable for the outcomes and so will do whatever it takes to ensure the project gets delivered.



E = Excellence - It's about setting (and holding to) high standards that are achievable.

Carrots and no stick - Humans and Chimps do not like sticks but do like carrots (and Chimps only respond to big carrots). We need to make sure we get (and give) more carrots. There are lots of types of carrots: material rewards, celebrations, recognition, encouragement and support (we should not be afraid to ask for support as well as to give it).

There is no place for the stick in society. The paranoid Chimp may try to run the workplace through aggression and fear. A Human driven manager instead provides support, and encourages development.

Likewise there are a number of sticks such as guilt, blame and regret (many of these can be about self punishment and hence can be very long lasting, preventing you from long term happiness).

How to be successful

The dream machine - a model for success - There is no guarantee for success. You can be lucky or unlucky. There are seven stages to the dream machine. You must remember that you have the Human and Chimp to deal with when planning your success. Think of your Chimp as a child: short attention span, undisciplined, disorganised, wants frequent rewards and is easily upset.

Cog 1 - The dream - A dream is something you want (but is not totally within your control e.g. to win a race). Goals are specific achievable objectives to help you reach your dreams that you are more in control of - e.g. training 3x a week. Goals have measures associated with it to check progress.

Cog 2 - Foundation stones - These are the components that drive the dream. Each foundation stone has a goal. It's best to focus on one or two foundation stones at a time.

Cog 3 - Commitment screen - There are two key questions you need to ask to pass the commitment screen: 1) What do I need to get the task achieved? 2) How will I deal with the difficulties we will face?

Cog 4 - The plan - Lincoln once said, "*If you have eight hours to chop down a tree, spend six hours sharpening your axe*". Thus success is all about developing a clear workable plan (and your plan works best in smaller manageable chunks).

Cog 5 - Oiling the wheels - You need to focus on what's already been achieved (rather than what you have still to do) - and chart your success. Like climbing a mountain, celebrate when you reach each stage.



Cog 6 - Audit - Review the progress made against the key metrics and then reshape your strategies where off-target. When deciding how to resolve the blocks, explore options through three lenses:

- 1) What are the circumstances/source of the issue?
- 2) What have I done to contribute to the problem (be it a belief or a behaviour?) and
- 3) What have others done to contribute to the problem.

Chimps are into blame and will rarely look to themselves as the source of the problem (but conversely will take the tributes when things go well).

Cog 7 - Outcomes - You need to plan for three different kinds of outcome: Success/Partial success/Failure

Success - Beware of complacency. It can also lead to fear (of your ability to repeat the success) or depression (at having achieved your purpose and now feel empty).

Partial success - The Chimp will focus on what did not work, whilst the Human will be more sanguine and celebrate what did go right. Its important to remember that you are in control of how your choose to feel.

Failure - Try to see failure as a temporary setback and not the end of the road. Failure is just a signal for future change and improvement. Again the Chimp will overplay it and see it as a catastrophic disaster. Remember that something is only as important as you choose to make it. We often look back on past failures and respect the learnings we gained from it (as helps us lift to a higher level of performance).

The Chimp goes through a cycle of grief when things fail: Denial -> Yearning -> Bargaining (if only....) -> Anger -> Disorganisation -> Acceptance and Reorganisation. This process can take 3-12 months. It's important to allow the natural grieving stages to be fully expressed.

Plug into your Computer statements such as: *'We all have failures in our lives and 'It's part of the way we learn and grow'.*

How to be happy (and have successful relationships)

Like any emotional state it is a choice. You can choose right now to focus on the things that can make you happy or focus on the things that make you sad. That said, being happy all the time is unrealistic.

What makes one person happy differs from another. So the first step is to start to work out what makes you happy (and conversely what makes you sad/anxious) - then do more of the one and try to reduce the other. Your 'happy list' should also include



immediate gratifications like 'cup of tea', 'walking the dog', and not just the longer term items. One suggestion is to keep a diary.

Likewise, what makes the Human happy is different from what makes the Chimp happy. Often the Chimp's happiness stem from transient, material things (such as food, sex, power, territory, stimulants) which often have longer term negative impacts - so make sure you are more focused on the deeper intrinsic drivers of happiness that the Human focuses on (such as purpose, relationships, personal growth etc). The more you can build up the strength of these 'inner core' aspects that make you happy, the better able you will be to be less influenced by the negative situations in our lives. When we are not feeling strong about ourselves, then we are like a tree with no roots that can easily be blown over.

'Having' and 'Being' - There are two aspects to happiness. 'Having' is a Chimp trait (and 'Being' is more Human). 'Having' includes achievements, awards, material possessions. Research has shown happiness from possessions is short lived. The Chimp quickly accepts the gains and then wants more (Chimps are never satisfied).

'Having' the right partner - Again, the Chimp looks for different things in a relationship (e.g. sex) than the Human inside (e.g. a soul mate). Sadly most people enter a relationship with either Chimp or Human in control.

All relationships need to be worked on to keep them flourishing. Any relationship should make the other person feel good about who they are, help them develop as a person and bring out the best in them (and vice versa). You need to be clear what both sides want from the relationship (and not expect one person to be able to meet all of your Human and Chimp needs). Likewise, since we are all imperfect we will occasionally let the other person down. Either we forgive and move on, or hold onto it and keep 'tormenting' the other person. In which case you are as guilty in helping to destroy that relationship.

In arguments the Chimp will be unwilling to accept criticism, often finding excuses and blaming others/events. When pushed, their aggressive side will quickly flare.

Avoiding 'conditional relationships' - If you want to build a relationship with another person, then you must expect to do all the running. Any respectful relationship does not put preconditions or unrealistic expectations on it as often these are where things go wrong as they are often not made clear to the other person. You cannot blame or criticise a person for not doing something they did not realise was expected of them - yet we do this all the time. Therefore, if you are frustrated or annoyed by a person, first assess what was your expectation you had of them and whether this had been communicated to them. You can't expect other people to live to your own standards - not do things that they are not naturally gifted at (so don't ask a car mechanic to



paint you a picture and vice versa). Thus it's not a case of them having the problem - it's you who has the problem.

When it comes to relationships, it's best to import some of these truths into your Computer, for example: *'Not all be people are going to be friendly'; 'Not everyone is going to agree with everything you say'; 'Some people are not going to like you'; 'Some people never change'; 'Some people never understand'; 'We all vary from day to day'; 'No one is all bad' and 'No-one is all good'.*

'Being' - Being is about who you are. It's about our self-image (i.e. the way we see ourselves), our self-worth (i.e. the value we put upon ourselves), our self-esteem (i.e. how we compare versus others) and our self-confidence (i.e. what we believe we are capable of).

The Human is more focused on values and personal goals than material gains. It also recognises the Chimp's obsession with trying-to-be-liked to be fool's gold.

Self-image - The Chimp looks at physical appearance and achievement to define self-image. Sadly it can rapidly change its mind so basing your self-image on what your Chimp thinks will make for a rocky road.

Self-worth - Depending upon the way you see yourself will ultimately affect the value you put upon yourself. And because your Chimp sees you differently from your Human, we can get some very different value ratings. Your real sense of self-worth needs to come from your Stone of Life.

Self-esteem - The Chimp creates a pecking order (much like in the jungle). Thus depending where you see yourself versus others can have some major limiting affects on who you spend time with, along with the quality and impact of your relationships with others (there is a great model from Transactional Analysis called the OK Corral which is worth referencing - Ed).

Self-confidence - The above factors will all influence your self-confidence - i.e. your belief in what you can (or cannot do). If this is misjudged then it can stop you doing things that are in reality within your ability.

Ways to happiness -

You choose to be happy (or unhappy) by what you focus on.

Spend your time thinking about solutions rather than wallowing in the problem.

You choose how important an issue is. Take a macro view and see a problem in the grand scheme of your whole life. This way you don't get upset by small things that are not important.

Let go and move on (or forever be stuck).



Learn to laugh at yourself.

Be proactive in all things (especially relationships).

Beware the snowball Gremlin - Chimp likes to overdramatise issues. When it looks into the future all it sees are problems. The Gremlin pushes a snowball downhill that grows and grows and before long you never risk doing anything! You need to input into your Computer that *'Few things in life turn out to be as bad as you first think'; 'You have the skills and capabilities to deal with most problems as they come along'; and 'Only worry about real issues you can control - the rest is just wasted energy.'*

Take your hand out of the fire - You would not leave your hand in the flame, so why stay in jobs and relationships that burn you?

Stop being your own biggest critic - Be light on yourself. Accept all of you, including the bits of you do not like.

How to develop security

Feeling secure makes your Chimp happy (and the best way to make a Chimp feel secure is to be within a group). The Chimp wants everything to stay the same (it loves routine and rituals) and will resist (consciously or unconsciously) any changes. The Chimp needs to accept that change is inevitable and that feeling vulnerable and insecure is normal in life for everyone.

It helps to store some beliefs into the Human Computer such as *'There is always constant change'; 'There is risk in everything we do (and sometimes staying safe is the riskiest thing we can do)' and 'We cannot control all risks'.*



SUGGESTED EXERCISES:

Keep a diary to work out how much of your day is spent being Chimp versus Human. Take time out to reflect on how well you are managing your Chimp.

Live 'NEAT': N = Normal; E = Expect; A = Accept; T = Take care. It's *normal* for the Chimp to have outbursts. Therefore you should *expect* it. *Accept* you are not perfect and *take care* of these outbursts in appropriate ways.

If you become upset by something, look to see if you have unhelpful/unrealistic expectations set. Start to work out your real values and beliefs and start to record these down as your stone of life.

Write down the qualities of the person you would ideally like to be. Then write down the list of who you think you are. The gaps highlight the areas the Gremlins and Chimp are affecting you (as the ideal list is the personality of your Human inside).

To discover what your key values are for your Stone of Life, imagine you are on your death bed, with one minute left to live and your great grandchild asks, "*Tell me what should I do with my life?*" Your answer will help you identify what is important for you.

What effect are you having on others? Are you building them up or knocking them down? Are you inspiring them or sapping energy away from them?

Define your troop and what roles they play in supporting you. Identify the gaps that are missing in your troop. Think about how you help them.

Human's like a clear purpose - both a longer term one and immediate goals. So at the start of each day ask yourself what you want to achieve by the end of the day.

Write down anything that is causing you stress. Then divide each up into three perspectives: 1) Your own perception of the issue 2) The circumstances and settings of the issue 3) Other people involved in the issue. These help you identify the reasons that caused the issue and so help you find relevant solutions.

In deciding on a long term partner, make a list of their good points, their not-so-good points that you can put up with (NB it's highly unlikely you will be able to change these), and their bad points that you cannot put up with. If there are any in the last column then chances are the relationship is doomed.

Imagine you are handing your partner over to another person. State the honest truth about your partner - good and bad points - warts and all. Sometimes it makes you question whether the relationship is still serving you.

Imagine you have an identical twin who really wants to look out for you. What advice would s/he give you? Sometimes this can be some quite tough home truths. Remember that often what you want is not what you need (and vice versa).



CRITIQUE

The Chimp/Human analogy helps us understand why we do what we do. It is of course a model and not reality. It is fundamentally flawed as we are one holistic being. As such we should not try to demonise parts of us and suggest 'Chimp' is bad and Human is 'good'. The Chimp is not a separate being from us - it is us and we need to accept all of us.

In reality, there is little in this book that is new. It's another take on the Triune brain, System1 vs System 2 thinking and draws heavily on Emotional intelligence and Transactional Analysis.

This book tries to be the magic elixir to life. The underlying principles I find useful but then its constant application to almost everything else becomes tiresome, worthy and frankly a bit incredible.

There is a saying that it's easier to plan than to do, and for me his key strategies for managing your Chimp fall into this truism. Loading new beliefs is much easier said than done as it calming and convincing your irrational, emotional Chimp - we know with children that providing a rational explanation why they can't have an ice-cream rarely works!

Furthermore there is a presumption that these areas are quick to fix. Psychotherapists have many long term patients who are still trying to manage their Chimps!

WOULD YOUR NEXT MEETING
BE ENHANCED BY USING AN
EXPERIENCED FACILITATOR ?



IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR AN ENJOYABLE, YET
EFFECTIVE AWAY-DAY (BE IT BRAINSTORMING,
VISION & VALUES, STRATEGIC BRAND BUILDING
OR TEAMBUILDING) MAYBE I CAN HELP?