

# Chapter 6

## **An Artificial Separation: Language/Emotions/Body**

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*“Sit up straight!”*

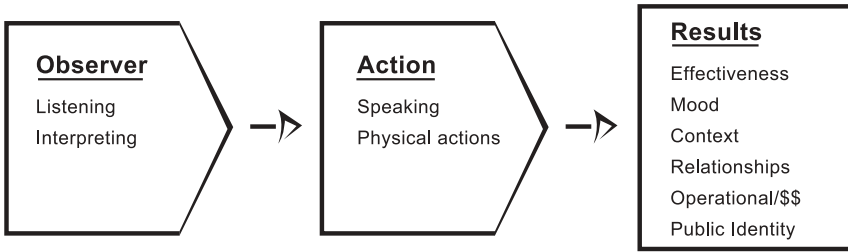
Grandma

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What follows, I believe, is somewhat intuitive and self-evident for most of us. We know, have felt, and have experienced the connections which will be outlined here. Hopefully the value here will be to share these connections with you in such a way that you’ll be more able to *use* your knowledge in *taking new action*. What I hope my contribution can be in this chapter is to present these in such a way—upon the foundation of language viewed as generative and creative—that you’ll see more possibilities, more choices for producing what you want to produce in your life.

In the last chapter we introduced the notion that we are each unique observers; from how we “see things” we take action, and from our actions we produce results:

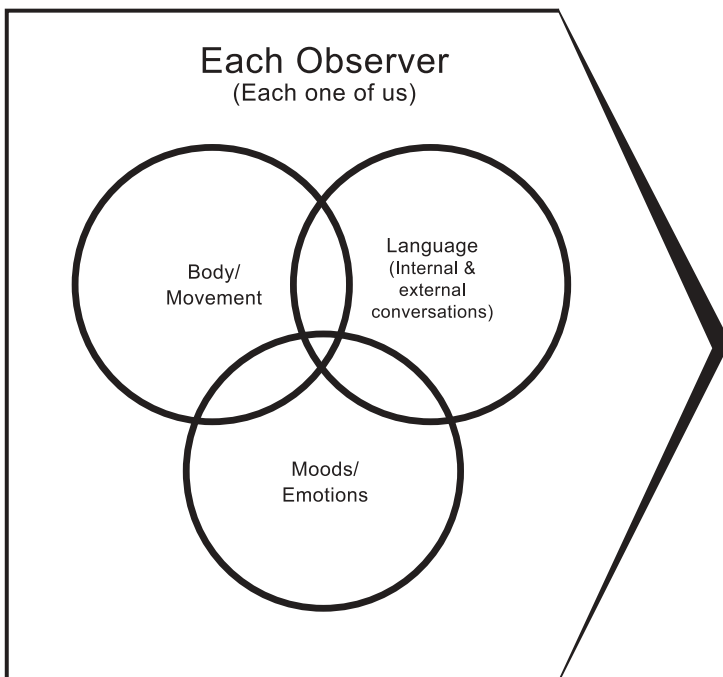
## *Language and the Pursuit of Happiness*



Let's start here: When we say we are each unique *observers*, we are not implying that each of us is a walking, talking eyeball. To us, the observer that each of us is can be viewed as a *bundle of congruency* among three separate but strongly inter-twined aspects:

- Our physical body (includes our biology as well as how we move)
- Our language
- Our mood/emotional states

That is, through the course of living as we've each been living, we've developed a coherency, a "way of being" composed of these three aspects, these three domains. Each observer—each of us, each human being, you and I and everyone else—may be viewed in this way:



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We can say that this combination, for each of us, is our own particular “way of being.” Now this is in particular contrast to the widely-held notion that we are primarily *rational animals*. By the time I was an adult, I somehow had that in the back of my head—that we human beings are first and foremost rational animals and that the main thing that makes us human is our rationality. I don’t remember anyone specifically teaching me that in any particular class. It just seemed to have been in the background of a lot of things I learned, heard, or picked up along the way. It’s at this level that I’m sharing this new way of understanding with you—to offer it as a substitute for the *rational animal* way of understanding human beings.

Yes, I certainly can be rational, and I use rationality a lot. But when I look at it, there’s a lot more going on with me, and with lots of other people, than rational reactions to situations and rational planning and rational decision-making and rational relationships and rational this or that. I can be rational, for sure, but to say that this feature is somehow the *most* primary, defining feature of human beings is, to me, contrary to my own experience. And once we look a bit more closely, it becomes clear that our ability to be rational is already resting on top of... you guessed it, language.

The *rational animal* interpretation, with its emphasis on our logic, also fails to fully take into account our emotional and physical sides. If we take a moment to reflect, we can all point to experiences in our own lives in which our emotions and our physical body have directly impacted—and continue to impact today—what we do, how we do it, what we say, and how we say it.



*The claim here is that the separation many of us have been taught is an artificial one.* Language is *not* separate from our emotional life and our physical body and physical movements. Our “way of being” is one in which language, moods and emotions, and body are all linked and are all playing a part. We speak and we listen, but the speaking and listening are always supported or not supported by the emotions that we have available. Our speaking and listening are always supported or not supported by our range of physical motions, our capacity to move in one way or another, our physiology.