

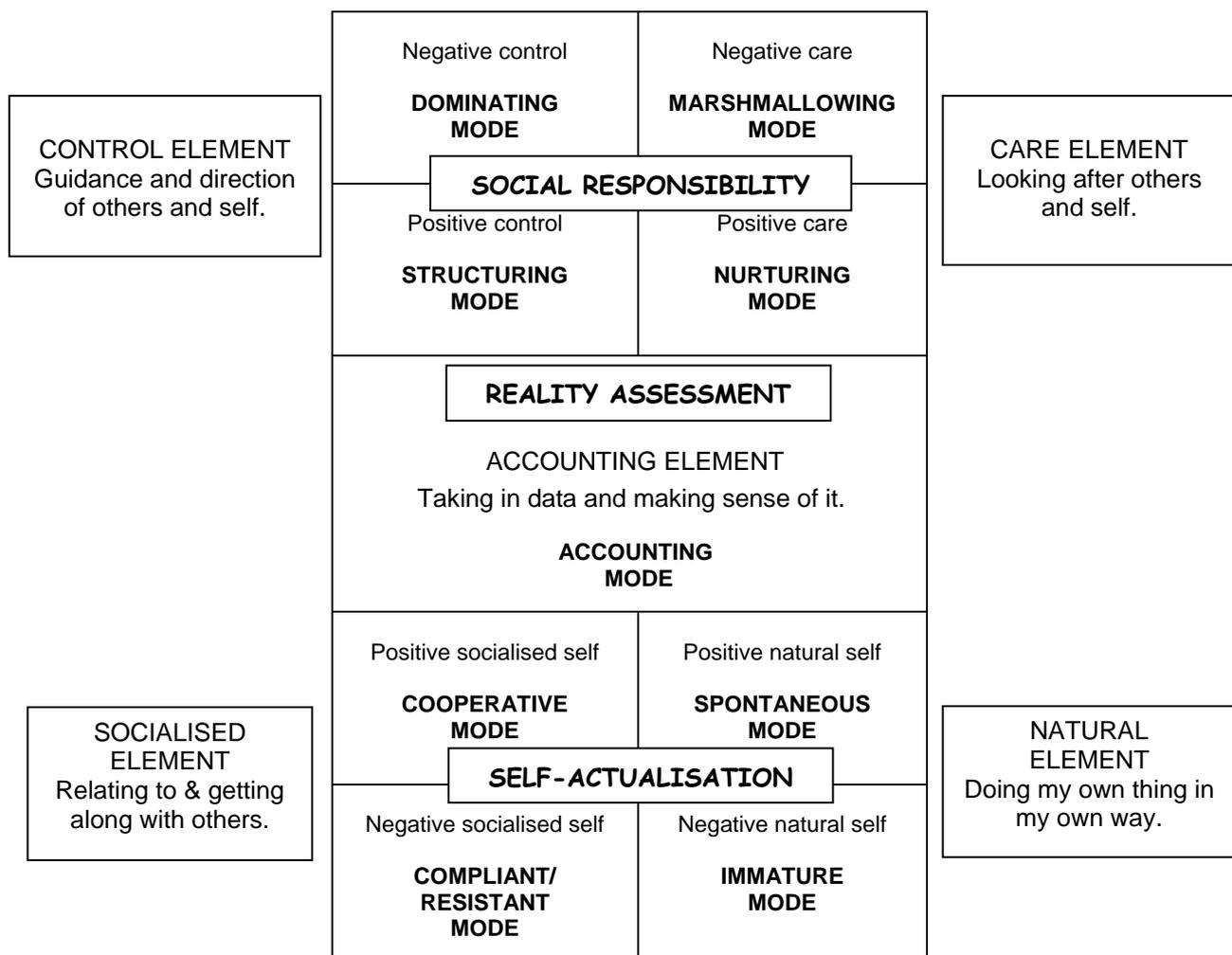
“TIFF and Leadership”

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The Temple Index of Functional Fluency © (TIFF) is a psychometric tool for enhancing functional fluency. The term functional fluency denotes efficacy of interpersonal functioning; by which is meant a seamless integration of a wide range of effective ways of behaving that supports the ability to build positive relationships. Just as in a language fluency, functional fluency implies a flexibility, range and balance of effective behaviours as well as actual skill in using them. The colloquial term that has sometimes been used for this is “response-ability”, an attribute important for leaders at any level and in any context.

In order to appreciate how TIFF works, it is vital to understand the make-up of the functional fluency model. Derived from transactional analysis ego state theory, it is based not on ego states but on three categories of human existence and functioning, namely growing up, surviving and raising the next generation. More basic than personality factors or traits, these are in essence to do with the survival and continuation of the species and could be said, therefore, to have a biological mandate¹. These three categories are divided firstly into five elements and then into the nine modes of behaviour of the full model. Details are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 The Functional Fluency Model, Showing Categories, Elements and Modes



The four **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY** modes are about ways of exerting authority, and are called the 'Being in Charge' modes. The four **SELF-ACTUALISATION** modes are called the 'Self' modes, and are about ways we manifest ourselves as people.

REALITY ASSESSMENT has just one complex mode that is about being 'with-it' and tracking current reality moment by moment. These are the nine modes that are measured by the TIFF questionnaire. The five central modes are the ingredients for blending into effective use of energy on behalf of both self and others. They are known as the "fabulous five". The four outer, negative modes often interfere with interpersonal effectiveness².

TIFF does not measure abilities or 'type' people. The results of the self-report questionnaire provide a profile of a person's behavioural tendencies and habits, both positive and negative, in a variety of situations and relationships. Everyone scores on all the modes, creating a unique profile to be explored through the feedback dialogue. The functional fluency model is used to help make sense of the scoring patterns in the profile. These patterns show how someone is inclined to use their energy. No single score has any meaning by itself; it is the patterns, balances and ratios of the scores that are relevant. The profile is like a snapshot – it offers glimpses and clues, inviting the person to work out the meanings and significances, and then to plan for change. It is this dynamic and collaborative process of TIFF that generates the potential for ongoing development of self-awareness and motivation for change.

Often TIFF provides evidence of habits and tendencies of which the person is only dimly aware. This is where having the structure of a model to work from and someone to discuss it all with is both comforting and enlightening. The design and the process of doing the TIFF questionnaire both reinforce ways to focus on and appreciate the positive rather than emphasise the negative. The style is empathic and encouraging, accepting the fact that no one is perfect and that we all have good and bad days. The transparency of the scoring method and the openness of the process support active reflection during feedback on how and why someone has a particular scoring pattern. Curiosity and insight chase each other in the process of gaining valuable self-awareness. This process of enhancing self-understanding is a key to promoting the emotional literacy necessary for building positive relationships³.

In learning about functional fluency and their own behavioural patterns through completion of the TIFF process, leaders are offered a framework for expanding and enriching their integrated use of the five positive modes. The framework can also be used to transform the energy they put into the four negative modes into more effective strategies.

Leaders need to be able to stay objective under pressure – in their Integrated Adult ego state. They need to be congruent, to 'walk their talk', to say what they mean and mean what they say. They need, in other words, to model that which they wish to promote. This will make it more likely that they will be able to inspire and support themselves and others in both the short and the long term. Professional development for leadership must therefore emphasise that personal development and especially emotional literacy are high priorities. TIFF provides a practical tool for this aspect of the training and development of leaders.

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References

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