THE TOOLS

TRANSFORM YOUR PROBLEMS INTO COURAGE, CONFIDENCE, AND CREATIVITY

Phil Stutz and Barry Michels
CONTENTS

PICTURE 1   |   1
PICTURE 2   |   1
PICTURE 3   |   2
PICTURE 4   |   2
PICTURE 5   |   3
PICTURE 6   |   3
PICTURE 7   |   4
PICTURE 8   |   4
PICTURE 8   |   5
Every area of life—his career, friendships, even his romantic life—was a shrunken miniature of what it could have been.

Here’s a way to picture the Comfort Zone and the price you pay for living in it:

Most of us are like the stick figure, stuck inside the Comfort Zone. To take advantage of the endless possibilities that life provides us, we have to venture out. The first thing we meet is pain. Without a way to get through it, we scurry back to safety. This is depicted in the arrow that goes out, comes close to pain, and turns back again. Eventually, we give up on ever escaping the Comfort Zone; our most treasured dreams and aspirations are lost.

Nineteenth-century physician, teacher, and author Oliver Wendell Holmes in “The Voiceless” wrote: “Alas for those that never sing, / But die with all their music in them.”

My father gave me my first lesson in the power of moving into pain when he taught me to bodysurf. He started by showing me how to get into frigid water. You have to dive in all at once, without thinking. He and I would sprint down the beach as fast as we could and then dive as deep as we could. It was a shock, but we’d be bodysurfing while the other swimmers were still torturing themselves trying to inch their way into the water. Looking back, I realize that’s the first time I was ever encouraged to move toward pain voluntarily.

---

**Picture 1**

![Diagram 1](image1)

**Picture 2**

![Diagram 2](image2)
ing and fall back into the Maze where you’re trapped in the past. Life will pass you by. Or you can use Active Love, unify yourself with Outflow, and move on with your life. In the initial shock of being mistreated, we all forget that we have this choice. The picture below will help you remember.

The stick figure is you, the moment after you’ve experienced an injustice. The lower arrow indicates that you do nothing; in effect, you’ve chosen to enter the Maze. The upper arrow indicates that you’ve chosen to put yourself through the three steps of Active Love. This decision unites you with Outflow; you’re free to move into the future. Many patients visualize this picture when injured to remind themselves they do have a choice.

Whether you’re a celebrity or not, when you crave the approval of others, you give them power over you. They become authority figures who define your value. Like a Roman emperor, they cast their thumbs up or down in what seems like a final judgment of your worth. No wonder you freeze in their presence.

The picture below shows how this works.

The picture diagrams the state of affairs in someone prone to freezing (which is almost everyone). The person is ashamed of his Shadow and does everything possible to keep it hidden inside him. This is illustrated by the box around the shaded figure labeled “Hidden Shadow.” The audience figures in the upper right are big because the person is frozen and unable to engage with the world. The Shadow is hidden and consequently, the person is unable to integrate it into their life.

**Picture 3**

**Picture 4**
that you can use them in front of people, even while you’re speaking. As you practice the tool and call up the Shadow, its appearance may change. That’s not a bad thing. Like anything else that’s alive, the Shadow evolves. What’s most important is that its presence forms an unbreakable bond you can feel.

The picture below shows how Inner Authority works. The person in the picture has brought the Shadow out of hiding. It’s now outside the person and bonded with him. Speaking with one voice, they evoke the Force of Self-Expression. This higher force gives the person inner authority, indicated by the arrow moving out toward the audience. The figures representing the audience are small and below the person—they’re no longer a threat.

Close your eyes and re-create the worried thoughts, repeating them intensely like you do in real life. At first, this might feel artificial, but if you keep at it, the thoughts will gain momentum and acquire a life of their own. Now, focus on the inner state that these thoughts have created. What does it feel like?

You just experienced a mild version of the Black Cloud. When it occurs in your actual life, it’s darker and more oppressive. By blotting out everything positive, it convinces you that only the negative is real. The following illustration depicts the Black Cloud at work:

Above the cloud is the sun, the universal symbol for the positive. Here, it would represent all that is right in the

**Picture 5**

**Picture 6**

BLACK CLOUD
The picture below shows how the tool works. It creates a sense of gratefulness that's so powerful it penetrates the Black Cloud. This is illustrated by the channel that extends upward from the person, splitting the Cloud. The small lines inside the channel represent the force of gratefulness, flowing upward. In the earlier drawing (p. 144), the sun shining above the Cloud represented whatever was right with the world. Now we can give the sun its proper name: the Source, the creator of all that is, the ultimate positive force in the universe. This picture shows how gratefulness becomes an organ that connects us to the Source.

We call the tool the “Grateful Flow.” Flow refers to any process that's endlessly creative. In the tool, you create an

The picture below shows the process of creating will-power.

The figure at the upper right represents you lying on your deathbed. He's much more aware than you are that time is limited. His warning to you is symbolized by the

“DON’T WASTE THE PRESENT”

DEATHBED PERSPECTIVE

Urgency

PRESENT MOMENT

“DON’T WASTE THE PRESENT”

WILL-POWER

TOOLS
the system. When you're in there, you'll experience something so strong it'll wash away your doubts."

This did not satisfy my skepticism. Nothing was going to wash that away. But Phil saw the arguments forming in my mind and declared abruptly, "No more debate. Study the card and get inside the system. If you still need an explanation, we'll talk later."

There was no arguing with him. He was adamant. My task was simple: participate in the system and experience what he called "higher forces." It was all spelled out in the following diagram:

The figure on the left is faced with a life problem; it might be an illness, a job loss, or even the inner confusion I was going through. As the first thick arrow indicates, the problem is sent down by the force that governs evolution.