

Fire For Thought



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Minds In Nature

Photo - Iris Kleinlugtenbelt

Since I was a child I loved fire. Burning newspapers with a magnifying glass. Occasionally a fire in the garden or a campfire on a summer camp. But sitting near a fire, it was something rare. After my studies I started with several courses in bushcraft. Again I was fascinated by fire and all the different ways of making fire, with either modern equipment or primitive techniques, the different plants to use, the stages of fire, all the possibilities for purposes.

The art of making a fire is vanishing in normal daily life but everywhere fire works like a magnet on people. Seats near a fireplace are taken first. Fire helps people to make contact. It is easy to say hi or even stick around and join a group. Fire also gives the opportunity to mirror mental processes, especially when it comes to getting results and achievements.

The more I think about fire the more fascinated I am. Fire is a key skill that distinguishes mankind from other animals. It was used by our ancestral human

species. Recent discoveries show that *Homo sapiens*, our species, walks around the earth for about 300,000 years. The use of fire is estimated up to 1.5 million years ago. When modern humankind lay in its cradle, our cousins already made it warm and comfortable. We were actually born with fire. There has never been a period of our species without fire, until now. This truly fascinates me!

So this fire thing is quite important to us humans. But take a look in a person's life? There is maybe some fire when cooking on gas. And we light some candles now and then. But we are missing that strong centre of our society.

And since fire is an element almost all people can connect with, I decided to make a model for personal reflection based on fire. I use this method to get clear what the client already knows, what he or she actually wants to achieve and how to get there. In several fire making challenges, people can try different things and experience what works well and what does not.



As you know you get fire by 3 components; heat, oxygen and fuel. With one element gone, the fire is gone as well. Fire is the result of these three elements in the right ratio. And then there are the elements around you to take into account. The wind, moisture in the soil, and the kind of wood you burn etc.

I use these same components in my coaching model: **Fire**.

The centre of the triangle is the result you would like to get. It is your goal, your desire, your dream. But to achieve goals you need three things.

- **Oxygen** stands for knowledge and inspiration. Everything you know about a subject. The inspiration to get ideas, creativity and the will to explore.
- **Fuel** stands for all your skills and the investments you need to achieve your goal. The things you have.
- **Heat** stands for the action you take to actually achieve your goal. The things you do.

PLAN

So with inspiration, knowhow, investments and skills you are near the possibility of getting a result. With the right actions it should work. The problem is, a lot of people have knowledge and skills but they do not dare to take action or make a decision. And as long as you do nothing you only have a plan. And a plan needs action, probably a lot of action. It takes time to build up the heat. To actually get to the point of your result.

PRODUCTION

Other people actually do a lot of work and they are very good at it. But without the inspiration of the purpose or fulfilment of the work it is merely production and not the result you probably want to get. Production needs Inspiration to become vivid and full of energy. With the right ideas innovations are made and new entrepreneurs arise.

TRY-OUTS

And there is the option of having a good idea and actually doing a lot of actions but without results. This is where skills are needed. Without the right skills you have a lot of try-outs. These can be very successful. But there is a risk of not being able to reproduce what you did. Try-outs need repetition and practice to get the best results.

So for me a firebow is still a challenge. I know the theory, the different kinds of wood you can use. I have practised the technique and still I do not get 100% result. Sometimes it takes several attempts or it does not seem to work. In this case for me it would be a very good advice to practise a lot more! The more I practise the better the result will be.





THE TRIANGLE

All three components work together. The knowledge and skills you have come from former actions. You read a book; you attended a course and graduated from school. The skills you mastered can lead to new insights, more questions and new inspiration. An idea could become an interesting thing to investigate, try-outs and new opportunities. You accidentally do things and discover what happens. It is an ongoing process of learning. As soon as you stop investing in your 'fire' it will burn out. The world around you will continue whatever it is doing. You need to constantly feed your fire and keep up. Fire used to be so important that people took care of it day and night. They knew that it would be harder to start over again than to keep it going.

RESULTS

Results can be any sort of thing. People can get tremendous results but it requires a lot of action and sometimes friction as well. Results can be estimated but not predicted. Fire is a good example when discussing a result for you cannot have half a fire. You either have it or not. So when you have an unfinished project or missing the result you try to eliminate all the possible influences and take action again.

WISHES AND WILLINGNESS

Most people have something they truly want to do or want to achieve. But few people are actually working to get there. One of the problems is that you tend to compare the situation in which you are with the final result. That however is not fair on you. You cannot make fire from a big tree log without cutting it into smaller pieces. When you have a small spark or a very tiny ember, you need to take care of it, treat it gently and build up your fire step by step using tinder and small twigs.

It is exactly the same with personal ideas and dreams. You can have as many as you like! They cost little energy. Results are harder to get. They cost energy, time or money.

So what is your goal, what would you like to achieve? What do you already know? Who inspires you? What skills do you have? What resources do you need? What have you already done to get there? What do you need most at this time? Is it Oxygen, Skills or Resources or is it time to take Action?

**Knowledge | Inspiration
(O₂)**

Plan

A plan needs action to work

Try Out

A try out needs skills and the right recourses to get proper results



**Skills | Resources
(Fuel)**

**Action | Energy
(Heat)**

Production

Production needs inspiration and new ideas to become lively again.

RESULT

- What do I want to achieve?
- How do I feel when I have reached my goal?
- What will this result add to my personal life?
- What holds me down?
- When will I have reached my goal?

OXYGEN

- What do I know?
- Who inspires me?
- What education do I need?
- Who could help me?
- What creative thoughts can I come up with?

FUEL

- What skills do I have?
- What resources do I need?
- What do I need to practise?
- Do I physically feel healthy?
- What does it cost me?

ACTION

- What is the first thing to do?
- Where do I get energy from?
- What is my action plan?
- What experiments can I do?
- Do I keep going on?

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