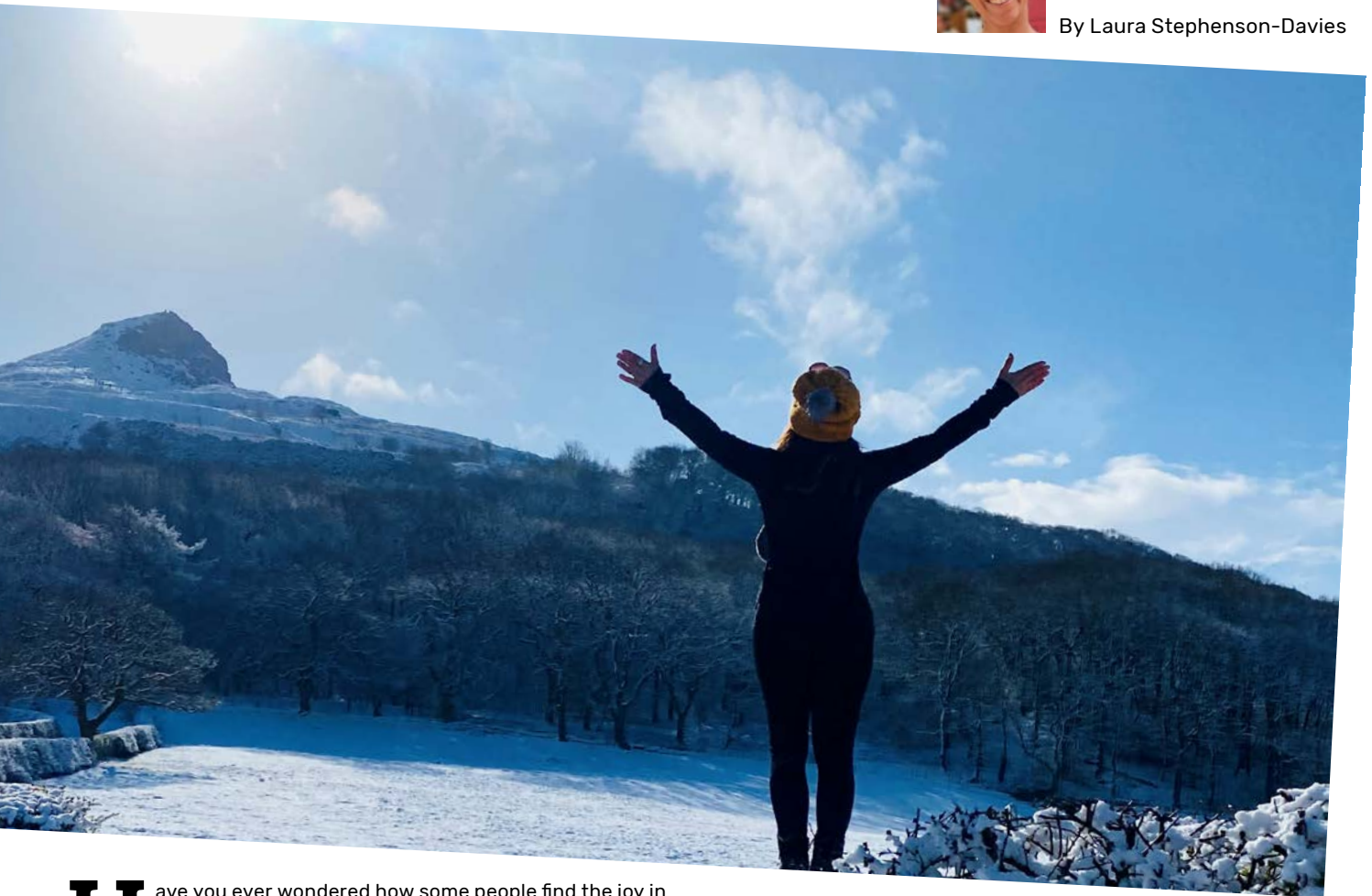


# Aligning Self for Action – Just Do It



By Laura Stephenson-Davies



**H**ave you ever wondered how some people find the joy in life, no matter what is thrown their way? Have you ever wanted to do something and managed to talk yourself out of it?

Have you ever had an idea and put so many obstacles in the way that you then felt it overwhelming or impossible?

Have you ever wondered how some people look light and happy, as if they do not have a care in the world?

Have you ever wondered how some people achieve what they want regardless of obstacles and excuses that could get in their way, and how they take action quickly and with ease?

## What is *Aligning Self for Action*?

'Aligning Self for Action' is the ability to take action and feel good about doing something that you know serves you and ultimately leads to joy.

This model of 'Aligning Self for Action' is a way to clear through the clutter preventing you from taking action so you have the confidence, inspiration and trust in yourself to just do it. This model is based on fabulous people who live and breathe this way.

Align: "To move or be adjusted into proper relationship or orientation."

Action: "The state of acting towards something."

## Model outcomes

- You have the confidence to move forward and take action or not. Action could be deciding to say no!

- You feel joy having completed / started the activity.
- You choose to make the activity a habit (if applicable) or decide it no longer serves you and let it go.
- You have a sense of inner ease and calmness when faced with future actions as your confidence and ability to take action grows.
- You have a raised awareness of the activities you avoid and why.
- Your decision-making process becomes shorter as you form a habit of positive inner dialogue.
- Everything you do is more in line with or working towards what you really want in life.
- You have a sense of fulfilment.
- Life is more joyful.



### The importance of Aligning Self for Action

For many years I have known what life choices help me to live a balanced, energised life, yet on occasion I avoid taking action and doing what I know serves me and can end up down a rabbit hole as a result.

Modelling people who take action with ease and whose natural state appears to be balanced, energised, calm, in the moment, joyful, flexible and open to opportunities is important so we can understand what it is that enables them to be this way.

Adopting this way of life and sharing it with others enables us to live more freely, in the moment and experience joy in everything we do!

### Aligning Self for Action diagram

Use the Aligning Self for Action steps to guide you through each step of the diagram. The key explains the NLP coding associated with each step. Coding is a way to break down and understand what is going on internally and externally for a person as they do what they do. An image we see externally is coded as Ve: visual / external; an image in our mind that we remember is Vir: visual / internal / remembered; an image we create in our mind is Vic: visual / internal / construct; a sound that we remember is Air: auditory / internal / remembered; a sound that we construct is Aic: auditory / internal / construct; an inner dialogue, Aid: auditory / internal dialogue; a feeling that we experience physically, Ke: kinaesthetic / external; an emotion that we feel, Ki: kinaesthetic / internal.

As we become aware of what is happening for ourselves and the strategies we use, we then have the choice to adopt and try out other strategies that are likely to take us closer to where we want to be.

Imagine you have taken this action. Step into the moment of completion so you are seeing this moment of completion through your own eyes, listen to what you are saying to yourself and feel what is happening in your body, and as you do this be aware of what is important to you about this feeling, what is significant about having taken this action, what is this action satisfying in you and notice to what extent taking this action has got you closer to where you want to be. Keep in mind these reasons and outcomes for taking this action. (Vic, Aic, Aid, Ke, Ki)

Now, take yourself back to the moment just before you decided to take action and notice any resistance or tension in your body, or self-talk about any risks or obstacles that you may come across as you plan to take action. Allow yourself to see, hear and feel what they are and as you do, take any emotions associated with these potential risks and obstacles and imagine you are moving them out of your heart/head or wherever they are in your body, to a place behind you, a place where you can deal with them later. (Vir, Air, Aid, Ke, Ki)

With this clear head, take a step back so you are able to observe each potential risk or obstacle and as you do, follow the steps below for each one:

- 1 Recall the reasons and outcomes for doing this activity. (Vir, Air, Ki)
- 2 Bring to mind one of the risks / obstacles you identified and tell yourself: "There is always a way." (Aid)
- 3 Imagine the obstacle / risk as a little hill or a small step. (Vic)
- 4 As you take a step onto this hill or step, ask yourself what your options are to enable you to proceed, what would be acceptable to you, and what would you like to happen to 'get ahead of it'. (Vic, Aid)
- 5 Take a moment to allow options / solutions to appear. You may hear or see these options. You might draw on similar past experiences, gain more information / knowledge, ask for help, find out what others have done, construct a contingency plan or a get out clause should the activity not go as planned. These may come in the form of photographs, videos, drawings, words, audio – allow them to emerge. (Vic, Vir, Aic, Air, Aid)
- 6 As the options appear, be aware of a sign, like a 'ping', a 'light', or a 'good feeling' that appears to indicate that it is a good option. If this does not happen in this way, that's ok; this will be different for everyone. (Aic, Vic, Ki, Ke)
- 7 Once you have this option / solution in mind, own it, and trust you are absolutely making the best decision that is important to you and this will enable you to move forward. (Ki)
- 8 Check in with your gut instinct. Bring to mind taking this action and take a moment to sit with whatever feelings and emotions come up... Now, be aware of your energy and feelings in your chest and stomach; notice what is happening. You may experience grumbling / butterflies in your stomach if this action is unfamiliar or it's exciting for you. Your heart might light up, you may feel it skip, sing, dance, you may experience a glow of colour, sunshine, a positive shift in some way. If it feels good / right in your gut and heart, go for it. If it feels heavy and dark, you feel low energy or bad feeling, this action may not be in line with who you are or who you want to be – if this is the case, reconsider taking action. (If you are unable to identify what your gut is telling you, sit with it for a bit longer and notice what happens). (Ki, Ke)
- 9 Take action. As you proceed, go with the flow, shake off / laugh off any setbacks, use step 4 to deal with any obstacles that may occur and trust it will be ok. Knowing that every situation gives you an opportunity to grow, choose to see any obstacles or setbacks as learning opportunities. (Ke, Ki, Aid)
- 10 Celebrate. Allow the feelings of being proud of yourself to come up, say 'yes' to yourself, punch the air, do a little dance, ▶

## Celebrate

(Ke, Ki, Aid)

TAKE ACTION  
(Ke, Ki, Aid)

Not OK

Check in with Gut Instinct  
(Ki, Ke)

Step back and identify options and solutions  
(Vir, Air, Ki, Aid, Vic, Aic)

Identify potential risks and obstacles  
(Vir, Air, Aid, Ke, Ki)

Identify reasons and outcomes for taking this action  
(Vic, Aic, Aid, Ke, Ki)

Choose an action  
(Aid, Air, Vir, Vic, Aic, Ki)

### Key

- Aid:** Auditory / Internal / Dialogue
- Air:** Auditory / Internal / Remembered
- Aic:** Auditory / Internal / Construct
- Vir:** Visual / Internal / Remembered
- Vic:** Visual / Internal / Construct
- Ki:** Kinaesthetic / Internal
- Ke:** Kinaesthetic / External

### Aligning Self for Action steps

Choose an action that perhaps you have resisted or that you want to take and haven't taken yet. (Aid, Air, Vir, Vic, Aic, Ki)

- ▶ pat yourself on the back, whatever works for you. Celebrate achievements, however big or small; this will help you to remember and draw upon this experience when / if required in the future. (Ke. Ki, Aid)

### Aligning Self for Action model

This model encompasses the common filters, beliefs of excellence and neurological levels of my exemplars. The age of my exemplars ranges from 8 to 67 and I was amazed at how much my exemplars had in common.

When aligning themselves for action they had the following in common:

- Internally referenced and had self-belief.
- Ability to see the bigger picture when deciding to take action and broke the action down into smaller steps when processing reasons, outcomes, obstacles, and risks.
- Present and associated when making the decision, and the ability let it be when executing.
- Always looked for the positives and options / solutions available.
- Choice to use 'get out clause' and / or contingency plan was important.
- Strong understanding of their own wants and needs and how they can influence / support others by attending to these first.
- Used visualization and feelings to form outcomes that they want.
- Used their gut feel to determine if the action is in line with what they want.
- Strong sense of who they are and what they want in life.
- Know and understand their limits.
- Check in with themselves often.
- Pause / slow down before taking action

### Neurological Levels that are important for this model

- Purpose – a sense of what you want.
- Identity – self-belief, self-awareness, self-love and self-trust.
- Beliefs of excellence.
- There is always a way.
- Every situation provides an opportunity to grow – obstacles / setbacks are learning opportunities.
- Gut instinct is always right.
- If they can do it, I can do it.
- Stepping back helps you to move forward
- What will be, will be. Let go and enjoy the ride!
- Values
- Open-mindedness
- Honesty with self
- Positivity
- Courage
- Resilience
- Passion
- Trust
- Capabilities – resourceful, flexible / adaptable
- Behaviour – calm and in the moment
- Environment – adaptable

### Choosing who to model

I first thought about the people I know who I love being around and who possess something that I want.

This led me to my daughter. Ellie, my youngest child, is still very carefree and has not been / refuses to be moulded to conform to society! Ellie is a joy to be around, lives in the moment and has an inner strength that makes her unstoppable.

Next, my Tai Chi teacher and friend has an amazing outlook on life and exudes a calming energy and a spark!

I then looked at someone who I admire and who would be a stretch for me to ask... I contacted Stacey Copeland, former England Women's footballer and Commonwealth Boxing Champion. She is strong, determined, humorous and an unstoppable force of nature.

### Exemplars demonstrating Aligning Self for Action

Ellie, my daughter, makes decisions at lightning speed based on what she wants to do. This is not to say they are not thought out; the thinking and justification just happens very quickly. If she wants something or wants to do something she just goes for it, whether that be climbing a tree or a new skill at gymnastics that she practises over and over again until she 'gets it'.

An example of my Tai Chi teacher demonstrating aligning herself for action is that, a year after her husband died of a brain tumour, she went walking across Spain on her own. Not feeling the need to keep up with others when she hurt her foot, she chose her own route and when the inn was full one night she trusted that it would all work out – and as if by magic, it did!

Stacey Copeland overcame lots of stereotypes to follow her dreams. Not only did she break the mould, she lives her life true to herself and empowers others to do the same.

Life is not always plain sailing yet all my exemplars, in my opinion, have a fabulous outlook on life and the ability to just do IT – whatever IT is that they decide to do, or not to do! They own what they do, and, remarkably, find joy during and following adverse situations.

- How do they do this?
- Have they always been this way?
- What is the difference that makes the difference?

You can find out more about their individual strategies below.



### Imparting the model

The first person I took through the model took action there and then! They were motivated and inspired to do something they had wanted to do yet had been putting off.



***"...logical and certainly works."***

***"Gives good confidence that there is a possibility and that feeling of possibility of achieving that state of mind is great."***

The model brought awareness of the issues preventing friends and family from moving forward and provided them with clear steps to making change and shifting barriers. The barriers became less significant as they looked at options to overcome them. It brought up choices that really helped them to make a decision to move forward. A metaphor that came to mind when going through the model was 'It's a leg-up to get back on the horse again, and we all need a leg-up sometimes to obtain our freedom and get going again.'

***"Raises awareness."***

***"It works...even on a 'mismatch'."***

***"The model is completely transferrable to any walk of life."***

***"Brings up the barriers preventing us from making change and gives clear and precise steps to making change and shifting the barriers."***

My brother-in-law found this model very helpful, as he was stuck with taking an action and had previously been going down the route of pleasing others rather than what 'fit' with him and his values.

***"Helpful to explore options and highlights reasons for taking action."***

## Learnings

What an amazing learning experience this has been. Doing this project has really helped to consolidate my NLP learning and made me more aware of what I choose to do and why I choose to do it, or not! I am more aware of my patterns and I am taking action more quickly and adapting actions to suit me and the time available. I recognised that a lot of choosing not to take action was down to my perception of time and feeling I didn't have enough time to do the task to the best of my ability and this would be backed up with negative internal dialogue. I now find myself just starting and I am ok if it isn't completed within the time restrictions (I am now aware) that I imposed on myself and it is ok if it is not as perfect as I would have liked... it's good enough! Following the model has helped me to identify what is important about the 'action' and made me more aware of the choices I have. I recognise that if it is important and is in line with my purpose, beliefs and values, it will get done at some point. The contingency plan element really opened my eyes and being aware of when this is required and identifying what this could be has made a huge difference to me taking action. I have found myself being more present, going with the flow more and enjoying what I choose to do.

***"Learning is in the experience".***

My model was becoming clear from the first three exemplars I modelled. They had all demonstrated many of the same filters and beliefs and confirmed what was becoming apparent. In hindsight, I could have made my project simpler and less time consuming by sticking with the three; however, at the time I was unaware of how I sometimes overcomplicate things because of my lack of alignment and my ego's need to excel. I have learnt so much from all my exemplars and recognise (with a little help from my fantastic support group) that I sometimes get too caught up in the content!

All my exemplars align themselves ready for action and they only take action when they believe it 'fits' with their purpose, beliefs and values in some way. They use visualisation, feelings,

internal dialogue, and make themselves aware of the risks and choices available and are open to adapting as situations change. When they do this, it supports them to make the decision to take action and just do it! This is what enables them to have the confidence to move forward, be light, flexible and find the joy in life.

***"Joyful people are not weighed down by avoidance."***

I recognised that a lot of my 'faffing' came from not fully trusting myself and the (now old) belief that everything needs to be your best work before sharing and asking for help!

***"When you trust in yourself, you can trust in others."***

All my exemplars gained strength and courage from adversity. For example, Ellie struggled to see 3D images for the first six years of her life; she would trip up regularly and she would pick herself up, brush herself off and carry on. She made the best of her limited sight, just got on with it and adapted accordingly. After getting glasses and consistently wearing them (even whilst doing backflips) her vision has improved and she has unbelievable resilience. My Tai Chi teacher overcame cancer, and injury, and found self-care and self-love in the process. Stacey overcame stereotypes and stepped out of the box she had been put in order to follow her dreams and carve a way and empower other women. She overcame many physical obstacles along the way through pure determination and resilience.

***"Adversity rocks - from adversity comes strength and the greatest learning."***

This project also reminded me that listening to your 'gut instinct' is so important. As I refined the model I got to the point when it just 'felt right' and I was finally happy with it.

***"Trust your instinct."***

## My daughter Ellie's strategy

Ellie, at eight, is a free spirit, a girl who knows her own mind and has an inner confidence and a 'can do' attitude.

Methods of modelling used:

- Conversation in person about a moment in time using clean questions.
- Walking (well... running, skipping and jumping) in her shoes.
- Ellie explaining to me / showing me how to do a cartwheel.

Ellie had bounded into our bedroom a few months earlier, excited that she had solved her brother's maths question, which had stumped the whole family. I asked her to talk me through what went on from the moment she opened her eyes. The level of detail surprised me and told me so much about how she processes everything she does. When she entered our room that morning, I had wrongly assumed that she jumped out of bed as soon as she opened her eyes... far from it!

She told me as she opened her eyes she looked up at the swirls on the ceiling and waited for the 'energy from the sun' that comes through her window. On this day she used the time lying in her bed to think about the maths problem we had all given up on. As she recalls the moment she looks up to the right. She had solved the problem by looking outside the box and systematically thinking about all the possibilities. As she did this, she saw a white piece of paper in her mind and a black pen drawing out options. When the 'right' option appeared and she could see it clearly on the paper, she heard a 'ping' noise in her head. She said as soon as she figured it out, her energy went up and she got out of bed and started walking, running, then jumping before bounding into our room declaring: "I've got the answer!" Ellie remembered telling us her solution and recalls that her answer was not fully correct. Ellie happily accepted this, exclaiming "Ooooo!" as she slung her head back to demonstrate

- what happened in that moment and, seeing the positive side, was happy that her work had taken us closer to the answer. She then remembered discussing the options and finding the actual answer with Daddy; she had been excited and started speaking more quickly. She was proud of herself for helping us move closer to the answer and demonstrated this by punching the air, doing a little dance, and saying "Yes!"

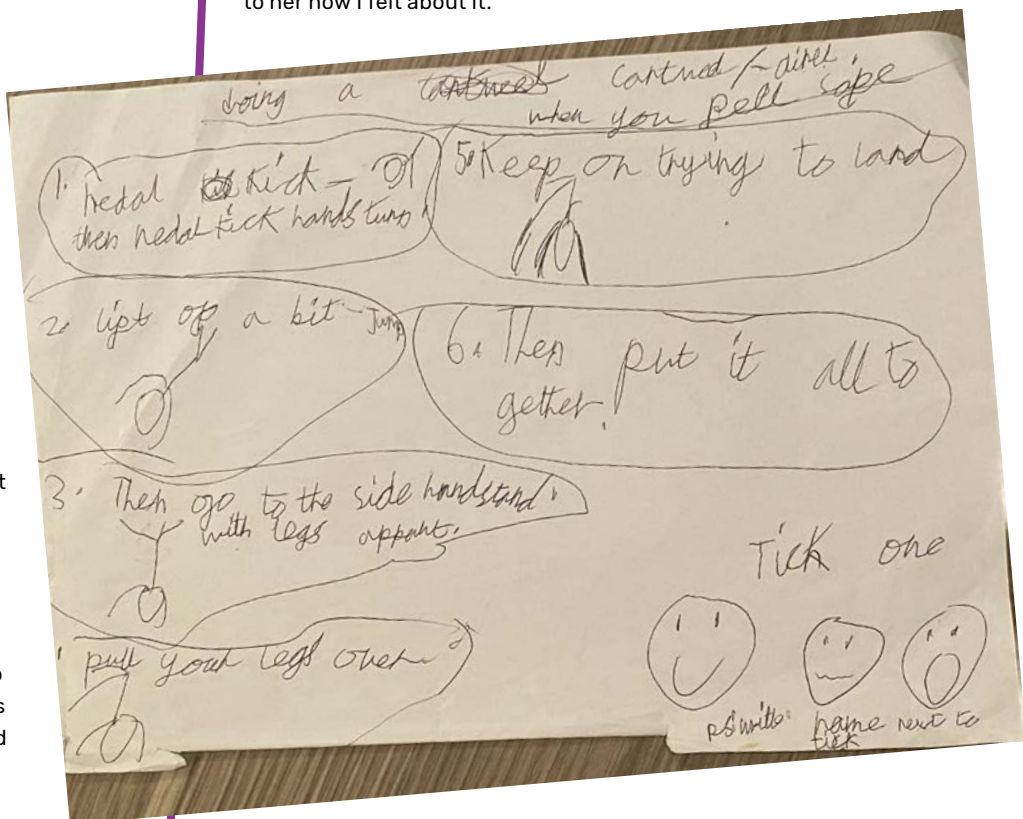
### Walking in her shoes

This experience showed me how free and joyful it is to be in Ellie's shoes. Everything was embodied by using her whole body and being in the present. It was illuminating and taught me so much about how she operates and experiences the world. She would see something that sparked her interest and just go for it... skipping, running, ducking and diving through trees, navigating obstacles at lightning speed. Ellie goes with the flow and is free from obstacles holding her back as she weighs up risks, assesses her options and quickly makes a decision to get to where she wants to go. She embraces trying alternatives to overcome what previously hasn't worked. As she follows her brother through the trees, her 'if he can, I can' attitude kicks in and whilst I am left thinking "I'm not sure that is safe ... I might hit my head ... I might trip over that branch," she doesn't even appear to see the danger. She does, of course, and chooses to use what has previously worked and her options to navigate it. She is decisive in the moment and adapts her actions where necessary.

### Ellie explaining to me / showing me how to do a cartwheel

I asked Ellie to explain how to do cartwheel. She proceeded to get up and started to show me. Then she grabbed a piece of paper and started writing down the steps and, matching

my preferred style, drew pictures illustrating what to do (see picture below). She talked me through each step, encouraging me and giving me pointers along the way. What caught my attention was that she taught by example and she reiterated to "only proceed when you feel safe to do so," something she had remembered her gymnastics coach saying. She also adapted the instructions, giving the choice for a no-handed cartwheel (!) and inserted three faces so I could feed back to her how I felt about it.



Her instructions were broken down into stages and were clear:

- Think about doing it in your mind.
- Needle kick, then needle kick with hands turning.
- Lift off a bit... jump.
- Then go to side handstand with legs apart.
- See it in your mind.
- Pull your legs over.
- Keep trying to land, and when you feel safe, just do it.
- Then put it all together, faster.
- Tick a face to show how you feel.

Ellie went on to explain what the smiley face mean.

Feedback is clearly important to Ellie. Patterns I have noticed are that when she makes a mistake, or something does not go to plan, she physically shakes her head as if to shake it off her. She also celebrates and remembers her successes and that builds her confidence and her belief that anything is possible.

### Strategy for action

- Decides on an action – jumping over a log.
- Reasons and outcomes – wants to get to the other side, brother has already done it, looks fun.
- Risks or obstacles – could hurt self on sharp bit sticking up.
- Briefly steps back to consider options:
  - Go around (dismissed, will take too long, wants to keep up with brother).
  - Turn around and go back (dismisses).
  - Cover sharp bit with something to make it safe – 'Ping!' That's the one; asks mum for a glove.
- Checks in with gut instinct – excited, heart racing.



- Visualizes with option in place – sees the log with the glove in place and it feels ok to jump over.
  - Takes action – jumps over log.
  - Celebrates – said “Yes!” to self and does a little dance.
- Ellie sees opportunities and challenges rather than problems and obstacles. She is light and has a well-timed sense of humour. Her resilience enables her to take everything in her stride.

**Tai Chi teacher’s strategy**

My Tai Chi teacher has recovered from cancer, recovered from a damaged back that left her immobile for a year and, more recently, lost her husband to cancer. She is strong, courageous, true to herself and has an amazing attitude to life. Doing and resting is her mantra.

Method of modelling used: Conversation in person about a moment in time using clean questions.

The moment I wanted to know more about was the moment she chose to go walking across Spain and carried on despite a foot injury. She exclaimed, “It was an OMG moment,” as she giggled at the memory. She had always wanted to do it and when she lost her husband, she decided that the time was right to help her heal. She is a risk taker: a calculated risk taker. A get-out clause is very important to her and in this case that was having enough money to get home should she not like it, or couldn’t do it for whatever reason. As she recalls the memory, she tells me that she said to herself: “If I can’t do it, I can come home... It’s ok to say I can’t do it.” This is something she had struggled with in the past. As she identified options, she searched through photographs and videos from a catalogue of past experiences in her head; these hold the images of the skills and scenarios she can draw upon. She had taken her time, so she could savour it all. In her mind, she broke the journey down into steps and concentrated on one step at a time. It wasn’t about just walking from A to B for her; this was an important experience in so many ways that taking her time and building up her fitness would allow her to enjoy the journey, not just arrive at the destination. The enjoyment came from the planning and anticipation and the thrill of going into the unknown.

She would talk to herself (and her late husband) along the way for encouragement and whilst dealing with minor setbacks, like the day she injured her foot. She had reluctantly decided to get a bus, knowing it was her best chance of getting the rest she needed to be able to complete the trip. The bus ended up being two days away! She said she imagined herself sitting at the bus stop for two days and that made her laugh. “Typical,” she thought. “Ok, what is my learning now?” She is excellent at changing state and from the moment she fell and injured her foot she adapted to make it possible to continue and go with whatever came her way. She does this by moving her emotions out of her head and heart and putting them behind her body so she can think clearly without emotions getting in the way. She tells herself she can deal with them later once she has looked at her options and developed a plan. She has a belief it will always work out and as if by magic it always does. This belief is confirmed to her over and over again. She had hobbled to the local bar and the owner had been to the place she was raising money for; instead of sponsorship, he kindly got his barman to give her a lift.

My teacher has learnt her limits over the years, with the best learnings coming from a bad back injury and recovering from cancer. She is very aware of her patterns, especially pushing herself too far. Although she still gets excited by the prospect of helping anyone and everyone, she has learnt to put herself first and this enables her to better assist others. She only ever takes action now if it’s ‘right’ for her and she knows this through listening to her intuition. She sits with the decision and waits to

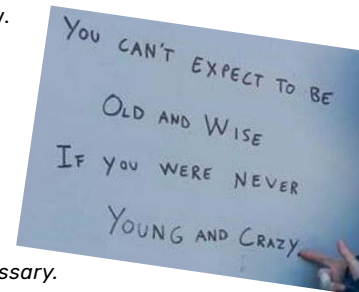


see if it feels good in her gut. If her heart skips, lights up, she can feel a good energy, she goes for it; if it feels heavy and dark in her heart and stomach, she doesn’t.

- “Things are ok in the end, even if you can’t see it at the time.”
- “You’re only given what you can cope with.”
- “Let go and trust it will be ok.”
- “It doesn’t always have to be you.”

**Strategy for action**

- Visualizes and feels action – walking through Spain.
- Reasons and outcomes – following her dream, always wanted to do it, lots of signs, healing journey.
- Calculates risks:
  - Might not like it.
  - Not fit enough.
  - Risk of injury.
- Steps back to consider options:
  - Can always get a flight home.
  - Can postpone to get fitter.
  - Can rest or get a bus / taxi if necessary.
- All options felt ok.
- Visualizes in more detail with these options in place – walking with a backpack through villages.
- Checks in with gut and intuition – tells herself, “Yes, I can do this!” and is excited – it’s scary yet exciting, heart sings, just knows it’s right thing to do, can feel it in her gut.
- Takes action – went walking, injured foot. Rested and carried on.
- Checks in with self throughout, goes with the flow, accepts what is, and adapts.
- Celebrates – said “Yes!” to herself and punches the air with right fist.



My Tai Chi teacher has many metaphors for life, and she is amazing at mirroring and asking herself what the learning in any challenging situation is. This has been developed through adversity. There are no negatives, just opportunities. My favourite quote of hers is “If you don’t listen to your body or life when it’s crying out for change, life will give you something to make that change!”

**Idol’s strategy**

Stacey Copeland was my ‘stretch’ exemplar. I had seen her speak at an event and was amazed by her passion, motivation, resilience, and drive to empower women.

► Method of modelling used: Conversation on Zoom about a moment in time using clean questions.

I had recalled a moment from the speaker session she had given about being picked for the England Women's football team and her boss being reluctant to give her the week off.

As Stacey went back to that moment, I could tell from her body language it was not a great experience for her. It should have been, as she had just been called up to play for England. Before receiving the letter, she had previously failed to make the squad. Using her belief that if someone can, anyone can, she went away and watched and learned from videos of professional footballers and practised until she knew she was good enough. Finally, she received a letter with the three lions on and was ecstatic.

When she got to work, she could see that there were already too many people off that same week and her boss was unlikely to let her take it as holiday. Believing there is always a way, she used her internal dialogue to look at options and decided that if he wouldn't allow her to take unpaid leave, she would quit – it was too important to miss, and she could always find another job. As she entered the room, all excited to be showing him the all-important letter, she received his response of "Why would you want time off for that?" which left her feeling deflated and the total opposite of the euphoria she had been feeling. He let her take unpaid leave and he never told anyone at work about her amazing opportunity!

That conversation had a massive impact on Stacey, and you could see this in her body language as she spoke about it. She looked deflated. It reminded her of all the stereotypes she had fought and was still fighting. She had shaved her head at school, so she did not stand out playing on a boys' team. She had felt there was something wrong with her as she wanted to do something that was not seen as 'normal' for girls. Her sexuality had been questioned and she felt like everyone was trying to put her back in a box that she did not want to be in.

Pure determination and resilience got Stacey through and she broke the mould. When injury left her unable to play football anymore she turned to boxing, becoming Commonwealth super-welter-weight champion. She also fought for women to be given the same opportunities as men and campaigned for women to be awarded an official boxing belt.

In order to move past unhelpful attitudes, myths, perceptions, and adverse situations she would use visualisation and internal dialogue to pick herself up and look at her options to enable her to take action. She did this throughout her career and continues in her quest to empower others through her charity work and by example. As she talks passionately about her empowerment quest, she is energised, animated and speaks quickly. She oozes confidence and passion and is still a force to be reckoned with, even out of the boxing ring!

### Strategy for action

- Visualizes action – playing football, no matter what.
- Reasons and outcomes – following her dream, watched endless videos of the England team and trained hard to become good enough to be given this opportunity.
- Identifies risks / obstacles – no holidays available to take on the rota at work, boss might not let her take time off.
- Steps back and considers options:
  - *Not having time off (not an option, dismisses immediately).*
  - *Unpaid leave.*
  - *Quit job.*
  - *Get another job.*
- 3 options felt ok – following her dream is more important to her and she told herself she could get another job.
- Checks in with gut instinct – nervous, scared, excited, happy to do what it takes.
- Does it – tells herself she's got a plan so it will be ok. Spoke to boss, took unpaid leave.
- Adapts – setback: boss didn't understand why she would want the time off to play "women's football" for England – left deflated, a learning opportunity.
- Celebrates – Gets to play football, jumped for joy inside.

Stacey has a strong belief that if someone can, anyone can. She looks for and grabs opportunities and can change state to feel better – and that usually involves taking action to help someone else. Win, win. She believes life is a gift and we can deal with whatever comes our way.

### What my exemplars learnt from the experience

Ellie is aware of her internal dialogue and the images she creates in her mind. She recognises why asking questions is important. Ellie went on to interview the family in a similar way and gave feedback! She is aware of her motivation for learning and how that links to her future / greater purpose.

For my Tai Chi teacher it was confirmation that we are only given what we can deal with and that every situation gives us an opportunity to grow. There are no negatives, just opportunities.

Stacey is more aware that she uses setbacks as opportunities.

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