

Reflection and Action

1. What do you now believe about the Rule of 90/10?
2. Identify a time in your life when:
 - A. You influenced the outside world in a positive way by controlling your inside world.
 - B. You influenced the outside world in a negative way by not controlling your inside world.
3. Thoughts leave fingerprints.
 - A. List three thoughts you have that are Top 20.
 - B. List three thoughts you have that are Bottom 80.
4. We have **the power of choice**. What have you become aware of during this chapter about which you want to take action?
 - A. What have you become aware of that you want to **start** doing?
 - B. What have you become aware of that you want to **stop** doing?

CHAPTER 3

Top 20s Practice Top 20 Thinking

Imagine that a friend stops by and asks you to go on a bike ride. When you go out to the garage, you notice that your bike has low air in the tires, a loose chain, and wobbly handlebars. You instinctively know that you're going to have a problem if you use this bike. You'd be wise to reconsider going on the bike ride or at least make sure you fix the bike before heading off with your friend.

What is true about the bike example is also true about our thinking. Sometimes our thinking is working in our best interest. We should trust it and use it. Sometimes it's not working in our best interest. We shouldn't trust it or use it. When we're operating effectively as a Top 20, we know when our thinking is working and we know when it's not working. When we're operating ineffectively as a Bottom 80, we think our thinking is working even when it's not. If we use our "broken" thinking then, like the faulty bicycle, we're going to have problems.

Top 20 and Bottom 80 Thinking

This chapter focuses on when our thinking is working and when it's not. We refer to these two conditions as Top 20 Thinking and Bottom 80 Thinking.

- **Top 20 Thinking means our thinking is working in our best interest.**
- **Bottom 80 Thinking means our thinking is not working in our best interest.**

The following chart describes these two modes of thinking:

Top 20 Thinking	Bottom 80 Thinking
• A positive view on life and how I see the world	• A negative view on life and how I see the world
• Positive attitudes and beliefs	• Negative attitudes and beliefs
• Hopeful and optimistic	• Hopeless and pessimistic
• Energetic moods and emotions	• Depressing moods and emotions
• Power to control my life	• Powerless victim of life
• Focused on what is important	• Lose focus on what is important
• Effective and productive	• Ineffective and unproductive

Individual people differ in how they experience their thinking to be working or not working. Following are the five authors' examples that identify when their thinking is Top 20 or Bottom 80:

Top 20: Engaged, confident, witty, compassionate, curious

Bottom 80: Withdrawn, doubting self, sarcastic, judgmental, needing to be right

When our thinking is Top 20, we are focused on what's important and we're able to stay focused. We're in the Zone. We're more positive and optimistic. We're more creative and patient. We're energetic, persistent, and empathetic. We draw the best out of other people. Time flies by and we accomplish a great deal.

When our thinking is Bottom 80, we lose focus on what's important. We're easily distracted. We're more negative and pessimistic. Our creativity disappears. We're impatient and easily irritated. We're more selfish and less concerned about others. Time drags on and we get very little accomplished.

Reasons for Knowing When Our Thinking Is Bottom 80

If we live on this planet, we are going to have times when our thinking is Bottom 80. That's not a bad thing; it's a human thing. We just need to be mindful of when our thinking is Bottom 80.

Let's consider three reasons why it's important to know if our thinking is Top 20 or Bottom 80:

1. Mental habits develop based on where we "live."

Although we may not be consciously aware of it, one of the most important things going on within us on a day-to-day basis is that we are developing mental habits. The mental habits we develop play a powerful role in governing our inner lives. The particular mental habits that we develop are determined by where we "live" and where we "visit."

Some people **live** with Top 20 Thinking. They're more positive and more effective most of the time. Do they ever go to Bottom 80 Thinking? Of course, but they only visit there temporarily. They go there for a short time, and then they return as quickly as possible to Top 20 Thinking. They seem to know that their lives are better when they're in Top 20 mode.

Paul's mother-in-law was a person who lived with Top 20 Thinking. Her thinking was almost always Top 20. Nothing was more enjoyable for Paul's family than to go to her home during holidays and vacations. She was interested in what each person in the family was doing in school or at work. Her positive energy drew people to her. You felt more like a human being after spending an afternoon with her. Did she ever display Bottom 80 Thinking? Yes, she might express a judgment about a cranky neighbor, but her visits to Bottom 80 Thinking were brief and infrequent. Paul's mother-in-law lived with Top 20 Thinking and only visited briefly with Bottom 80 Thinking.

Some people do the very opposite. They live primarily with Bottom 80 Thinking and only visit infrequently with Top 20 Thinking. They may be a bit more positive on their birthday, but then they eat a piece of the cake, complain about the frosting, and return to Bottom 80 Thinking.

Paul's aunt was a person who lived with Bottom 80 Thinking. She was extremely generous and had a heart of gold, but her thinking was chronically negative. Paul advised his daughters that, whenever they called their aunt, they were never to ask her how she was doing. Nonetheless, two minutes into the phone conversation, she'd complain about her health, she'd complain about her neighbors, and she'd complain about the weather. After listening to her for a minute, you'd wish you had scheduled a dentist appointment for a root canal.

It is hard to know when this began for Paul's aunt. However, a long time ago, on a particular day, she had a negative thought. This was followed the next day by a second negative thought, and the next day by another negative thought. Over time, she developed the negative mental habit called complaining.

Paul gave the eulogy at his aunt's funeral and talked about two things: the generosity of her spirit and the negativity of her thinking. Everyone in the church had several examples of her generosity and negativity. Everyone was aware of that except the woman in the casket.

It's easy to spot this type of thinking in others. The Top 20 trick is to identify it in ourselves.

Can you change a negative mental habit when you are eighty years old? Forty years old? Yes, but it's going to take work. **What gets fired in the brain gets wired in the brain.** If negative thoughts have been firing for years and years, it's going to be more difficult to "unwire" them.

Did you brush your teeth left-handed or right-handed this morning? It's doubtful that you gave it much thought before you picked up the toothbrush. You have developed a habit, an unconscious choice you make every time you brush. Try using the opposite hand for a week and you will see how difficult it is to "unwire" a habit.

What about a second-grade student? It's going to be much easier to change a mental habit, because it hasn't become as solidified in his brain. However, it's best if second graders don't even begin to form negative mental habits in the first place. If students and adults are

more aware of their thinking and know where they are "living," they are less likely to develop negative mental habits.

The mental habits we do want to develop are the positive ones. These take root and develop when our thinking is Top 20.

Following are some positive and negative mental habits the authors have developed as they have "lived" in Top 20 and Bottom 80 Thinking:

	Positive	Negative
Willow	Empathy	Sarcasm
Kevin	Compassion	Self-doubt
Tom	Creativity	Cynicism
Paul	Curiosity	Judgment of others
Michael	Resourcefulness	Jumping to conclusions

Everyone forms mental habits. That's a given. Whether they are positive or negative mental habits is a choice. It depends on where we live and visit.

This is the first reason why it's important for us to be aware if we are in Top 20 Thinking or Bottom 80 Thinking. We don't want to develop negative mental habits by living in Bottom 80 Thinking. They will govern our lives and diminish our effectiveness and potential. However, by being mindful of our thinking, we can choose to think more as Top 20s. Later in this chapter you will learn how.

2. Life looks different when thinking as a Top 20 or as a Bottom 80.

Whatever we are looking at or whatever we are experiencing is going to appear one way if we are thinking Top 20 and another way if we are thinking Bottom 80.

As a mother, Willow understands that even her beloved children look different to her depending on whether her thinking is Top 20 or Bottom 80. When Willow's thinking is Top 20, her sons look like precious gifts. They are smart, creative, and energetic boys. These same two boys look foolish, sneaky, and

obnoxious when she is in Bottom 80 mode. Instead of being energetic, they are energy-draining. The fact is that they are the same two boys. They just look completely different to their mother when her thinking is working and when it's not. That is important to know, because every interaction Willow has with her kids will be affected by her thinking.

Let's consider a problem in our work or personal life. What does a problem look like when our thinking is Top 20? We're likely to see it as solvable and maybe even as an opportunity. But if we are in our Bottom 80 mode, that same problem seems hopeless and looks like an impossible mountain to climb.

During a training in St. Louis, a woman said, "When my thinking is Top 20, things that are problems don't even look like problems. When my thinking is Bottom 80, things that aren't problems look like problems." How is that possible? It's possible because whatever we are looking at will appear one way when our thinking is Top 20 and another when it's Bottom 80.

The second reason why it's important for us to know whether our thinking is Top 20 or Bottom 80 is because whatever we are looking at will look different. If our thinking is Bottom 80, it's helpful to know on our way to work that we will see our clients, colleagues, or tasks differently than on our Top 20 days.

3. Making decisions when our thinking is Bottom 80 usually results in a mess. We use our thinking to make decisions. If our thinking is working, we will probably make pretty good decisions. But if our thinking is not working, the decisions we make will often result in a mess.

One day in mid-October, Kevin called out to his family, "FFT!" Everyone in the Brennan household knows that "FFT" means "Forced Family Time" (playing charades, taking a bike ride, or walking to the neighborhood ice cream store) and generally those are positive experiences.

On this beautiful fall evening, Kevin suggested taking a family walk. He went outside and waited for the rest of the family. Soon, Gina, his wife, and his youngest son joined him. The three older kids were nowhere to be seen. Sensing her husband's annoyance, Gina said, "The kids are coming, but they're not thrilled." Kevin, now even more perturbed, responded back, "REALLY? They've had ALL day to play with their friends. A little family time is a great way to end the day!"

One by one, the kids came from the neighbor's yard, each muttering complaints as they approached their father. Kevin noticed that Brian didn't have his shoes tied and Sean didn't have a jacket. Cecelia walked silently with her arms crossed and mouth tightly shut. Frustrated, Kevin snapped at the kids: "Tie your shoes. Where's your jacket? Why are you so crabby? This is going to be fun!"

Hearing the kids mutter under their breath that they wanted to play with their friends and not go on a boring walk, Kevin yelled, "THAT'S IT... HALLOWEEN IS CANCELED!" The kids' mouths gaped open, their eyes filled with tears, and a cacophony of whines, cries, and sobs filled the air. Totally unaware that he was using his Bottom 80 Thinking, Kevin made a decision that resulted in a nasty family mess.

Our reputation probably has more to do with our Bottom 80 decisions than anything else. People may appreciate our kind and generous actions, but our irrational Bottom 80 decisions will be etched in their memories forever. Someday, Kevin's children will be telling this Halloween story to their own families. That's why it's so important to be aware of our thinking. Maybe then we won't make decisions when we are in our Bottom 80 mode and create a mess that needs to be cleaned up during the next several weeks, months, or years.

**The mind is everything.
What you think
you become.**

—Buddha

If these are the reasons why it's important for us to know if our thinking is Top 20 or Bottom 80, how can we be more aware of and better manage our thinking? We will be more aware of our thinking if we know

our **Invitations** and **Indicators**, and we will better manage our thinking if we use **Submarines** and **Trampolines**. These important components of our thinking will be covered in the following pages.

Invitations

When Kevin's kids complained about Forced Family Time, they sent their father an "invitation" to make a decision using his Bottom 80 Thinking. **Invitations are the conditions or situations that come up in our lives that invite us to activate our Bottom 80 Thinking.** If we choose to accept the Invitation, we are RSVP-ing "yes" to attending a Bottom 80 party.



On a flight to Lincoln, Nebraska, to do a three-day training with teachers, Tom and Paul had checked boxes of books and their luggage. After they landed in Lincoln, they waited at the baggage carousel with the other sixteen people on the flight for their luggage to arrive. Nothing came. The flight had arrived with no luggage whatsoever.

Paul said to Tom, "The airline just sent us an Invitation to come to their Bottom 80 party. Are you interested in going?"

Mindful of his thinking, Tom responded, "I'd like to have my luggage, but I learned a long time ago that complaining won't make my suitcase magically arrive. So, no, I'm not going to the party."

Everyone on this flight needed to meet with Brent, the young man who worked for the airline. The other sixteen people on the flight received the same Invitation and chose to go to the Bottom 80 party. When it was their turn to meet with Brent, they willingly voiced their displeasure. They yelled at him and blamed him for their inconvenience.

When it was Tom's turn, he asked Brent, "So how is your day going so far?" Brent chuckled. Then Tom asked, "What can we do for you? Can we help you in any way with this mess?"

Brent responded, "Two things. Tell me where you're staying tonight and describe your luggage to me."

They gave him that information, then thanked him for his help.

"The next flight," said Brent, "will be coming in from Minneapolis at 11:00 tonight. Everyone's luggage will be on that plane. Yours will be the first delivered."

Tom and Paul's luggage was delivered later that night. Here's the deal: **When we govern our inside thinking, we influence the outside conditions.** The opposite is equally true. When we don't govern our inside thinking, we also influence the outside, just in a negative way. A few people who were on that flight are probably still searching for their luggage.

Conditions that we don't like or want are certain to come up in our work life or personal life. These include weather, traffic, mechanical failures, negative or demanding people, abrupt change, mistakes... and so on and so on. Invitations are coming. We can't control the Invitations, but we can determine whether we handle them with Top 20 Thinking or Bottom 80 Thinking. We have the power of choice.

Certainly, some Invitations that come up in our life are more serious than others. Experiencing rain on a day we want to have a picnic is not the same as experiencing a personal tragedy. It is normal and natural to go to Bottom 80 Thinking after traumatic moments in our life. It can be extremely difficult to get through these times. Although the journey may take longer, and we may need help and support from others, human history provides many examples of people who have overcome tragedy and healed.

Conditions or Experience

What is the relationship between conditions that come up in our life and the experiences we have regarding those conditions? Bottom 80s believe that our experiences are determined by the conditions. Top 20s realize that conditions and experiences are two completely different things.

Conditions are outside things about which we have no control or little control. **Experiences**, on the other hand, are inside things about which we have total control or almost total control. In other words, **we don't determine conditions, but we do determine our experiences.**

We don't want to lose our luggage. However, we can lose our luggage and our mind, or we can lose our luggage and stay in Top 20 mode. We don't control the lost luggage, but we do control our thinking about the lost luggage.

Students frequently complain about being bored in school. The teacher, his style of teaching, and the content he is presenting are outside conditions for students. The boring experience the students are having is determined by their thinking, not the conditions. But it's so easy to blame someone else for the experience we are having. As adults, we can make the same choice if we're not mindful. It's just that when we do, we give away power to make a positive difference in our lives. Bottom 80s make a habit of this.

Keep Your Day

Today is the only time in history we get to experience this day. We will never get a second chance. Each day we decide if we are willing to give our day away to Bottom 80 Thinking.

While Willow was teaching high school social studies, she had a student in her class who she identified as "slouching boy." While Willow was teaching, the boy sat in the back row lying horizontally in his desk with a look of total disgust. Because Willow interpreted slouching as disrespectful, she

immediately started to lose her cool, and drifted farther and farther into Bottom 80 Thinking. At some point, she would verbally reprimand the student and escalate the conflict.

Willow would then take her negative thinking to the faculty lounge and complain about the "slouching boy" to any coworkers who would listen. Unfortunately, she wouldn't leave her Bottom 80 Thinking at school. She'd take it home and bark at her husband when he came home from work. The conflict at school became a conflict at home.

While leaving school one day, Willow thought, "I'm tired of giving away the best part of myself to others all day and bringing home the worst version of myself to the people I love most." She decided to see slouching boy differently. She realized he was merely "inviting" her to activate her Bottom 80 Thinking. It was still up to her to RSVP. Aware that she had a choice, she declined the Invitation to go to the Bottom 80 party. By saying, "No" to the Invitations from the outside world to go Bottom 80, her thinking became healthier and more effective, both at school and at home.

Because Willow had some form of slouching boy in every class she taught, she had been giving day after day away. Realizing the folly of putting her emotional life in the control of a high school boy's sitting posture, she made a conscious choice to no longer give her days away. She would talk with slouching boy about his posture whenever that was necessary, but she kept her day. Slouching boy was a condition that invited her to Bottom 80 Thinking. He did not determine her experience. That was her choice.

A businessman named Steve attended one of our trainings in Sioux Falls where he became mindful of his frequent use of Bottom 80 Thinking. He approached us at a break and humorously introduced himself, "I'm Steve, the most generous man in all of South Dakota. I've given more days away than anyone! I've given more than 30 days away to my next-door neighbor."

Like Willow and Steve, our choice is to keep our day or give it away. Top 20s more often do the former while Bottom 80s choose the latter.

Indicators

While it's important for us to know what invites us to Bottom 80 Thinking, it's even more important to know our Indicators. **Indicators are the feelings we have or behaviors we manifest when we are thinking as a Bottom 80.** They help us know that our thinking is not working in our best interest.

Indicators vary from person to person. Paul's primary Indicator is his need to be right, Tom's is mean-spirited sarcasm, Michael's is irritation, and Kevin's is impatience. They refer to their Indicators as being aggressive, coming out of a cave with a club. They are more overt and assertive. Willow's Indicator is quite different. She is an entertaining extrovert when it comes to public speaking, but, when her thinking is Bottom 80, she becomes quiet and withdrawn. Willow goes into her cave. Some of us have more aggressive or assertive Indicators, while others are more like Willow.



Additional examples of the countless Indicators human beings experience include:

- Being tired
- Feeling stressed
- Being easily irritated
- Expressing a negative tone of voice or body language
- Being unfocused
- Not listening
- Procrastinating
- Being bored
- Being judgmental or critical

If we don't know our Indicators, other people often do. People we live with or work with can probably identify our Indicators. Even our pets can pick up on our Indicators. That's why the dog sometimes walks out of the room when we walk in.

It's helpful for us to know the Indicators of the people with whom we live or work. When Willow and Paul first started working together, they had experiences like the following. (Remember, Paul is the director of Top 20 Training and thirty years older than Willow.)

Paul would say something like, "Willow, when we do training for that group next week, we will be doing these three topics." Willow would respond with, "Sure, Paul, that's fine. Let's do whatever you want."

Now, in Paul's language, the word "fine" means "fine," and the word "whatever" means "whatever." But in Willow's language the words "fine" and "whatever" mean, "Oh, sure, old man, so that's how we're going to play this game. You're going to tell this young gal how we are going to do things. Don't you know that we are all equal in this company?" Although Willow wouldn't say this out loud, this is what she would think. Though Paul didn't realize Willow's Indicator at the time, he does now. When she says "fine" or "whatever," he says, "What topics do you think we should cover with that group?" Because he knows her Indicator and she knows his (his need to be right), they are much more effective with each other.

This is not a free pass for Willow to continue acting in a passive-aggressive manner or for Paul to need to be right. However, because they have now discussed their Indicators and can observe them in each other, they can help each other recognize their Bottom 80 Thinking and behavior sooner rather than later.

Top 20s are more effective because they are aware of their Indicators and know when their thinking is not working in their best interest.

Submarine

It's wonderful when our thinking is working in our best interest, but what should we do when it's not? The Submarine is a helpful metaphor for understanding how we can effectively manage our time in Bottom 80 Thinking. Imagine diving underwater in a submarine. Being inside the submarine, we are protected from the outside conditions and



what's outside is protected from us. We are not expecting to be underwater forever. At some point, we can raise the periscope, check out what's going on above the water, and eventually resurface.

When we are sinking into Bottom 80 Thinking, we can go under with grace and dignity. We can contain our negativity so we are not passing it on to others. A simple way of practicing the Submarine is to let others know when our thinking is not being effective.

One day, Kevin came home after a long drive from an out-of-town training seminar. Feeling exhausted after a full day of work, Kevin was well aware that his thinking was Bottom 80. Upon entering his house and being noisily greeted by his four children, he quickly hugged the kids and immediately alerted them that his thinking was Bottom 80: "Hey kids, it's so good to see you. Listen, my thinking is really off track right now. I'm going to work on getting to a better place. I'm just giving you a heads-up so you know it has nothing to do with you."

During the next few hours, Kevin's moments of impatience, lack of energy, and occasional negative tone of voice didn't have a negative impact on his children. They understood it wasn't about them. What if he hadn't told them that his thinking was Bottom 80? What would his children think if they sensed their father's negativity? It's likely that they would have taken it personally and thought it's because of something they had done.

Top 20s Practice Top 20 Thinking

Have you ever gone to work, walked by a colleague, and said, "Good morning," and she didn't respond back? You then may have thought, "Wonder what I did to tick that person off?" All this negative thinking can sometimes be avoided by simply letting people know when we're having a bad day. By doing so, we don't multiply problems in our lives and relationships.

Top 20s know that, when their thinking is ineffective, they can use a Submarine and contain their negativity. When Bottom 80s activate their ineffective thinking, they fire torpedoes and create a greater mess.

Trampolines

Top 20s not only know when their thinking is ineffective, they also know how to get it back to working in their best interest. They understand and use Trampolines. **Trampolines are the means by which we can bounce back and get our thinking working in our best interest.**

Trampolines vary from person to person. They can include: exercising, being with family or friends, taking a nap or getting a good night's sleep, having quiet time, praying or meditating, listening to music or engaging in hobbies, being in nature, performing acts of kindness, or being grateful. These are some of the ways that get our brains thinking more clearly and in our best interest.

Another powerful Trampoline is maintaining perspective. Maintaining perspective results when we focus on something important so that Invitations that come from sources of lesser importance are not given more power than they deserve. By maintaining perspective, we are able to stay centered on what we truly value.

Tom maintains perspective by carrying a rock in his pocket that he found in Scotland while vacationing with his son. When life sends Tom various Invitations, focusing on the rock allows Tom to be centered in a more peaceful place.

Kevin maintains perspective by recalling a time his son Brian was diagnosed with a very serious health condition. Thankfully, after eight days in the hospital, Brian overcame the condition and regained excellent health. However, when Kevin thinks about children living with challenging health conditions, he is able to maintain perspective and stay grounded in Top 20 Thinking.

Similarly, Willow remembers a special friend who was dying of cancer. Sometimes Willow would visit while her friend was receiving chemotherapy treatment. Willow noticed that she never complained about anything during those visits. Why? She realized that 99% of the things she complained about on a day-to-day basis she would never say to a friend who didn't know if she was going to live another day. Willow decided to discontinue with the daily complaints about little things. By recalling her friend, Willow stays centered on the present and the blessings in the moment, without dwelling on what she doesn't have.

Paul's grandchildren provide him with perspective. Thinking of them keeps him locked in on what's important and prevents him from being overwhelmed by trivial events.

Michael maintains perspective by gratitude. When he is struggling with his thinking, he purposely becomes mindful of those things in his life for which he is grateful.

Top 20s not only know when their thinking is being ineffective, they know how to fix it and Trampoline back to Top 20 Thinking. When we change our thinking, we change our life.

Our Choice

Although we don't have a choice regarding the conditions in our life, we do have a choice about the experiences we have. That choice is determined by living as a Bottom 80 or a Top 20.

Top 20s improve the inside experience first...then the outside conditions or the experience of the outside conditions gets better.

Bottom 80s wait for outside conditions to improve...then the inside experience gets better.

As Bottom 80s, we wait. We wait for our kids to want to go on an evening walk; we wait for our luggage to arrive on time; we wait for slouching boy to sit up. As Bottom 80s, we do a lot of waiting before our lives, relationships, or experiences get better.

Top 20s don't wait; they choose. They control the one thing they can control...their thinking.

Our friend and sixth -grade teacher Jeanne says, **"We are either characters in someone else's story or authors of our own lives."** Either we are victims and blame, or we claim the power and freedom we have to make a positive difference in our lives and the lives of others. It's a choice.

Reflection and Action

1. What negative mental habits have developed in you that get in the way of your effectiveness and limit your potential?
2. Identify a situation or a person in your life who looks one way when your thinking is Top 20 and another way when it is Bottom 80. How do you see that person or situation based on whether your thinking is Top 20 or Bottom 80?
3. What is a decision that you made while your thinking was Bottom 80? What results did you get from that Bottom 80 decision?
4. What Invitations come up in your life to which you bring your negativity and go to the Bottom 80 party?
5. What are your Indicators? How do you know when your thinking is ineffective and not operating in your best interest?

6. What is a situation in which you could have used the Submarine and let others know that your thinking was Bottom 80?
7. What are Trampolines you can use to change your thinking from Bottom 80 to Top 20? What can you use or do to maintain perspective?
8. We have **the power of choice**: What have you become aware of during this chapter about which you want to take action?
 - A. What have you become aware of that you want to **start** doing?
 - B. What have you become aware of that you want to **stop** doing?

CHAPTER 4

Top 20s Know How to SEE Things Differently: The Frame

So much of what we share in *Rebalanced Thinking, Rebalanced Living* has to do with seeing: how we see, what we see, if we see, old ways of seeing, and new ways of seeing. By SEE, we mean how we think; our beliefs, perspective, or point of view. How we SEE is important because our effectiveness has a lot to do with how we see things. In fact, one reason why we are not effective at times is because of how we are seeing. In order to be more effective, we sometimes have to see things differently.

As important as our seeing is, we can sometimes believe that what we are seeing is accurate even when it's not. We asked a lifelong judge what he had learned from 40 years on the bench. He immediately responded, "Eye witnesses are often unreliable. They don't always see what they think they are seeing."

Sometimes **we don't even see what is obvious**. If that's the case, how can we be sure that we know what's not so obvious, like someone's motive? If we listen carefully while watching talk shows on TV or at social gatherings, we will often hear people claiming to know another person's motive. Why is that? **Because we think we see things exactly the way they are**. That's rarely the case.