How do you make a difference?

The Make Your Difference Framework to amplify your positive impact

Leadership & Change

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Hey - I’m really glad you’re here! I’d love to hear your thoughts and help you leverage your positive impact. Let’s make a difference!

I am Marcella Bremer and I’ve wanted to make a positive difference in the world as long as I can remember. Since I graduated from Rotterdam School of Management, I’ve been working for over 25 years in developing people and organizations in varying roles as a change consultant, coach, trainer, communications consultant, entrepreneur, team leader and author.

But I’ve often felt discouraged and disappointed during my search for meaning and positive change. I let the harsh reality and the critics and cynics get me down. “Change is hard. Leaders are greedy for power and money. It’s a dog-eat-dog world. Work is about making money.” There was only one enthusiast, inspired and energetic me - but I was getting exhausted, trying to create positive change in the workplace and the world.

That is, until I started to see it differently. Until I shifted my mindset from scarcity and problems to abundance, until I leveraged my impact by moving from “what” to “how” and next, to “who”. Until I understood how I co-create the world one act at a time, one person at a time. Until I became more aware of my essence and presence, influencing the system. Until I learned to BE present and share my unique gift with the world. Will you do the same? Let’s travel together on this fascinating journey.

Before we start, I have two requests. I’d like you to suspend judgment and be open-minded. Just thank the inner critic for its comments and read on.

I also ask you to slow down and let this text sink in for a while.

Please be patient while you read the philosophical parts, and reflect on them.

The framework may not seem practical - but it is, if you keep it in the back of your mind. Once you do, it will fuel everything you do to leverage your difference.

But for that to happen, you need to open up, slow down and really take this time. If you feel hurried and too busy, put this document away and block time to go through it later.

Last but not least, this is a document to reflect upon. You can answer the questions I added to gauge your responses. The questions might help you become more aware - of your source of attention - to help amplify your impact. It’s up to you.

This is you-time. Please put away your smart phone, close your email and other distractions. Take a deep breath and exhale slowly. Be present. Open up. And there you go... May this framework serve you.
1. Do you make a Difference?

Are you making a difference? When you look to answer this question, you probably assess yourself by the results you achieve. Did you lead a successful change program? Did you make the deadline? Does your boss give you a bonus? Does the team you lead perform well?

When looking to find your difference, we tend to search for facts and measurable results. This is the WHAT: it needs thinking and fixed facts.

But how did you get your results? You did certain things. You followed a procedure or went through a process. You applied your knowledge and did things in your unique way. This is the HOW, or the process that created your results. The HOW defines the WHAT. It’s the process of doing that leads to results.

The HOW is the realm of doing and changing. It’s a work in progress, no fixed facts.

The HOW is harder to measure than the WHAT. We can see your results or test your knowledge. But how do you do it? This is unique for every individual and harder to describe.

The way you do things depends on WHO you are. Your presence is the essence. Your colleague might achieve slightly different results. He or she did it in a unique way: their how-to process was different. Because the two of you are different people.
The WHO is the “source of attention” - that engages in a process and creates an outcome. The who is often the blind spot - who you are is even harder to assess than the process or the outcome. It’s the magic spark that makes you, you! It’s your uniqueness. It is your being. Here’s Who you are, connected to your big Why; your purpose and your essence.

So, do you make a difference?

We didn’t answer the question just yet. You do things, you achieve certain results, but do you make a difference? The short answer is: Yes, you already make a difference, by being your unique self.

However, you may not be satisfied about the effect of your difference at this point. Maybe you’d like to make more of a difference: you’d like to amplify your impact.

So, if you want to increase your positive impact, I’m going to ask you to keep an open mind. We will get to that. But let’s first discuss a bit of philosophy.

2. Philosophy & Science are on your side

Fact 1: There’s only one of you!

Amongst over 7 billion people on earth - no one has the exact same pool of genes or experiences, feelings, thoughts that you have. You are incredibly unique. Never before did someone exist who’s exactly like you - and there will be never again. You are a unique creation.

There’s only one of you. Your presence makes a difference.

Your presence, who you are, makes a difference. Because you are here, the “web of the world” ripples differently. Your presence, your actions and
your results already influence the world. Isn’t that amazing when you really think about it...?

**Your Difference notebook**

First practical tip: If you are serious about increasing your positive impact, I recommend to buy a notebook to take notes during your journey. An old-style notebook will help you become more aware. It will help you to be present in the here and now and engage with what you are reading - when you write your thoughts and observations down and engage the muscles of your hand. Paper allows you to draw or paste images to inspire yourself. It’s up to you!

**QUESTIONS**

Second practical tip: To retrieve your answers: breathe three times and relax. Lower your shoulders. Connect to the spot in your body where you feel You. Be open and accepting to anything your system shares with you.

Just let the answers pop up, whether they are verbal, an image, a sensation, a gut feeling or voice in your head. Don’t judge the answers. Write or draw them down. Let them be. Don’t worry if you don’t find answers just yet.

- How are you a unique presence?
- How do you make a difference?
- How do you want to leverage your positive impact?

**Fact 2: The world is a connected, complex system**

Did something unexpected ever happen in your life? And at work?

This world is not the linear cause-and-effect one-fits-all reality that you may believe. The world can be thought of as “a web” or a field where information and energy and matter are ultimately connected, influencing each other all the time, one thing leading to another and on and on and on. It’s a web of data, stuff, movement and possibilities.
Fact 3: The world is non-linear

That’s not New Age or hippie talk. Science has revealed a non-linear world, where small initial changes can lead to hugely different outcomes. The world turns out to be complex and systemic. Systems tend to develop emergent features all by themselves and things start happening - one thing organically leading to another unexpected thing that you couldn’t have planned nor predicted.

Who are you to judge your impact?

So, who are you to determine that you don’t make a difference - or that you do?

You can’t predict all the outcomes of your actions. That one thing you said, or did, made someone else change their mind, or led to another response in the system - that interacted with something else - and it surely has an outcome somewhere in the system. How great the impact is, is often beyond your sight and judgment.

You can’t predict nor completely control your outcomes

Did you hear these kind of stories? How one girl missed the train and met her future husband in the next train - and similar coincidences in the chain of your ancestors that make that you are here today?

Did you have experiences like that?

Lollipop moments?

Drew Dudley, a leadership coach, states that we all have changed someone’s life - usually without even realizing it. He accidentally had a positive impact on a girl’s life that he didn’t even know. On the day she was checking out a university with her parents, she felt terrible and thought she couldn’t do it - she
wasn’t ready. They had discussed her anxiety before and her parents reassured her that the minute she decided she didn’t want to go to university, they’d go home and love her all the same. No pressure! The girl says: “We visited the campus and then I made the decision to not go to university and I felt peaceful immediately. But before I could open my mouth to tell my parents, the door swung open and Dudley stepped out with a bucket of lollipops, handing them out to the visiting students and parents. He stopped in front of me and stared at me - then he turned to the guy next to me and said: “Please give this beautiful young lady a lollipop”. The guy was so shy and embarrassed that I quickly took the lollipop from him just to save the poor guy - and then Dudley said pretty loud to my parents: “Woa. First day from home and she’s already taking candy from strangers!” Everyone around us burst out laughing - and the minute that happened - I felt I was perfectly at home at this university and that I would stay.” Dudley had a huge impact on her life - she told him later when they accidentally met again. She also married the guy who stood next to her...

Dudley says: “I didn’t even remember the lollipop moment when she told me about it. So this is what happens: there must be many more lollipop moments when we impact others - and we’re not even aware.” Do you remember your lollipop moments, when someone’s random comment led you to make another decision - or how accidentally being in the right place at the right time proved to be decisive for the turn your career took? Instead of your laborous planning and plotting... there emerged a chain of events.

Life is what happens to you while you are making plans - John Lennon
Fact 4: Small actions can create huge and emergent, unexpected effects

Small actions can have huge outcomes because systems have tipping points. Every one of us can contribute to a better world when we consistently do small acts of kindness that will spread through the system because people tend to copy one another. It’s like the pay-it-forward slogan says. It’s contagious. If someone was kind to you, you tend to get a better mood and be kinder to someone else as well, or you do your work with positive energy with the effect of achieving a better outcome. Small acts will ripple through the system - and the more people do it - the sooner the tipping point will be achieved.

Small acts can have huge outcomes

Fact 5: Complex systems have tipping points

The tipping point is where the system as a whole starts to behave differently. It has changed. It has become so “normal” to be kind - that even the sceptics, the critics, the nay-sayers start to behave more kindly, because the context around them has changed. It becomes rewarding for everyone to be kind - and you’ll be “punished” when you’re not: by being criticized, by being weird, by standing out in a negative way. That’s what people want to avoid. We all want to feel safe and be okay. Hence, we tend to adjust to the majority. That’s how systems of people operate. Even systems of over 7 billion people. Sure, that may take time and there’s still a lot of work to be done - but yet: keep this simple principle in mind. Start small....and end great.
QUESTIONS

* Do you know of a small action that influenced a system (such as organization, group)?
* Which “emergent” event influenced your life and work?
* How did other coincidences impact your life?
* What turned out to be a blessing in disguise?

3. Yeah, but... Intermezzo with your Inner Voice

Yeah, nice positive thinking but I work in an aggressive for-profit organization. I endure office politics and fear. My corporation pollutes the environment and dodges taxes. I’m just an accountant, or a banker, or a secretary. We outsource services to the Philippines and we pay them below-human wages. My boss is a bully. I simply have to pay my mortgage so I do marketing for this margarine brand, 60 hours a week. What positive difference can I make? How do I have any positive impact at all?

Thank your inner critic for protecting you

There it is....! Thank your inner critic for this reality check. The little voice in your head is simply trying to protect you from getting hurt, when you get your hopes up too high. It wants you to stay realistic. You’re not Gandhi, or Mandela, or Mother Teresa. We’re not doing voluntary work in underdeveloped countries. You don’t work in health care, education or any other public, social service for the greater good of our community. You donate some money to charity, every now and then. That’s all.

Cut the philosophical crap that everyone makes a difference by who they are. We want a better world. We need to deal with change fast, this 21st century. Never before did we see so much fascinating and disruptive change - the pace is accelerating, the complexity is increasing, and it’s less and less predictable.
Being kind to one colleague is like pouring a drop in the ocean. What does it matter? We want to contribute to changes that matter! We want to make a difference next to making a living.

Think again. Please go back to the above. Small acts can matter. The first step to making more difference, to increasing your impact, is being present and aware. Having an open mind. So let those paragraphs sink in. Suspend judgment and thank your inner critic for its protectiveness. But you need to move on.

Even if you work in a mean, power-horny, profit-greedy, polluting, unethical corporation - you can increase your positive impact. It’s for you to decide whether you’d have more leverage within that hostile environment or outside of it....

But if you stay, if you are courageous and strong enough to endure it, you can start spreading small, positive changes. By humbly asking the right questions, the right Why’s, by suggesting alternatives, by role modeling alternatives, by doing small acts of kindness, positive leadership and inclusive change.

It’s your call. You’re free to leave and spend your energy elsewhere, if you think that would increase your leverage.

All I’m saying is: it’s a myth that only voluntary organizations or social workers or activists have a positive impact. Some of them even don’t! Some charities make people dependent instead of empowering them. They inadvertently stimulate corruption or greed in the system they try to help.

It’s a fact: you can’t foresee all the outcomes of your actions in a system.

**Fact 6: You can have a positive impact anywhere, anytime**

It’s not just WHAT you do, it’s HOW you do it and WHO you are. If a non-profit organization that aims to help poor countries develops a workplace culture of bullying, their employees
take their fear and anger home - spreading unkindness wherever they go - losing their impact and blocking potential - no matter how noble the organization’s cause is.

On the other hand, you might have a bigger positive impact while providing capital equipment and engineering consulting just like Barry-Wehmiller Companies, a $1.5 billion global manufacturer. They implemented a leadership development program - helping leaders discovering who they were (know thyself) and how to lead “people-centric” with respect for who their employees are - and saw the staff’s divorce rates go down. Bob Chapman, the CEO, said: “Companies don’t care about people: 7 out of 8 people are not cared for at work. Capitalism sees people as objects for success: we have a crisis of leadership. Broken lives are the result. Our goal is to create an organization where everyone matters - a culture where people discover and share their gifts and are recognized for them. They go home each night and have a meaningful life. Because when you’re told what to do and never asked anything - you don’t feel good about yourself and you’re not nice to your wife.”

You can make a positive impact anywhere, anytime

The lower divorce rates were an emergent feature of the system that no one had foreseen - but that turned out to be beneficial for both employees and the company.

This case proves another point to me - how you can make a difference and have a positive impact at work - even if you are a manufacturer, an accountant, an IT guy, a marketing girl, the janitor or the cleaner, or the CEO - instead of a saint or a social activist.

You don’t even have to be at work to increase your positive impact. We all have different roles. Spreading kindness or creating positive
change can be done at home, as a housewife, or in communities like your village or church, whether you’re a leader or a participant.

There seem to be only two conditions to increasing your visible impact: 1) you have to be present and 2) you need to interact with others. If you’re a hermit, your impact seems smaller - but we can’t even know that for sure because reality ripples differently because of the hermit’s presence...

The workplace is a learning lab for human development

The workplace as a learning lab

The workplace is a wonderful learning lab for human development. We spend 40 hours a week together with people we didn’t pick - for the biggest part. We have to accomplish results together, in teams, in a world that’s seems to become more volatile and changeable by the minute. The workplace turns into a learning lab and sometimes even a pressure cooker for learning tolerance, self-management, communication and leadership skills, how to handle change, how to handle people, how to deal with uncertainty, etc.

Everything we learn here, we take home to our families, our communities, our society. We spread behaviors in the system because people copy each other. Every act of positive leadership and kindness counts. Every act of including people in change, asking questions, engaging them, helping them find their strengths: every act counts. No matter how small. Its effects will ripple through the system. What vibe are you spreading? What information and energy do you radiate? Are you ready to energize, engage and empower yourself and others?
All we have to do is open our minds and see it differently

QUESTIONS

⋆ Can you make a positive impact anywhere, anytime? Make a list of the opportunities you see now. Make a list if what you already did...

⋆ What small act of kindness can you do today?

⋆ How can you leverage your impact in the workplace?

Fact 7: Reality is what you choose to focus on

We are constantly riding the waves of this rippling world system - but most of us cling to our linear cause-and-effect world view. Funny, isn’t it? All we have to do is open our minds and see it differently. See the world for what it is: a chaotic, complex, fascinating, systemic whole. It may sometimes behave in a linear way, but often times, it does not. Welcome to reality!

What reality, anyway? The one-size-fits-all reality is a myth, too. There is no absolute reality. The world is ultimately virtual - because we can only access reality through our senses and our brains. Everyone has their own experience of what just happened... emphasizing certain data over other stimuli, filtering and judging it from their personal point of view. Everyone creates a personal version of reality - because reality’s true bit size (google-bytes of data) is too much information to take in. We filter and select to handle it.

Reality boils down to what you choose to see. You can focus on how you can’t change the world: “There’s only one of me and the world is so large” This focus may make you’ll feel condemned to the Sisyphus labor of moving boxes around and not making any “real” difference.

Or you can focus on how the world is different and got changed - because you were born. If you are open to see the relative, ever-changing nature of reality and the complex, systemic features of our world, you no longer need to discourage and disappoint yourself. You
no longer criticize yourself for not making any difference. You focus on how you already make a difference and how you can increase your positive impact, starting within your circle of influence.

**Maybe - a Zen Parable**

A farmer's horse ran away. His neighbors gathered upon hearing the news and said sympathetically, “That's such bad luck.” “Maybe,” the farmer replied.

The horse returned on his own the next morning, and brought seven wild horses with it. “Look how many more horses you have now,” the neighbors exclaimed. “How lucky!”

“Maybe,” the farmer replied.

The next day, the farmer’s son attempted to ride one of the wild horses, was thrown, and broke his leg. “How awful,” the neighbors said. “It looks like your luck has turned for the worse again.”

The farmer simply replied, “Maybe.”

The following day, military officers came to town to conscript young men into the service. Seeing the son's broken leg, they rejected him. The neighbors gathered round the farmer to tell him how fortunate he was.

“Maybe,” said the farmer.

**QUESTIONS**

* Do you tend to focus on how the glass is half-full or half-empty?
* How could you change your focus to leverage your hope, courage and energy?
4. Your Essence is your Difference

There’s only one of you: every act you do is uniquely colored by your essence. Every small act can potentially lead to a great outcome. Every journey starts with one baby step.

Don’t let small acts make you think and feel small. Together, we are already changing the world. One small act at a time, one person at a time - until we reach a tipping point. Let’s move ourselves into a positive direction and inspire others to follow by being authentic and congruent, aligned with our essence. Our essence is who we really are. It’s our true nature that also implies our purpose, once we discover our essence.

Every act you do is uniquely colored by your essence

Don’t let small acts make you think and feel small

This philosophical insight may turn out to be practical. Knowing that your essence is already influencing the streams of information, energy and matter in the world. The mere thought can be energizing and empowering. You’re here! You make a difference already. Your difference is the antidote against indifference. That’s what the world needs - people like you, who care. People like you, who know that they make a difference.

Ask your loved ones - and you’ll know how much of a difference you make.

Ask your colleagues, ask your clients - ask anyone you interact with - and you’ll discover you make a difference (in varying degrees) in who
you are, how you do your work and what you achieve. There’s a piece of you in everything you do.

You make a difference. But okay, you might want to increase your visible positive impact.... Therefore, reflect on the questions and keep going!

There’s a piece of you in everything you do

QUESTIONS

- How are your actions colored by your essence?
- What is a typical piece of You in everything you do?
- Ask a few people around you - what stands out for them when they think of you and your work.

5. How do you increase your Impact?

Otto Scharmer, lecturer at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and co-founder of the Presencing Institute, is one of the developers of Theory U about the process of change.

One of his research questions was: Why do some tools work well in the hands of some change practitioners, while in other cases no significant change occurs?

The answer: the quality of results achieved by any system depends on the quality of awareness from which people in the system operate. It comes down to who they are...! Otto calls the Who the blind spot, and he discerned the levels of who-how-what.

One change consultant or leader or coworker can make change happen because of who he or
she is - while the other stays stuck and doesn’t have much impact - in spite of using the same tools and techniques. It comes down to presence, essence and awareness. That’s what leverages energy, engagement and empowerment.

**The quality of results achieved by any system depends on the quality of awareness from which people in the system operate**

We often measure our impact by the WHAT of our results. But results stem from who we are. It ain’t so much WHAT you do - it’s HOW you do it, and that depends on WHO you are.

Who you are unravels when you develop and know your essence, presence and awareness. When you free up energy and information, to flow freely and share it with the world. Because the more authentic You are, the more you can be present and give your unique gift to the world.

**It matters Who you are**

To increase your impact, you need to be WHO you are. You need to do your homework: know thyself. You must develop and free yourself from limiting beliefs and negative emotions. You need to come to terms with past fears, grief and anger so you feel safe enough and you don’t desperately need your armor (your limited ego). Then you can allow yourself to experience “flow”, don’t hold yourself back and flow freely. You’ll be able to tap into your true potential. Being who you are, you don’t need to defend and justify yourself. No need to feel unsafe, hurt, insecure, mocked or insulted, angry or stressed. No need either to put others down, to control them, to judge them, to label them. You’re safe.

Being who you are and leveraging your impact doesn’t mean more
ego and vanity ("hey, look at me!").

**Being who you really are means less ego.** It means developing into the best version of you, and connecting with your higher self or your soul. Your higher self knows your purpose.

Less ego means expanding and unleashing potential, forgetting your “self” because you do the Work you’re meant to do. It is a “self-less” way of working when you experience “flow” (as Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes it: you forget yourself when you are absorbed by your work) and information and energy flow freely. You’re not self-conscious when you experience flow. You are one with what you do. That way of working makes you thrive and delivers unique, amazing results.

At the same time, you add value because you are Self-ish. By who you are, with your Higher Self leading the way. Your essence starts to be your presence: your uniqueness shining through everything you do.

**Be yourself at work - What you see is what you get**

Being YOU means you went through the stages of raising your energy, increasing your engagement and empowering yourself and others. You feel safe and open, yet focused. You role-model authenticity and integrity by being yourself at work. What you see is what you get. You are open to connect with others, with the whole person, not just their job role. You treat people as people - not objects or means to an end.

You unite instead of divide. You are fully present with personality, character, and purpose - lifting the others, too. People trust you for who you are - enabling them to do what they must do - together creating great outcomes.

One grand example? Nelson Mandela. The South African government wouldn’t have taken the risk
of abolishing apartheid, letting-go of their power and sharing it with any other “black man” than Mandela - because of who he was. He had done his homework and showed he had developed himself beyond his anger, grief and fear. He unleashed his potential and could be trusted, serving as a moral anchor for the “black power” that was about to be freed. That was scary for President de Klerk and his fellows at the time. But Nelson Mandela made the difference because of who he was.

You need to be YOU, fully present and open to reality.

When you open up in the here and now - you will see your impact increase.

But most of us don’t do this homework of discovering who we really are, clearing away what still hurts and opening ourselves once we feel safe so our information and energy can flow freely. Many of us use valuable energy to control negative emotions, to fight or flight, or to hide behind ego and armor - and not letting their essence and presence shine through. If you hold back, instead of flowing freely - you can’t impact the world with your energy in the way only YOU can do. Your light doesn’t shine as brightly when you hold back.

Many of us are closed in one way or the other. Closed to new information, ideas, and energy, closed to other people. Closed to reality itself - which makes their work hard instead of smart... because they miss valuable clues.

There’s a saying: To change the world, start with yourself...

Or, as Gandhi put it: **BE the change you want to see in the world.**

Let’s start with essence, presence and awareness. Let’s increase our impact by starting with the WHO in the system that needs change. First develop ourselves, then the others in the system. Let’s BE (a) Present and increase our impact.

**QUESTIONS**
How much of You is in your work?
How do you hold back? What, and when? Why?
How can you be present and open to the information and energy of reality?
What percentage of You shines through your armor?
How often do you feel unsafe, hurt, insecure, mocked or insulted, angry or stressed?
Do you easily trust people? Do they trust you?
How would your Higher Self act at work? What would your Higher Self say to your current you?
Who is an example or role-model for you in being Who they are?
What percentage of your true potential do you currently use?
Are you ready to develop more of Who you are to increase your impact?

6. Make Your Difference Framework

Let’s take a look at the Make Your Difference Framework that I use to increase my positive impact in multiple ways. This Framework is the basis for my coaching, training and consulting. It will be the basis for my new book as well as an online program and a local retreat/workshop. (Yes, I’m excited about this :-)

The Who-How-What is a concise 3-level model of change and impact. But each level has multiple layers or aspects that we must pay attention to, to increase our impact.

Here’s the Make Your Difference Framework that originates in the unique energy of Who you are (that really makes the difference), which leads to engagement in How you do a process that leads to empowering results or What you bring about.

**WHO** you are is your basic resonance or energy. It’s your essence (your nature and purpose), your presence (how that radiates from you) and your awareness (how much you perceive). It’s the source
outcome: positive impact

freedom  equality
brotherhood  democracy  justice
positive leadership  inclusive change  sustainability
cultures of kindness  new organizations  development

process: doing

staying open
suspending judgement
including trusting  asking  listening
connecting  creating  changing
empathizing  prioritizing

source of attention

soul  willing

mind  thinking

heart  feeling

body  being

Make Your Difference Framework

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what
empower

how
engage

who
energize
of attention.

Where attention goes, energy flows. It’s the level to energize.

Who you are is a whole, but we can distinguish four practical layers to work with:

**Your Body** is the basis of your existence:

- **Energize**
- **Empower**
- **Engage**

It expresses who you are by being present (and acts out what the subconscious experiences). It has stored your memories so far, it contains your health and resilience as well as your gut feeling and future potential. It secures your vitality. Here’s the domain of health, wellness, sports, sleep, intuition, breath; physical energy.

**Your Mind** plays a major part as the spokesman of your system: expressing experiences in words and thinking. It stores memories but also your filters, thinking habits and personality. Here’s the domain of thinking, self-management, analytical knowledge and learning; mental energy.

**Your Heart** is the tone of voice, the tune of your emotional state. Here’s where your basic emotions are maintained and where you’ll find your love and kindness, your passion. It’s emotional energy.

**Your Soul or Higher Self** represents your intention and purpose. It is connected to your deep Why. What drives you? What’s your best You, your unique contribution? It speaks the language of dreams, symbols, the subconscious and “knowing”. It’s spiritual energy.

To increase your impact, we can work with ourselves in all four fields.
**HOW** you do it is your basic level of engagement. It’s what you do in the world. It needs action and is creation. It’s the process. It’s the level to engage.

How you do it is different for everyone, but this HOW-level can benefit from tools and techniques that represent “21st century” values such as inclusiveness, development, change and respect.

In this field of attention, we’ll focus on practicing dialogue techniques, change circles (how to deal with continuous change?), humble inquiry (the art of asking genuine questions), exercises to train compassion and empathy, to use permissive and “enabling” language, mindfulness and the focus on essentials, deal with abundance and create a safe space for others to contribute. Useful techniques that gain in impact once you have worked out your issues on the WHO-level and your body, thinking, emotions and spirit are aligned and you are no longer blocking energy and power.

To increase your impact on the How-level, we practice these tools so you can guide a worthwhile process in any topic for yourself and others. It matters how you do things.

**WHAT** you impact or change reflects your ultimate empowerment. It’s the content and outcome of your work. When you’ve gone through a good process, you can trust it to produce a good result. It’s the level of empowerment - if you have worked your way up and have started at the WHO-level.

What you impact is different for everyone. I like the my What to represent the values of “Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité”. These mottos of the French revolution, though more than 200 years old, illustrate what I’d like to emphasize in my results in the 21st century. Freedom, equality and brotherhood imply positive leadership, inclusive change, cultures of kindness and new ways of organizing. I work primarily with people in workplace settings, so that’s my WHAT.
In a more abstract way, I believe that the What should aim for a free flow of energy and information and matter - to help others reach their highest potential as well. Whenever a free flow is hindered, it brings about hurt, damage or limitations.

What you like your results to be, depends on your specific topic and your chosen focus and leverage.

To increase your impact on the What-level, you work on the contents of your topic, your focus, your values and criteria and you explore to find your leverage.

The Make Your Difference Framework can help you become more aware of your essence, your presence and your purpose. It can help you find your unique energy on the levels of who, how and what. You develop yourself to be fully who you are - and learn to practice techniques and use tools that will help you facilitate fruitful processes to, ultimately, achieve positive, desired outcomes.

Several readings, exercises and journaling questions can help you do so. I will share some of them with you in the free series How You Make a Difference.

7. Who are you? Be (a) Present!

Make your difference by being you. Increase your impact by becoming aware of WHO you are. Next, work on HOW and WHAT - and assess yourself ultimately by your positive impact.

Be (a) present and share your unique gift with the world

Who you are is: your essence, your presence, your awareness. That’s what leverages energy, engagement and empowerment. That’s what will increase your positive impact.
is your current level of energy?

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being low and 10 being awesome), what is your current level of engagement?

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being low and 10 being awesome), what is your current level of empowerment?

If your answers are below 6, you have some homework to do. Let’s increase your positive impact in the next weeks - and stay tuned for the program if you want more.

In the free series How You can Make a Difference, we will touch on:

- the mindsets that help you create a positive impact
- 21st century positive change
- how to lift your energy
- how to energize your workplace
- your purpose and focus
- positive leadership and abundance
- positive energy networks
- culture of kindness
- body and breath

and more....

These topics are also covered monthly in the articles, interviews, book reviews and videos in Leadership & Change Magazine.

One act at a time, one person at a time, we co-create positive change.

Great that you are still here! The world needs people like you, who
care to make a difference and leverage their positive impact.

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, Nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”
Dr. Seuss, The Lorax

Marcella Bremer

PS: I look forward to your responses....

Marcella Bremer is a change guide, author and energizer who helps leaders, consultants and professionals make a difference at work by positive leadership, inclusive change and cultures of kindness.

She co-founded Kikker Groep consultancy for organization development (in the Netherlands), OCAI online (online organizational culture survey) and Leadership & Change Magazine and Blog. She published two books, her latest is “Organizational Culture Change: Unleash your Organization’s Potential in Circles of 10”.

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