

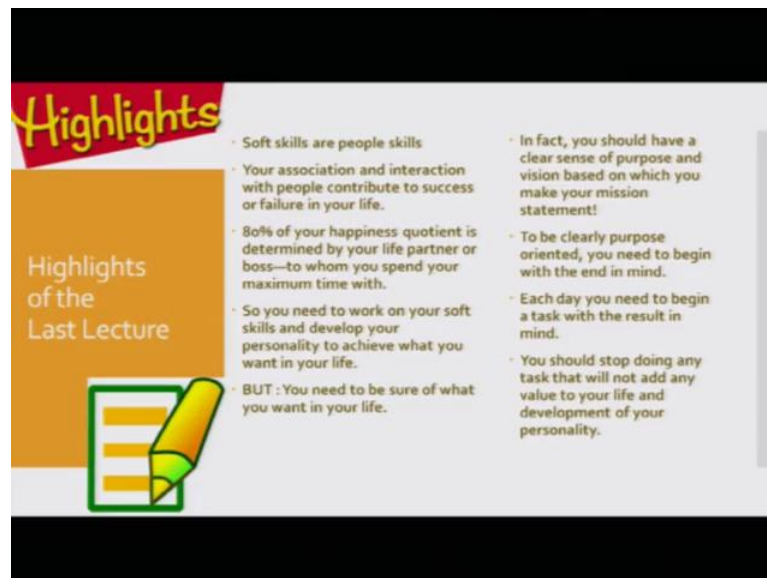
Developing Soft Skills and Personality
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Lecture – 03
Human Perceptions: Understanding People

Hello there, welcome back to NPTEL's MOOC course on Developing of Skills and Personality. I am Prof. Ravichandran from IIT, Kanpur. I have been giving you this course and we are in the first week, we are in the third module now. In this module, I will focus on human perceptions and how we make some perceptual error and why it is important to understand human beings in terms of keeping in mind this perspective that we think to make errors in perceiving things, perceiving people.

Before I start let me give some quick highlights of what we did in the previous one. The last lecture, I focused on soft skills as an important aspect of people, skills impact their greater synonymously, soft skills are considered people skills.

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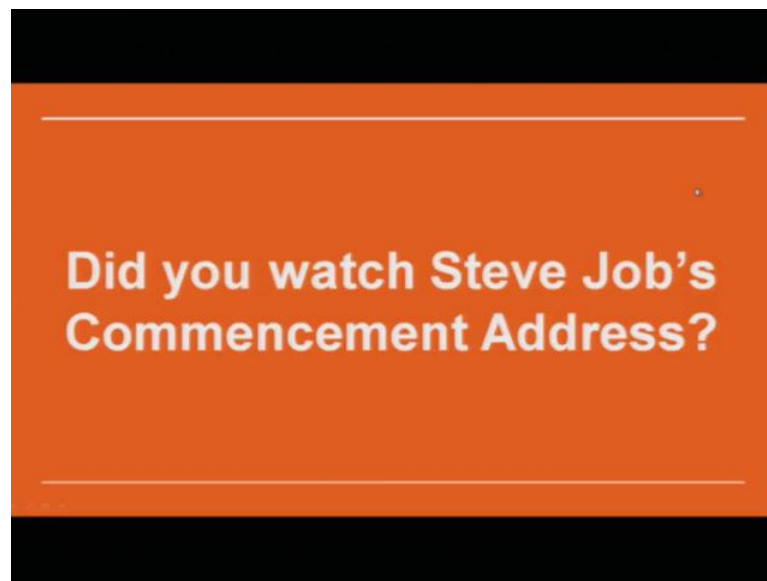


This means your association and interaction with people contribute to success or failure in your life. I also mentioned that 80 percent of your happiness quotient is determined by your life partner or boss with whom are you are spending your maximum time with, it can be anybody, but it is this single person with whom you are spending maximum time is going to determine your happiness quotient.

So, you need to work on your soft skills and develop your personality to achieve what you really wanted in your life, but you need to be sure of what you want in your life because most of you just leave life auto pilot mode, not sure take things as it comes, go with a flow, but then you do not determine the course of your life impact. You should have a very clear sense of purpose and vision based on which you make your mission statement to be clearly purpose oriented. You need to begin with the end in mind, I quoted from Steven Covey's one of the habits that he talks about from 'Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' in which he says, that you should begin with the end in mind, each day you need to begin a task with the result in mind.

So, what will happen if I do this task? What will the result be and you should stop doing any task that will not add any value to your life and development of your personality. When you ask whether the task is going to add anything to your life or value you do it, if you think that it is not going to do anything to your personality do not do that task.

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Now, the next question I said in passing that you can watch the video of Steve Job's that we gave as a commencement address at Stanford University, did you watch it? Now, I am going to drop names, I am going to suggest books. The other book that I mentioned was Steven Covey's "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People". I talked about one habit I may talk about one more habit, but I leave you to read the other habits which are equally important and I mean touch upon those habits. I may not do that, but I expect that

when I tell you that you may read this as extra not actually demanded for the course, but then it is like you read it, so that you get a much better view of the way I am proceeding with the course.

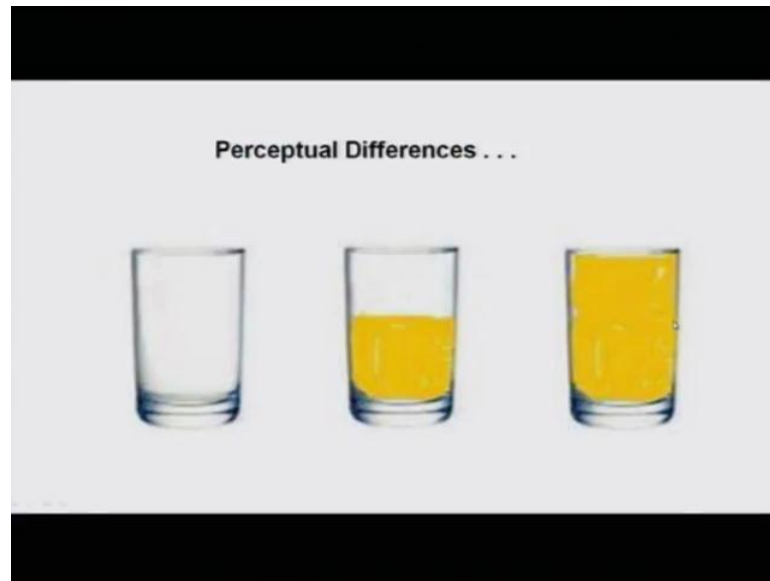
Now, in case you have not done it, just again Google it, go to YouTube, watch Steve Job's commencement address. It such a very inspiring talk which also keeps you in clear prospective as why you should have your sense of purpose? Why you should be clear about the goals in your life?

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Now, in this module am going to talk about the perceptual difference that we succumb to the sense that the way we see things, the way we perceive through our five organs particularly, the way we literally receive things from our eyes and then gathering information in our mind. The way we filter things, the way we look at one sided of certain things, the way we are not able to look at the other things. So, that determines our perception which means we are looking at things not exactly the way we should be looking at. Let me explain how and I am going to show you some objects, you see them and then you will be able to understand what I mean.

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Now, look at the perceptual differences, how do we call this cups? This one is full and obviously, this one is empty and how do you call this one? Is it half full or is it half empty?

Now, psychology say that if you look at this cup and then if you say, that it is half full that you are an optimist and if you say that half empty then you are a pessimist. So, a pessimist is somebody who always sees the empty pot of life, the negative aspect of life whereas, an optimistic is somebody who sees what is feed the complete pot of life and

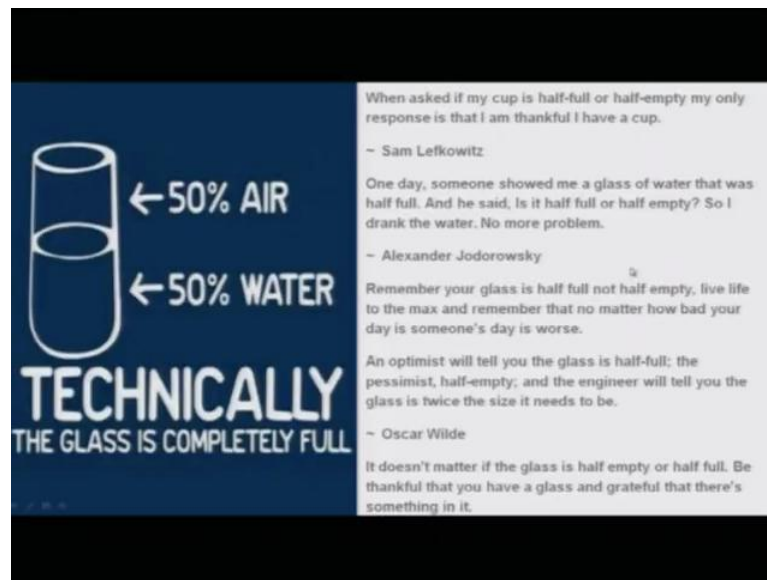
optimist sees something that is good in everything and a pessimist sees something that is bad in everything. Now, you may ask should I be an optimist or pessimist.

Now, these are test which identify whether you are in optimist or pessimist by nature, some of us actually perceive the negative things of life and some of us actually perceive what is positive, what is green, what is rosy and then we do not look at the towns. Now, that does not mean that you should compel to change your views, but then its impact, it is important that you are aware that most of the times negative and same thing with the person, who is very optimistic, it is important to realize that sometimes the person is too optimistic, where he actually need to see some limitation in certain situation which he or she fails to see. Now, what about the life race, the life journey in which the optimist as well as the pessimist has started.

Now, it is said that both the optimist as well as the pessimist would reach the destination of the life at the same time. Even if you are on a race, both will be achieving their targets at the same time. Then what makes the difference, it is believed that the optimist would have enjoy the journey, the optimist would have enjoy the life, the optimist would have enjoyed the entire process of reaching the destination whereas, the pessimist all the time cursing that he has to undertake that journey, all the time blaming people for having put him in that situation, all the time finding fault with somebody, he keeps walking dragging complaining and then still reach us that. So, that you need to decide whether you want to enjoy your life by changing our prospective and attitude, by forcing yourself to look at things which are filled instead of looking at things which are empty first thing.

Now, second thing that I want to find out is that the same thing that we see two different people see, two different things which means the same argument can have two sides. The same person can be seen by two different people with two different prospective, one can see this person as a utterly evil person the other one can see this an angel, a completely benevolent and divine person, both are possible and it is a same person.

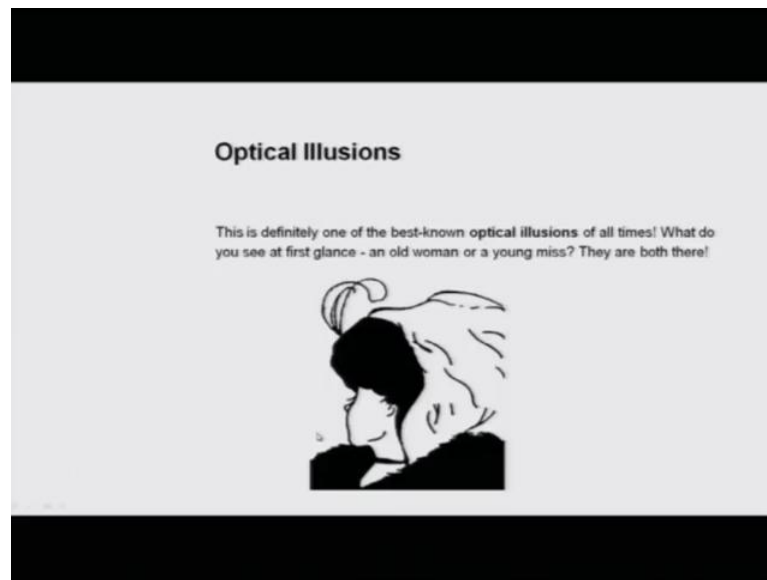
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Look at some more perceptual differences and the way people will talk about the same glass. So, I was just looking at some of the observations made by some people, in this technically they say that if you give a kind of scientific technical explanation they say that the glass is completely full. In fact, 50 percent it is water and 50 percent it is air, but there are others who reflected on this situation. So, there is the Sam Lefkowitz, he says that when asked if my cup is half full or half empty my only response is that I am thankful I have a cup Alexander Jodorowsky.

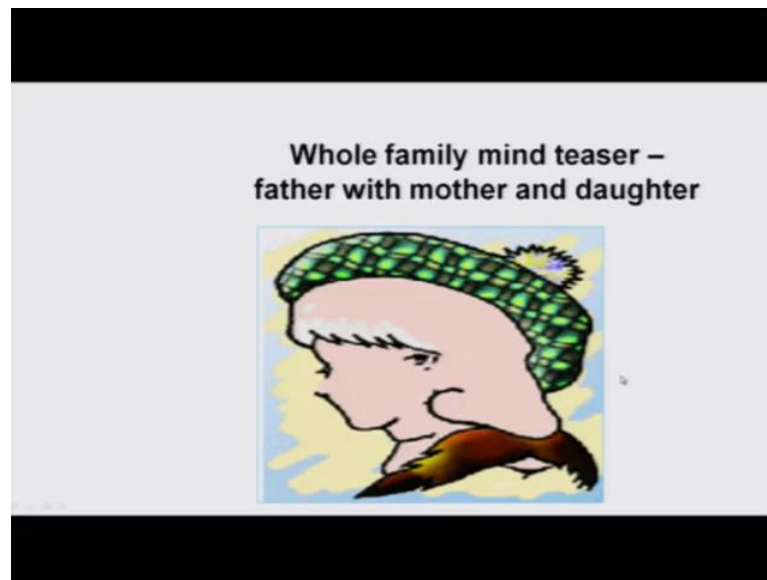
One day someone showed me a glass of water that was half full and he said ha said half full or half empty. So, I drank the water no more problem and then this another person who says remember your glass is half full not half empty, live life to the max and remember that no matter how bad your day is someone else day is worse and then the famous quote from Oscar Wilde, it is that an optimist will tell you the glasses is half full, the pessimist half empty and the engineer will tell you the glass is twice the size it needs to be and overall it does not matter if the glass is half empty or half full, be thankful that you have a glass and grateful that there is something in it. So, that is again a kind of optimistic view taking from this thing that even if the glass is full or empty. So, take the way of that there is something given to you at hint.

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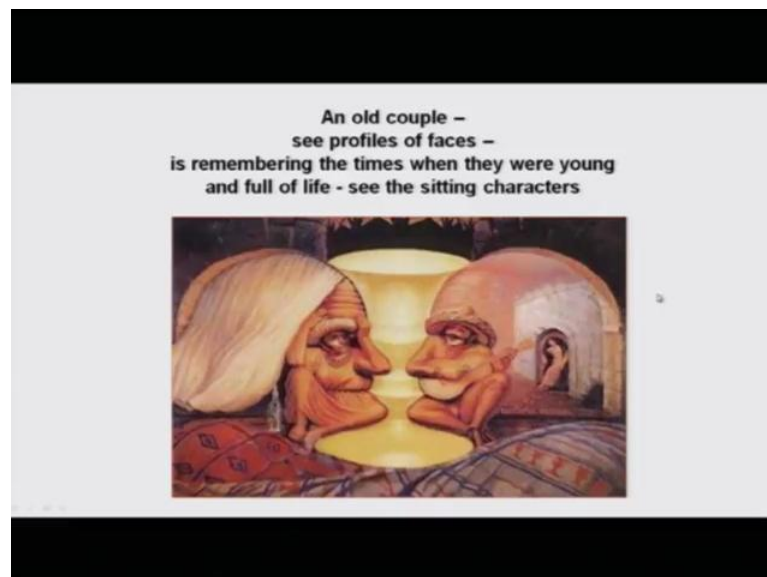
Now, other optical illusions, which actually determines our perceptual differences, look at this, this is definitely one of the best known optical illusions at all times, what do you see at first glance? Do you see an old women or a young miss? Of course, if you look at this as the hair of a young lady and then the nose and then you will able to see the young women, but if you look at this as the eye of the old lady and then may be wearing a cover on her head and then this is her nose and then you can see the chin here mouth. So, if you see the other side you can also see the old women, but again psychology would say that if you see the old women again you are looking at actually not will young and then not very bright aspect of your life, if you look at the young one they again they would say that you are more looking at the bright aspect of life.

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Now, this is like a complete family mind teaser, the father with mother and daughter. So, there are three the previous one. Now, here you will also see a father. So, you can see this nose coming from this side and then there is this person hidden here and as in the previous picture you see the young miss and the old lady.

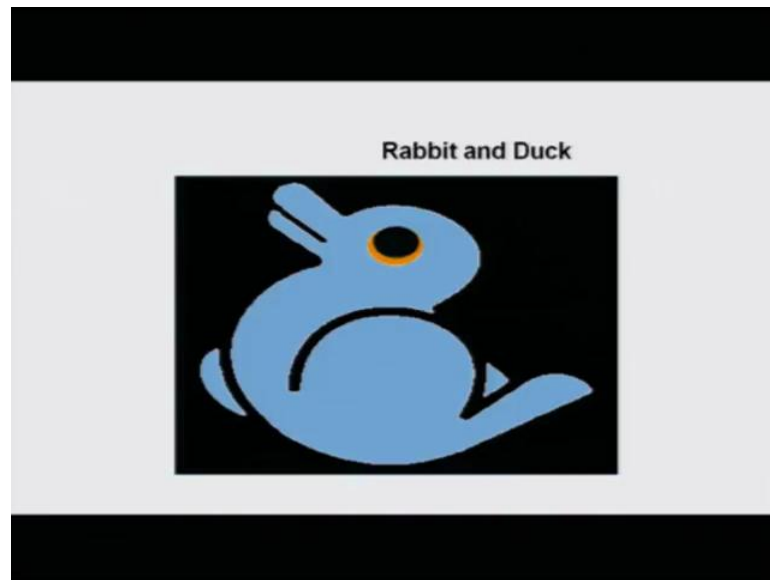
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Look at the next one, these an old couple see profiles of faces and then couple is remembering the time spent, they were young in full of life see the sitting characters. So, there is one character here, another character here and then there was sometime some

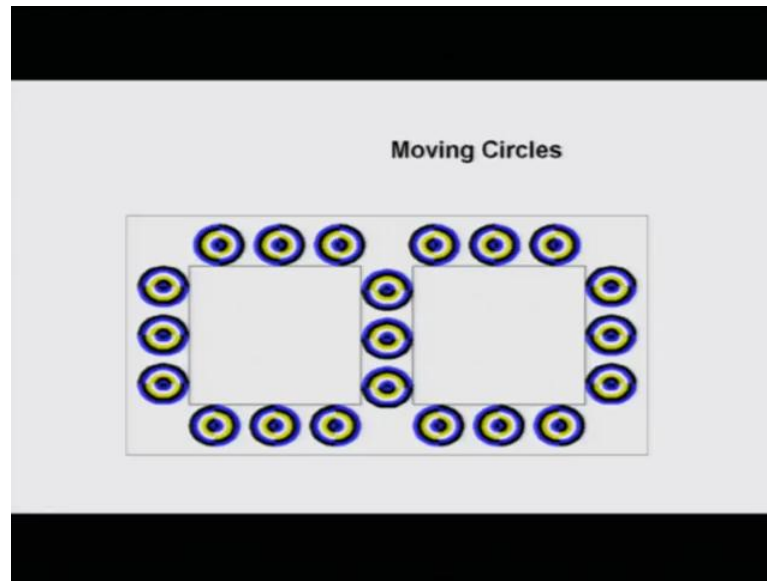
people miss this part in between and then another lady here. So, like first time when you see you mean me, so many things or you may see one thing and then missed the other things. So, this is what we say as the error which is happening because of your perception.

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Do you see a rabbit or a duck and now that you are trained maybe you see both rabbit as well as the duck. So, if you see the rabbit it is like this sight. So, its tail is there, its eyes. So, if you see the duck this becomes its wing and then this becomes its tail. So, you like some of you may be seeing the rabbit first, some of you may be seeing the duck first.

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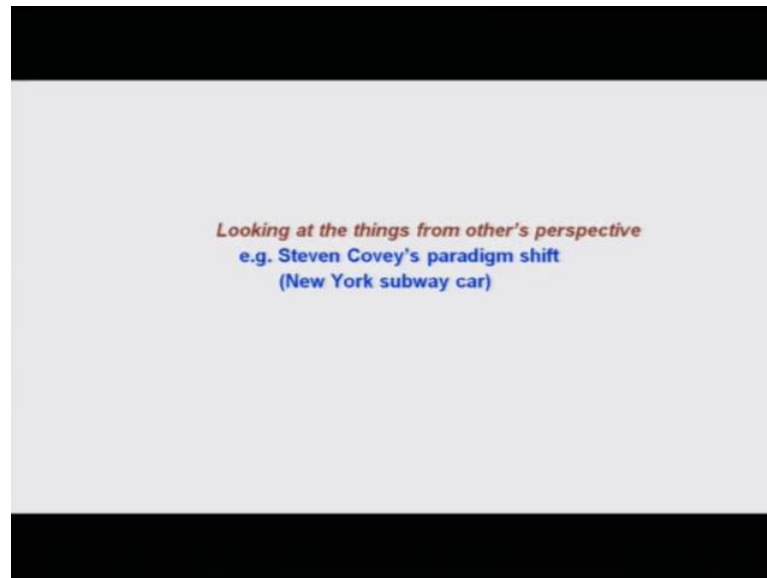
Maybe this may not be very clear in the video, but then the point I want to make it is if you started it for a long time you will get a feeling that the circles are moving and we know wherever that is just an illusion because they are just stationary and they are not actually moving.

Now, when you see clearly that what you see is not what is true then you need to understand that when you interact with people, you also have to keep this in mind that you see something which is not all the time true or which may not be showing you reality in its correct profile, you are all told that 4 blind men maintained looked at an elephant. In fact, they are looking is actually touching the elephant. So, one person touching the elephants leg and said that its looks like a pillar. So, the other person put his hand on the body and then he said that it looks like a wall and so on.

So, the third person put it in the front part and then he said that this is something like tree. Now, each one when they were touching one part of it they were not able to understand the whole part of the elephant and then none of them get the complete picture. When this is the case, this is how sometimes we analyze a situation, we analyze a case and then we look at people we hear something about people and then we hear sometimes even a rumor. We do not want to verify that we do not even want to ask the people, but we form our own prejudice and let that relationship.

Now, in this context people often say that others do not understand me and people do not see how good I am, they always find fault with me. Now these are normal things, but I would like to end this video with another story from Steven Covey and it is another incident that he narrates and this is the incident that he narrates when he happens to travel in this New York subway car.

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He actually tells us why he started writing this book, the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People and what happened and what made him write this book. Now, this we tell in the introduction. So, what happened he talks about the paradigm shift in his thinking that happened when he was traveling in this New York subway car, what is this paradigm shift that is a complete change in your thinking, complete shocking perspective change, complete alteration in your pattern, the mind pattern, the world view, the way you are looking at people.

So, there was a complete change, how did it happen for him let me tell you the story. So, he was in this New York subway car, it was very calm, very peaceful and then people were all quite and they were returning after their busy day busy schedule, some were reading news paper, some were listening to something silently, most of them there quite in a very mode and then some of them were actually sleeping and then nodding their head and at this point, one middle aged man got into the car and then he actually came with three kids, one small boy and then two sisters for him. Now, he came and then he

sat next to covey and then he said and then he was completely lost in his world and then he just let the kids play.

Now, you can imagine the situation it was so calm, so silent, but these children started moving here and there. They started making noise, they started playing, they started playing hide and seek, they went and hit somewhere, somebody's news paper, they started pulling. So, they made so much noise and then everybody felt annoyed and then this is such a car and night time and nobody expected that these children will come and then spoil their sleep, spoil their peace and then they were, so annoyed and they were not understanding why this man was keeping quite even Steven Covey, the author was also anoint, he thought that he will shout at the children, but it is the person who is sitting whose children. So, he thought that first he should ask this father to shout at the children.

Now, before he wanted to ask the father or before he wanted to shout at the man angrily for not doing anything to the children, for not understanding this people were so annoyed he just wanted to know for one minute why he was keeping quite because it was for a minute he thought that it look. So, unusual that that this guy is just keeping quiet and then all this, all his kids are making so much noise and causing lot of trouble and disturbance and why is he looking loss somewhere and so unconcerned about what is happening, when Covey just gently disturbed him and asked him would you mind stopping the children from making noise and then why is he just keeping quite he said, Yes, I would and since he asked why is he keeping quiet and what is he thinking about?

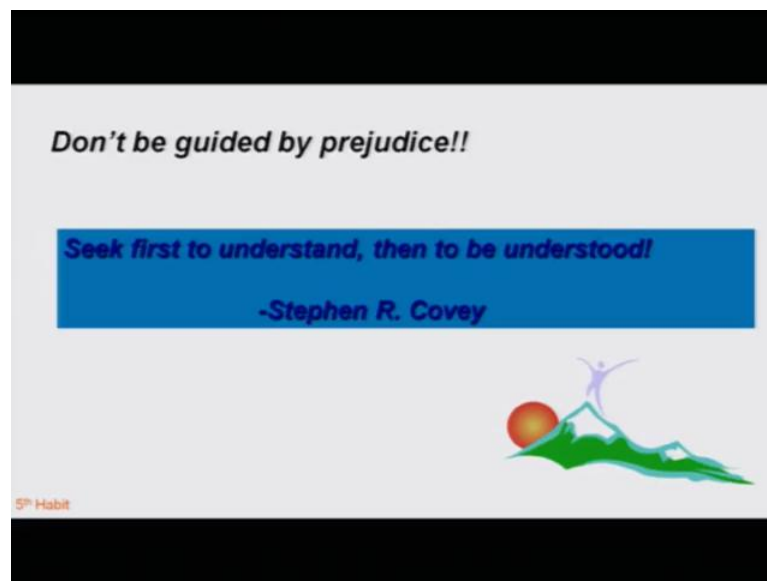
He said that since you asked I do not mind telling you actually we are returning from the hospital in which I was reported that their mother was admitted after she met with an accident and we went when she actually passed away. So, we are just coming from the funeral ground we have just worried her and then the children were so affectionate with her and I loved her so much and then she loved us all and she has completely take in care of my children and I had no idea as how much love and care she was giving for them I was so busy with my business.

But, today they always wanted to go way this car and I never allowed them and just for a change of mind I brought them inside the car, I just allowed them to freak around, do whatever they wanted and I was just completely lost because I do not know as soon as we reach home how we are going to fill the emptiness and what this children are going to

do? How am I going to handle these kids? Now, this was the thinking that is in my mind, that is preoccupying me and I am sorry I did not know that they are annoying you and when he was about to stop the kids, Steven Covey told him not to do that and then he realized what happened to him one minute before he was so angry with this man.

So, annoyed with the children and just when the man narrated this incident that his wife died in a car accident and then they went and then buried her and then they are coming back and she was so young, so carrying and then they are missing her, so much what makes Steven Covey change from anger to such comparison and emotion. So, then he realized that it was empathy, it was his feeling for the other person that made him realize that it is good that he asked him and then he understood about this person. So, he makes the next roll.

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That is the fifth habit he says, do not be guided by prejudice, seek first to understand, then to be understood, instead of saying people do not understand me, I do not know what guise having in his mind, you just try to understand if you are a father try to understand your son, if you are a son try to understand your father, between friends try to understand each other between teacher and student try to understand each other, husband and wife understand each other, neighboring community, different religious community try to understand each other, try to empathize, try to be compassionate empathy is actually feeling in to put yourself in to the other, shows of the person when the husband

comes late from the office, the wife just opens with such anger because the husband actually promised that he would take her out for shopping or for a movie and then he came so late.

Now, she just start shouting at him without realizing that he met with an accident and then he had to be taken to the hospital for first aid and then in her anger, she did not see all these things that there was some bandage in his hand and all that and later after all anger subsided she saw what happened.

Now, everywhere this situation is possible that before you went out your emotions, if only you care to find out from the other person what made that other person behave that way in rather and abnormal way there is always an answer and if you seek to find that answer. So, there is no question in your mind as why you should behave in very uncontrolled emotional manner. Now, that is his golden rule which is that seek first to understand and then to be understood. So, keep this in mind it is going to give you a very important challenge in your emotional way of dealing with people, but try to practice this habit cultivate this habit.

Next time when you know that somebody is behaving in rather a very abnormal manner in terms of emotions. So, you just try to find out instead of going and shouted at or instead of reacting just try to seek first, why the person is behaving in that manner and when the person is not willing to tell you create an environment, show that you are sympathetic, show that you are empathetic, show that you are compassionate and then make the person comfortable with you make the person share his or her happiness as well as hurt feelings something that is bothering something that is worrying this person find out and if the person can share that with you, then you will know that you have no reason to cheat, scold, abuse the other person emotionally.

So, remember seek first to understand and then to be a understood with this thought, I conclude this one with a reminder that in case you have not watched Steve Job's video, go and watch that and then it is worth buying this book, Steven Covey's 'Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' two habits I covered because they are fundamental in nurturing you in developing you, in terms of personality and making. You develop the soft skills, the first point was discussed in the previous one that you begin with the end in mind and

the second one that I have discussed here actually in its sequence, it is the fifth habit that you need to develop empathy, and you need to feel to the other person before you react.

So, with this note, thank you for watching this video, we will meet again in the next video.