

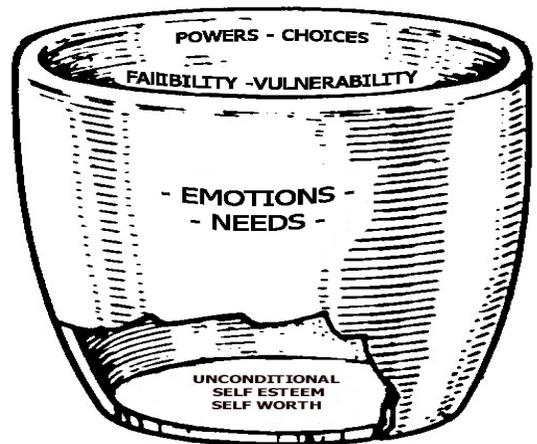
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PREFACE

The Magic of the Crucible

What is the Crucible?
The Crucible is a space for transformational change so you can actualize your highest and best. It is a wonderful hypnotic space you create within your mind for generative change. It is a model for unlearning (as well as learning) and for a deep personal encounter with yourself.



The Crucible is not a real place in the outside world; it is a real place in the inside world of your mind—if you create it there. This book is your personal invitation to create a powerful place in your mind — a place where the magic of transformation can happen. This book is my invitation to you to create a place where you can facilitate change that will occur easily, naturally, and organically. With this process you can invent a place where you can break through your old defenses and foolishness, even your old B.S. that has undermined your genius and glory for all these years. Would you like to do that?

The Crucible, as an incredible hypnotic induction, is designed for your authenticity. It is designed as a change place for you to actualize your highest values and visions in your best performances. Are you ready for ecstasy? Are you ready to fall in love with life, with the adventure of discovery and growth? Are you ready for the vitality of being fully alive/fully human? If so, buy this book, read it, absorb it, use it to be coached to your next-level of development. If not, put it down immediately and run as fast as you can! If not, this book will be dangerous to your “peace of mind.”

The metaphor of a Crucible, as used here as a picture of change and transformation, arises from two sources—industry and artists. In both cases, a crucible is used to melt down iron ore and other elements which can then be poured into molds that give the metal new form and strength. The crucible is the holding space for all of this transformation of molten materials.

Who is *The Crucible* for?

As a book on self-actualization, *The Crucible* is a book of processes that trainers, coaches, leaders, managers, parents, and anyone else can use. If you want to facilitate *the self-actualizing process* and enable yourself and others to unleash latent potentials—this book is

for you. Yet it is more than just processes for development. As a place for self-actualizing transformation, the Crucible enables you to create and enter a sacred space that protects and honors human possibilities and transcendence.

In this book you will learn the process for how to create a Crucible space for yourself and for another. To illustrate this, I have provided numerous case studies of those who have entered the Crucible for a metamorphosis of old habits, limiting beliefs, and sabotaging understandings. In this pages I will also tell the story of how this process developed the Crucible as a pattern and a model.

Where is the book *The Crucible* Positioned?

The Crucible is the seventh book in the *Meta-Coaching* book series. As such it presents the second change model of Meta-Coaching. You'll learn all about this in chapter two where I'll explain the Crucible as a change model and compare it to *The Axes of Change Model* that is fully described in *Meta-Coaching Volume I*.

This is also the fourth book in the series on Self-Actualization and Self-Actualization Psychology which is the psychology for the emergent field of Coaching. Why? Because unlike therapy, Coaching works primarily with people who are psychologically healthy and who are ready to get on with the highest challenges in the adventure of life.

Where did the Idea and Elements of *The Crucible* come from?

It came from the developers of the first Human Potential Movement (HPM) of the 1960s. I found almost all of the pieces for the construction of the Crucible in the writings of Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Rollo May, Robert Assagioli and other leaders of the first Human Potential Movement. They had an intuitive sense that people would self-actualize if they had a *personal "encounter" with the truth of their life experiences and the truth of their own meaning-making*. Via that encounter a person becomes real and authentic which then empowers them to translate what is potential into actuality. In other words, I didn't invent this from scratch, I found it and put it together in the form that follows.

Why was that Inadequate?

Now several of these original thinkers of the HPM did put together many of the Crucible pieces. But they did not put enough of them together. Now some of them thought they did! Some of them even argued that what they put together was fully sufficient to facilitate self-actualization. It was not. For example, Carl Rogers presented his now famous three-fold recommendation of the qualities that he considered "necessary and sufficient for healing and self-actualizing." He thought unconditional positive regard, accurate empathy, and personal congruency or authenticity were enough. And he was close, very close, and yet there were still a few things missing from that formulation. I'll describe this more fully in chapter 10 on "Truth."

Did the Leaders of the first HPM Discover the Secret?

Well, yes, they discovered many of the secrets! Yet not one of them put all of the elements together. They knew that there had to be an intense, focused, and life-changing *encounter* and they worked to create it, but the kind of “encounter” prevalent among the people of that first movement was not adequate for the consistent unleashing of potentials.

And why not? Primarily because the Encounter Groups at those early years were too brutal, confrontative, too rough, and too threatening, and so evoked as much fear and defensiveness as it did hope and transformative vision. It was an undependable process. So those Encounter Groups eventually faded away. And the primary reason for that was singular—*there wasn't sufficient safety in the encounter*. There wasn't sufficient reduction of the danger and so the basic human defense mechanisms were never sufficiently calmed.

Standing on their Shoulders, What has been Learned?

Today we know something that they didn't know, namely, that the releasing of potentials doesn't have to be rough or explicitly confrontative. We don't have to “get in someone's face” and “break through their defenses” to enable the self-actualization process. Unleashing can occur much more subtly, often by simply the uncovering processes (processes that enable us to uncover that's hidden within).

This is one of the best discoveries of *The Crucible Model* that you will experience in this book. You can now create a space that allows yourself and others to relax defenses, posturing, and hiding behind personas. You can create a space that enables a person to let go of all of the barriers to authenticity because there's no need to personalize the threats. And by eliminating the tendency to personalize, you eliminate the need to defend yourself—as if it needed defending.

While the first human potential movement was on the right track, they didn't quite get the self-actualization formula right. But now, these many decades later, we are able to see things they didn't. This has nothing to do with a superior intellect or skill. We see further than they did because we stand on their shoulders. Today we have learned from their insights and contributions as well as mistakes and mis-applications. Here I have made the discoveries explicit and then extended them in new ways.

Is it Possible to Create a Safe, Loving Encounter?

Yes! *The Crucible Model* enables you to have an encounter with truth, with the truths you need to face, and the truths that will set you free to be yourself fully and authentically. The Crucible creates the safety so that you can do that without personalizing and without feeling threatened. *And* here's another fascinating discovery—you can even do this with yourself.

Then, once you enter the center sanctum of the Crucible, you not only face the truth,

but you find value in it through “the continual freshness of appreciation” that characterizes self-actualizing people. And that, in turn, then enables you to take full ownership and responsibility of your insights, realizations, and discoveries thereby altering your character forever.

By iterating that process you will then move up the levels of authenticity, the levels of truth, and the levels of appreciation and responsibility. Then suddenly, unexpectedly, surprisingly you’ll experience a “peak experience.” Ah, the peak experience! That’s when love and joy breaks in to surprise you. And these emotions serve as signs and indicators that you have entered into the zone of self-actualization and that you are transcending yourself.

What do you mean *The Crucible* is Hypnotic?

Ah yes, hypnotic, hypnosis, trance, the inner world, the magic of representation and meaning and frames! The boy potential mysteriously said to Neo in the movie, *The Matrix*, “There is no spoon...” So also *there is no Crucible*. There are only your constructed images and memories and imaginations and feelings and beliefs and intentions and hopes and dreams that come together to create a place for transformative change—in your mind, in your heart. “Think not that it is the spoon that moves; it is rather you who moves.”

Hypnosis!/? Yes and no. As it is inside you, and as it is created by you, you have to *transition* from the outside state of sights, sounds, and sensations to your inside state of sights, sounds, and sensations. And it is that inside state that we call *trance* since you transitioned there and when you are there, you seem to be gone, lost, not present to the outside world. So centuries ago, people called that “sleep” or hypnosis. But you are not really asleep, you are just *inside*—fully awake to your possibilities!

And being inside—*fully awake to yourself and your highest objectives*—you are now free and empowered to build up a resource within so that you can adapt, change, unlearn, and actualize your highest and best potentials.

What Else is in *The Crucible*?

You will find that each chapter ends with an invitation for some *Crucible Coaching*. Would you like that? I hope so. If I were with you in person and had the opportunity to encourage you to integrate and implement what you just read, I would coach you to your next-level step of self-actualizing. Since I’m not there in person, I have provided some *Crucible Coaching* to complete each chapter.

If you want to really take advantage of that, get a notebook and title it, *My Transformational Life*. Then as you complete each chapter, use the coaching paragraphs to apply and implement what you’ve learned so that it becomes actualized performance in your life. This will raise the value of the book to giving you a three-thousand dollar value for your money.

I've included in this book many *Self-Actualizing Patterns*, especially in the Elements of the Crucible chapters. From the field of Neuro-Semantics, now you can build up your hypnotic transformational breakthrough space by using these processes for actualizing your ability to change with graceful power.

I'm delighted to send forth this book about this incredibly powerful and gentle process under the provocative title— *The Crucible*. My hope is that this will empower coaches, consultants, trainers, leaders, and everybody who works with people to facilitate the unleashing of human potentials in hundreds of thousands. I trust that this will enable people everywhere to find their own authenticity and live their integrity congruently. I hope also that many will use *the Crucible process* for creating new metamorphosis for themselves transforming old structures of beliefs, habits, decisions, understandings, etc. into new empowering and enlivening ones.

So with that in mind, here's to your transformative changes that will make you feel incredibly more alive, more human, and more able to live your potentials!

L. Michael Hall, Ph.D.
Colorado, 2010

The Crucible

Preface

L. Michael Hall