



The Paradigm Shifter

Jinnie English helps people change their thinking – and themselves.

Photography by Jessica DeMuro

Have you ever believed something to be true, then later changed your mind? If so, you had a paradigm shift, which is simply the habit behind how we reason. A paradigm is commonly known as the lens through which we see the world.

A paradigm is often unconscious and colored by our beliefs, values and more importantly, our experiences. Since our paradigms are often unconscious and difficult to access, it's not easy to become aware of what we're doing incorrectly. How does this apply to you? Well, it means that in order to make small changes in behavior or thinking, we have to first become aware of the negative habits that control what we want to change. Then, different habits to replace the old ones need to be developed. For those individuals who have been successful in changing their thinking and behavior, chances are they worked with a seasoned clinician over a period of time; chances are, they worked with someone like Jinnie English.

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Jinnie English, a psychotherapist in Chicago, is the CEO of Chicago's High Achievers. Her company has made its mark among corporate executives, entrepreneurs and their families by helping these individuals change the way they see the world by transforming how they see themselves in it.

A graduate of the University of Chicago and Ph.D candidate at the Institute for Clinical Social Work, Jinnie has received some of the best clinical training in the country. With nearly 20 years of clinical experience working with depression, anxiety, survivors of abuse and trauma, power and control, and women and minority

issues, Jinnie has an in-depth of understanding fundamental to the work she does with her clients.

Jinnie is a Jewish, bi-racial, Korean and African-American native Chicagoan, who grew up in Englewood with her parents and two younger sisters in the late '70s. She began her career as a traditional social worker in Pennsylvania with President Clinton's inaugural Service Corp program in 1992 – now AmeriCorps. Working in education, child welfare, family counseling, talent development and employee relations, Jinnie's experiences are as diverse as she is. Charting a course to become a clinical director in a social service agency, her plans changed after beginning her private practice in 1999.

A few years into private practice, Jinnie noticed that many clients worked in environments that stifled thinking and with people who had low levels of self-awareness. She began to do training that emphasized and integrated dynamic critical thinking, self-awareness and self-correction, which led to her company's most popular product – business think tanks.

Chicago's High Achievers expanded its reach by going international this year. Now, the professional development programs are provided by International High Achievers, while the personal development services continue to be provided locally by Chicago's High Achievers. While Jinnie is excited about the direction of her company, she admits, "It's hard on two fronts: selling and shifting. I mean, how do you sell therapy? You don't tell someone they need it, that's for sure!" She continues, "Selling our services is truly an art. Then, on top of that, you have to do

the work of creating change within each client. It's hard and takes time."

The Paradigm

So, what is the paradigm that over 500 people have experienced and worked with Jinnie on shifting? "History doesn't repeat itself, people repeat history," she observes. "All past experiences impact the outcome and quality of our future experiences. If you want proof, just look at how people continue to have the same things happen to them – both good and bad. If the same thing continues to happen to you, chances are it's something you're doing, because it's statistically impossible for it to be everyone else."

For example, Jinnie explains, if you find you often lose the support of your peers in different environments, chances are you're doing something that causes people to lose faith in you. The opposite is also true: if you engage people easily and maintain healthy relationships, then chances are you're doing something that causes people to embrace you.

How it Works

In order to change a paradigm you have to revisit those significant experiences that helped shape the paradigm, then re-evaluate their meanings. For example, an individual who's very critical of others may believe that being critical is the best way to motivate someone because growing up, their parents were critical of them and they associated being critical with love. The challenge is determining what events or experiences were significant to the individual, because often it's the least thought about experience that shapes the way we see and experience the world, explains Jinnie, who works with clients to reflect and re-evaluate various parts of their life. "When working with individuals on making effective change, technique alone is insufficient," she advises. "It's important that the therapist acquires advanced training, supervision and lots of experience."

Effectiveness

Jinnie's success rate is an impressive 80 percent, which means that percentage of clients report having improvement in self-awareness and/or self-correction. "I try to meet people where they are and go from there. I'm truly curious about my clients and care about their success," Jinnie reflects. "I like them and they trust me – that makes it easier for us to work together." ■

What Will Recovery Take?

Money Matters by Kay Kamin



Six months ago, Money Matters wrote a column about deflation. It ended optimistically by saying: "If government efforts to stimulate the economy prove successful, perhaps we can avoid a long drawn out, Japanese-type deflation." So, what's happening?

"Glimmers" and "Shoots" Although the recession drags on and we continue to lose jobs, deflation seems to be easing. President Obama now talks about "glimmers of hope" while other government leaders, including Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke and Treasury Secretary Tim Geitner, say "green shoots" are appearing. These "glimmers" and "shoots" consist of narrowing credit spreads, growing consumer confidence and a reviving stock market. Such upbeat signs are causing financial planners to think post-recovery. And they are thinking inflation!

Inflation vs. Deflation Inflation is the opposite of deflation. Inflation is an upward movement in average price levels; deflation is a downward one. When inflation hits, costs go up, the real value of money declines (each dollar buys fewer goods and services), demand outstrips supply and people begin hoarding goods. Often inflation is described as "too many dollars chasing too few goods" and here's why.

Too Many vs. Too Few The "too many" dollars are the result of government efforts to stimulate the economy. Our government has put the pedal to the metal with fiscal, credit and recapitalization stimuli and housing, mortgage, bank and corpor-

ate bailouts. Massive government spending grows our money supply. Some oversimplify by saying the government is "printing money." This isn't exactly right, but the net result is the same: excessive liquidity and too many dollars. The "too few goods" result from company efforts to survive a recession, including production cutbacks, inventory reductions and job eliminations. It takes time for companies to rev up again during a recovery, causing demand to outstrip supply. This fuels inflation. Now experts are beginning to debate when, not if, we'll get inflation. For example, Roger Ibbotson, a highly respected business professor and founder of Ibbotson Associates, has been quoted as saying, "Between the bailouts and the stimulus, it's pretty clear we're going to have some inflation when we get out of this mess. It may not show up for another two years, but after that I think it's quite likely."

Reflation Hopes An economy moves from deflation to inflation through a process called reflation. Reflation is caused by increasing credit availability and upping the money supply. Reflation, however, is a tricky process. Too little reflation, and the economy stays mired in recession; too much reflation, and up pops inflation. Ideally, the reflation process would end in price stability (i.e., when there is price equilibrium between supply and demand). But as Chairman Bernanke has explained, ideal recoveries are difficult to engineer. To do so, the Federal Reserve would have to intervene at just the right moment and raise interest rates just the right amount. In past recoveries, the Fed has tended to wait too long, or act too soon, or raise interest too high, and inflation has ensued. What we hope for this time (and "we" includes Chairman Bernanke) is that the reflation process will result in only mild inflation in the range of 2-3 percent, and not "excessive" or "hyper" inflation in the 4 percent-plus range. So a future question to discuss should be: how much inflation will the recovery bring? n

Kay Kamin is an attorney and Certified Financial Planner. She welcomes your financial questions – email her at KH-Kamin@aol.com, and you may see your question addressed in a future article.