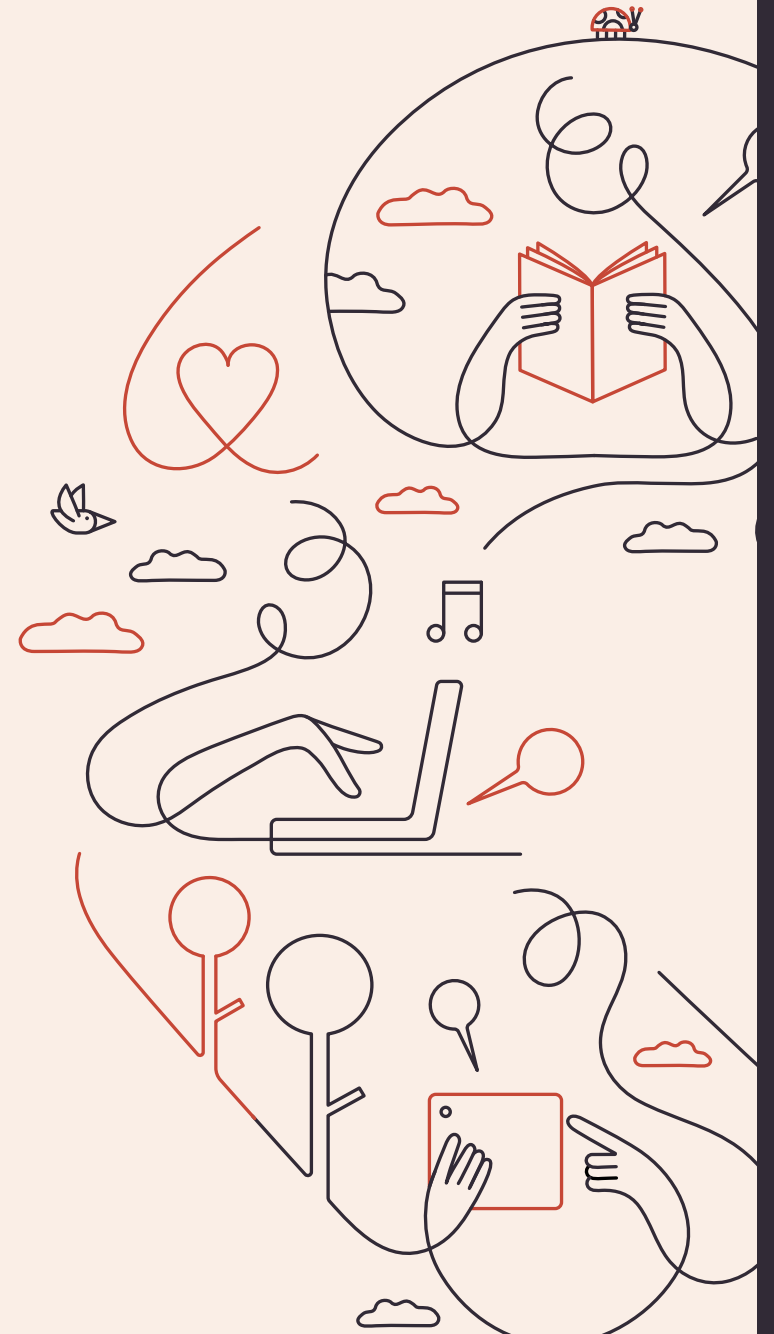


How to know yourself: Three steps



Getting to know yourself is a lifelong adventure, one of the uncharted journeys we all travel.

What if someone or something could help you along that journey? What if you could come to see yourself as others see you? And what if you could refine and deepen those insights about yourself and make practical improvements? In other words, what would it be to know yourself better than you do now? What becomes possible for you and those around you?

Think about how you act when you have nothing to win or lose; about how you act when nobody is looking; and about how you justify what you do: that is your character. And your character is not fixed, it changes over time depending on what you encounter in life. We all grow through experience if we meet life honestly and courageously; that is how character is built.

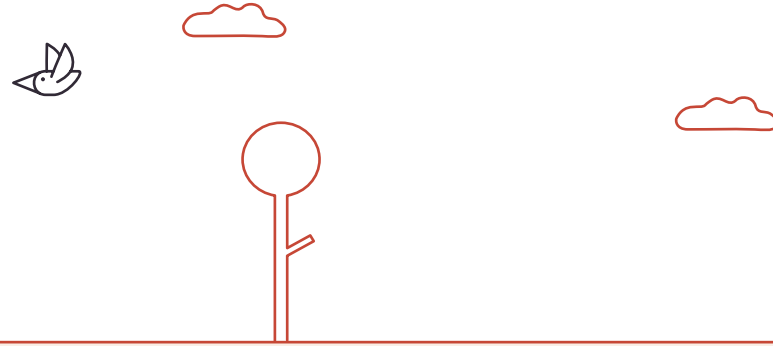
The three steps that follow are the Heartstyles framework for thinking about character and shaping how we can develop it: informing ourselves about our character, revealing our character to ourselves, and then transforming our character for the better. If we get this right, we will be up to the task of living appropriately, not for gain or achievement, but for order and tranquillity in how we live.

The benefits of this simple three-step process of character development are many: better relationships and collaboration with others, readiness for anything that comes our way, consistency and ease in how we treat others, and a more relaxed relationship with ourselves. This has an impact on our lives at home, on the family, with friends, and at work and play. The Greek philosopher, Aristotle, ascribed good character to those who used their knowledge of human flourishing to judge situations accurately, and then acted effectively to produce good results. Those good results are waiting for us along the journey as we inform ourselves, and reveal and transform our character for the better.

1**2****3**

1

Inform



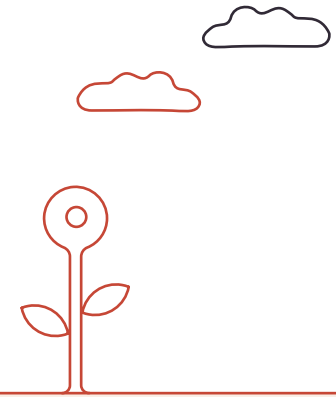
The first step on this journey is to gather information about our own best intentions and deepest values.

We cannot examine or change what we are not aware of. And we need information presented to us and an invitation to reveal elements of our character in order to raise our awareness. Heartstyles is a set of Indicators which in the first instance can give us information about our behaviour, making us aware of its elements; only then, with this information, can we understand and then change our character. But to say this is not to say that Heartstyles measures character. It measures perception of behaviour and others perception of behaviour setting out sixteen distinct categories or styles of behaviour that we can use to develop or transform our own character.



2

Reveal



The second step is to reveal our character to ourselves.

If we succeed in revealing to ourselves how our own view of the world and our place in it are formed, we can change or alter them. Character is the result of many choices over time. Over time, we become what we habitually do.

The more we appreciate why we make the choices we do, and understand how those choices affect others and ourselves, the better able we are to change them.

Our character is the sum of our best intentions and deepest values. No one would like to end up with baser intentions and shallower values; and, although there may be traumas for all of us along the way that challenge us, we can connect with our intentions and our values more often once we have become aware of them.



3

Transform

The third step is to transform our character.

We can use our new information and our revelation about our character to select effective behaviours that differ from the ineffective ones we may have tried before. Developing character does not necessarily mean our creating better intentions or more noble values. It means accessing those things more often. The transformation this can bring about in us is remarkable; yet it is something that requires practice, patience, and renewed and regular self-awareness.

After all, our intentions and values tend to be broadly similar. For example, while we universally value humility and love, and the inner and outer benefits they bring, not one of us is always driven by them. Instead, we are often driven by our reaction to those things we cannot control; and it is here, in the exercise of how we choose to react, that character emerges and growth can take place.



Information, then revelation, then transformation...



All three are vital in character growth. Our character determines our behaviour and our relations with the world; yet it also can influence the collective behaviours of those around us, a team, an organisation, or even a society. Our character rests upon our moral orientation and the consistency with which we apply our moral judgement over time. And this can prepare us for anything.

If you're interested in exploring how character development can enhance effective behaviours in your organisation, we'd love to have a conversation with you.

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