Chapter Ten — How Instincts Do Their Work

It is obvious and clear that instincts provide significant levels of guidance to our lives.

Instincts help us set priorities. Instincts help us set goals. Instincts steer us toward some behaviors and instincts steer us away from other behaviors.

That impact is clear. What is not clear is how instincts actually do their work. The tools and the approaches that are used by our instincts to steer our behaviors are not generally understood to be tools used by our instincts.

Instincts each have their sets of goals and behaviors. We tend to we use our intellect to help us figure out in each setting how to be in line with expected instinctive behaviors for that setting. We tend to be guided and influenced heavily by our emotions in that process.

To create their steerage and to achieve their goals, our instincts often trigger, activate, amplify, support, and reinforce specific sets of emotions. Emotions often create very clear functional behavioral steerage levels for our instincts.

Our instincts can make some behaviors feel right, pleasant and good and they can make other behaviors feel wrong and bad.

Our instincts can create happiness, comfort, and a sense of security — and our instincts can create stress, anxiety, anger, sadness, and even sorrow.

Our instincts can activate limerence, lust, and sexual focus for us at very basic and direct levels. They can also trigger both joy and rage when the specific sets of instinct provoking issues and behaviors that give us instinctive reasons for either joy or rage are at play in our lives.

Emotions are key tools for our instincts. Instincts would have relatively little impact on our lives if instincts did not have the ability to use our emotions as key guidance factors and as direct behavior steerage tools.

We can't understand functionally how our instincts steer our thoughts and our behaviors until we recognize how well and how intentionally our instincts activate and channel our emotions in very specific ways to achieve their goals.

Our Instincts Rely On Emotions To Steer Our Behaviors

Our instincts are heavily dependent on our emotions as tools that guide us to specific instinct-aligned behaviors.

The anger we instinctively feel when someone threatens our children or when someone threatens our turf creates emotional energy and mental steerage that causes us to behave in ways that fit the goals and the responses that are embedded in those particular instincts.

The rage we feel on those situations both guides our thoughts and behaviors in the moment of rage and it also gives us a set of intellectual priorities that we use to structure our lives and our settings in ways that will help us not have to be enraged in the future.

Stress is also a key tool for our instincts that affects both immediate behavior and longer-range responses and thought processes. Any time we feel stress, there is a good chance that some aspect of our lives is out of alignment with an instinctive behavior.

The stress we feel when our hierarchy doesn't have a captain — or when we are surrounded by people we perceive to be Them — or the stress we can feel when we believe our children are beyond the immediate level of our direct protection and when our children might be at some level of personal threat or risk — are all levels of instinct-triggered discomfort that steer us toward behaviors that will keep those problems and those specific situations from occurring again for us at future points in our lives.

As we figure out — through our various personal and collective experiences — which behaviors increase our levels of instinct-triggered stress in our lives, we are more likely to make behavioral decisions that enable us to change those trigger points and avoid those behaviors. We tend to avoid the specific stress provoking set of activities once we know what those activities are.

We are much more likely in the future to choose to do various stress-reducing and stress avoiding behaviors when we discern and sense which activities, situations, or settings trigger and aggravate the instinctive stress.

People who are feeling underlying levels of stress in any setting can sometimes get rid of the stress by figuring out that it has an instinctive origin and then dealing with that instinctive origin directly in a useful way that situationally deactivates that specific trigger for stress.

Both Pleasure and Stress Can Have Instinctive Triggers

At the other end of the guidance continuum from stress — the instinctive sense of pleasure and joy that results from nurturing our child or from activating and then successfully using any of our problem solving instincts — or the pleasure and joy that can result from having a reciprocal romantic attachment and a reciprocal romantic relationship — can cause

each of us to behave in ways that facilitate the goals favored by those particular instincts in order for us to continue to feel that sense of pleasure.

The power of instincts to guide us in fairly complex ways has not been fully appreciated by most of us in understanding many of the basic patterns of our own lives.

The guidance we feel from our instincts tends to be invisible to us — both in its role as part of the tool kit for our instincts and in the specific directions that our instincts point us to when our instincts use our various emotions to guide us to various instinct-favored behaviors.

A whole range of behaviors that are instinctively aligned simply feel normal and right to us in our lives — and we generally do not have a clear intellectual and cognitive sense and awareness that those specific behaviors are closely aligned with our basic instincts and that's why those particular behaviors feel both normal and right to us.

Instincts have the ability to choreograph some very specific and complex behaviors. That level of choreography achieved by our instincts seems impossible until we look at the ability of instincts embedded in the brains of other living beings that do amazingly intricate and highly choreographed things entirely based on their instincts.

To appreciate the level and the degree that instincts can choreograph our behavior — and to get a better understanding of the interaction between our own instinctive behaviors and our own intellectual and cognitive thought processes — it can be conceptually beneficial and intellectually useful to look at various ways that instincts actually guide a number of other living beings who also clearly have lives and behaviors that are very directly influenced by their instincts and who also use their intellects to achieve their instinctive goals.

Instincts Create Complex Behaviors

Instincts clearly create some incredibly complex behaviors in other species. Ants, for example, tend to have complex building agendas that are entirely created, sculpted, shaped, and driven by their instincts. Instincts in the tiny brains of ants drive specific multi-level behaviors.

Members of ant colonies interact with one another in clearly choreographed ways that are obviously purely instinctive.

There is no possible way that individual ants or individual ant colonies could ever begin to invent, create, discern, or develop any of those complex and consistent behaviors or any of the array of specific behavioral

sequences and functional consequences for groups of ants without having instincts as their guide and template.

Bees also have amazingly complex sets of instincts that create lovely bee dwellings, highly structured bee interactions, and a series of bee relationships with their environment and with other bees that both protects their hives and helps individual bees bring home enough nourishment to their colony so that their own hive and their own bee family can survive.

The ability and capability of specific sets of biologically engineered instincts to create highly choreographed functionality and detailed activity programs in even microscopic bee minds is unquestioned.

Bees do what bees do with instinct as the obvious, operative, direct, and highly effective guide for what each bee is functionally doing.

For bees, there seems to be relatively little judgment involved in guiding their behaviors. There has to be some judgment of some kind, however, that is involved in the process even for bees — because bees who leave the hive to find food don't simply fly blindly into walls or into the sides of trees.

Bees Discern Environment and Make Choices

Bees discern their environment and bees make choices about how to achieve their instinctive behaviors in the specific context of the environment they experience and discern.

Bees have instinctive behaviors and bees apply them in the context created by their environment and by the context created by the situation each bee is in. Bees who have returned to the hive after gathering pollen, for example, wait their turn to do their food direction mapping dances and there is obviously even some situational judgment involved for each bee in knowing when it is their turn to dance.

But basically, bee instincts interact very closely with the bee environment and all of the relevant bee behaviors that choreograph and structure the life of bees result from that package.

Wolves, on the other hand, clearly use a significantly more blended combination of instinct and intellect to interact with their world. Thinking processes and individual judgments clearly guide some aspects of wolf behaviors to a degree that a wolf is the cover art for this book.

Wolves instinctively form packs. They instinctively mate and produce baby wolves. They instinctively feed, nurture, protect, and functionally educate baby wolves.

Wolves have many highly patterned instinctive behaviors. They make a broad series of situational and circumstantial judgments that all fit into those basic patterns.

Wolves very clearly use judgment as well as their instincts at various points each day in determining both their basic individual activities and their situational group behaviors.

Bee and ant environments tend to be fairly narrow and specific relative to key areas of functionality for each species. Some ants are so specialized that they can only exist in the bark of particular trees.

Ants do not need a high level of intellectual judgment to function in those narrow and specific environments.

Wolves Use More Judgment In Achieving Instincts

Wolves, by contrast, have to have enough intellect to adapt themselves to a wide range of environments — from the arctic to the prairies to rugged mountain ranges where the terrain itself can literally change several times every few miles.

Surviving in all of those settings, environments, and circumstances requires significant situational judgment by the wolves that happen in the

framework created by basic sets of wolf behaviors and the functional wolf activities that are guided solely by wolf instincts.

Wolves make decisions daily about what to hunt, where to sleep, who to fight, and when to do things in a pack that are better done in a pack.

Pack behaviors are — at a basic level — highly instinctive. Pack behaviors obviously have instinct at their core.

Even domestic dogs will sometimes — when they find themselves in a pack-like situation — instinctively function in very pack-like ways that can closely resemble some levels of wolf pack behavior.

For wolves, there are clearly judgments made about their various pack relationships as well as judgments made by individual wolves about whether their most proximate potential prey is too large to attack and whether another creature they might encounter in their world is to be feared, avoided, attacked, or eaten.

Some judgment at a significant number of social functionality and interpersonal political levels is also clearly involved when an aspiring and ambitious young wolf decides whether or not he is ready to challenge the Alpha wolf in a pack in order to win the Alpha role. It clearly takes some

judgment at a highly situational level for a young wolf to decide whether or not to personally attempt to achieve the Alpha status position in his pack.

Wolves have social behaviors that involve both judgment and deliberate mutually supportive interactions with other wolves. Those behaviors all clearly "feel right" to wolves.

Wolves also have very obvious and clear sets of emotions that can be easily recognized. Anger, for example, is an easily recognizable emotion for wolves. Wolves clearly can feel anger and act accordingly.

Wolves very much seem to enjoy their cubs and to enjoy playing with each other as young wolves. Mother wolves who lose cubs seem to mourn their cub's loss. The wolf equivalent of sorrow clearly exists for at least a brief time after a loss by death of a cub or a fellow pack member.

So we obviously can see some patterns for wolves where instincts clearly and directly drive their basic and specific behaviors and we can see situations for wolves where obvious emotions for the wolves encourage, support, and incent their various relevant instinctive behaviors.

We also see many examples where both situational judgment and relatively complex cognitive reactions of some kind clearly influence,

determine, direct, and enhance the actual implementation of those instinctive goals and instinctive behaviors for wolves.

Humans Use Judgment, Knowledge, and Paradigms to Achieve Our Instinctive Behaviors

Human instincts also have some basically choreographed behaviors, but people tend to follow a significantly more complex set of implementation strategies than any other living beings.

In addition to adding situational and circumstantial judgment and a set of basic emotions to the behavioral decisions we make in the context of our own instinct actualization processes, we humans have an overarching set of basic intellectual and cognitive functionalities and thought processes that cause us to create cultures, develop paradigms, and build the societal structures and the belief systems that we use to implement and achieve our basic instinctive goals and our universal behaviors.

Our instincts clearly set the underlying pathway and the basic objectives for many of our behaviors — like protecting our child, defending our turf, or decorating our nest.

Then we add on to those basic instinctive pathways important layers of context and guidance from our belief systems and from our cultures.

The guidance we each get from our belief systems tell us the acceptable and effective ways for us to actually collectively and individually function and behave relative to various relevant issues that exist in the exact situation and the specific setting and the array of relevant circumstances we are each actually in as we each make our decisions.

Our instincts work with that mixture of intellectual, perceptual, and cultural factors to cause us to behave in ways that can allow each of us to achieve the directions and the goals that are set for each of us in each setting by our instincts.

Our Instincts, Cultures, Paradigms, And Judgment Function As A Package

So when we look at how instincts influence our lives, it is clear that our instincts have a set of basic tools — assisted by several very specific emotions — that our instincts use to influence and guide us and it is clear that those tools work well to guide us a very high percentage of the time.

Those instinct triggered emotional guides work particularly well to guide us when we don't know that the emotions we are feeling are being used by our instincts as tools and when we simply have a "sense" that what

we are doing feels right and that what we are doing is the normal and natural thing for us to do at that point in time.

That is a very effective basic tool kit. Our emotions and our instincts function well and often as a package. Our instincts are armed with a very effective set of emotional prods, prompts, penalties, and rewards that are each activated by our specific behaviors in the context of our situationally relevant instincts.

Some of the tools used by our instincts are chemical in nature. Multiple studies have documented a range of behaviors, for example, that trigger pleasurable oxytocin releases in our brain to serve as a direct neurochemical reward.

Maternal instincts, science has shown, clearly use an oxytocin reward system as a reinforcement mechanism for mothers relative to certain maternal behaviors. Oxytocin is a narcotic-like chemical that creates a feeling of maternal pleasure. It is a very effective reward chemical.

That same overall package of maternal instincts has other areas and other components where the specific behaviors by mothers can create negative levels of neurological anxiety. Some behaviors can trigger a sense of stress and even guilt for the instinct-guided mothers.

Behaviors That "Feel Right" Tend to Be Instinctively Aligned

The working set of instinct reinforcing and instinct triggered emotions is complex and extensive.

The emotional triggers used by our instincts include anger, rage, stress, anxiety, sorrow, grief, affection, emotional comfort, lust, limerence, happiness, and a core-level sense that a particular behavior either "feels right" or "feels wrong."

That point about the impact of a specific behavior "feeling right" has been made several times in this book. "Feeling right" is a very powerful motivator. It is a tool that our instincts use often and well.

Whenever a behavior "feels right" at a very basic level, there is a good chance that the specific behavior that triggers that feeling is synchronized and aligned to a very significant degree with one of our basic instinct programs.

Both positive and negative behaviors can "feel right." Doing damage to a "Them" feels right to too many people because our most negative us/them instincts can include a choreographing sense that we should, in fact, do negative things to "Them."

Helping an "us" get needed access to food or to shelter can feel very right as well. That sense of "feeling right" can usually be triggered in what are fairly predictable ways for each set of behaviors once we understand the behavior patterns that are triggered by our instincts.

Stress Is Used By Multiple Instincts To Influence Behaviors

As noted earlier, stress is one of the most effective tools that can cause each of us to respond to the guidance of our instincts. We can feel both individual and collective stress, for example, when we don't have a hierarchy in place in a setting where we feel the need for a hierarchy to exist.

We can also feel stress when we do have a hierarchy in place but when the Alpha position for the hierarchy is vacant.

Teams that lose their coach can create a sense of very direct Alpha vacancy stress for both team members and team fans. Companies that lose their CEO can feel rudderless, defenseless, and vulnerable — and internal morale can suffer in both organizations and communities to the point where performance and morale suffers — when there is no leader in place.

Tribes with no chief, gangs with no leader, and countries who lose their Chief of State all feel instinctive and collective stress until a new leader is named and is in place.

We have learned in our intellect driven thought processes to respond in a proactive way to avoid ever feeling that particular stress of not having a key leader in place in any setting both intellectually and functionally by creating cultures and formal processes for leadership succession that directly minimize the likelihood that we will ever feel that stress in any relevant setting.

We are intelligent beings and we tend to find stress unpleasant. So we plan ahead and we take intelligence-based proactive steps to reduce that level of leadership vacancy stress in multiple ways.

We create guidelines, rules, and processes for leadership succession in almost all settings that allow us to avoid having that leadership vacancy stress happen. We create succession rules with great consistency and we use them with great regularity for exactly that reason.

The stress of a leader vacancy can continue until the people in a setting perceive that the Alpha position has been filled. That perception that the position has once again been filled is important for the succession process.

If the people in a hierarchy don't have the feeling that their Alpha role has been legitimately filled, stress levels in that setting can continue.

That's one of the reasons why so many cultures create very visible and formal ceremonies for the naming and the installation of a new alpha leader. Coronations, inaugurations, and appointment and anointment ceremonies and rituals are all worldwide behavior patterns. Those public Alpha designation celebratory ceremonies can help end the stress for each settings of not having a leader in place.

In any case, organizational stress can be situationally triggered when any given organization feels un-led.

Stress Is Also Created When We Are Surrounded By "Them"

Stress can also be generated when people don't have a sense of being surrounded by "Us." That is another very important impact to recognize and understand.

Anytime a person is in a setting where everyone around them is some category of "Them," our instinct-guided stress responses often engage and we tend to feel uncomfortable, anxious, and generically unhappy.

That level of stress that is triggered when we are surrounded by "Them" can create unpleasant feelings. The sad truth is that our stress-triggering instinctive reactions to "Them" have actually served people well for a very long time. That set of reactions to being surrounded by "Them"

continues to protect people in very real ways in a wide range of settings today.

Today, in major portions of the world, anyone who is surrounded by "Them" can still literally be at risk of their life in that situation. People in Kenya, Pakistan, Syria, Iraq, Chechnya, The Sudan, and The Congo are literally being killed today for finding themselves in settings where the people around them are functioning as "Them."

People in The Congo last year were being killed or having their limbs amputated by machetes for simply speaking with a different tribal dialect than the people who had the machetes.

We have a very long history of people in many settings doing bad things to "Them" and of also having "Them" do bad things to "Us" — and that history clearly extends into behaviors that are happening in the world today in far too many settings.

So feeling a level of purely instinctive stress when we see that we are surrounded by people we perceive not to be "us" is actually a very useful instinctive survival tool and we should be grateful that we trigger those feelings in those situations because those feelings can help us survive in too many very real settings.

Integration Causes Us To Be Often Surrounded By "Them"

A major problem for many of us who are in integrated situations in our increasingly diverse society, however, is that many people in our country find ourselves constantly in circumstances and settings where we personally are a minority in that setting and in that situation.

That experience of being a situational minority in a setting can happen at work, at school, on the streets, and in our various transportation facilities. It can happen routinely, and it can be expected — or it can surprise us and alarm us when it happens unexpectedly.

It can be very disconcerting for any of us if we unexpectedly discover we are situationally an "us" among "them."

In each case — expected or unexpected — when that status of being a situational minority happens, our stress instincts that result from being a situational "them" can be triggered — and that can create an emotional context for us as individuals that often isn't positive or pleasant for us at any level.

People In Work Settings Surrounded By "Them" Can Feel Stress

When we understand that our instincts use stress as a tool, then we can understand why — in our various work settings or school settings a person who is constantly surrounded by people who are not "us" feel a constant and overarching low-level or even moderate level sense of stress.

Even in those situations where there is no actual risk of any kind at any level, our core instincts do not know absolutely at a fully reliable level that a total absence of personal risk is actually true for that situation. So our stress instinct tends to be activated in those situations. It is a very consistent and often relatively unpleasant instinct.

As a result of situational minority stress instincts being activated for any of us in any setting, the perceived potential for situational risk becomes a concern that is consistently lurking in our subconscious mind during those situations and in those settings.

Being the only white person in a room full of black people or the only black person in a room full of white people — or the only woman in a room full of men — all can trigger that sense of isolation stress and a feeling of basic discomfort, incipient anxiety, and innate caution.

Being the only gay person in what is perceived to be a room full of straight people — or being the only straight person in a room full of gay

people — can also trigger that same sense of separation, otherness, situational isolation, and basic intergroup stress.

The truth is, anytime we find ourselves situationally to be in an us/them minority situation, we can feel those levels of stress, and those feelings are often unpleasant.

Our instincts clearly use that sense of stress to guide our behaviors. The key guidance we receive from our instincts for that set of issues is to avoid that situation in the future.

We Can Learn To Deactivate Situational Minority Stress Levels

Avoidance is sometimes impossible. Sometimes circumstances make being a situational minority a functional reality — and those circumstances can be beyond our control.

There is a useful way of learning how to deal with that instinctive sense of stress when those circumstances happen. We can actually each learn to reduce that feeling for ourselves significantly when we feel it being activated when we know that stress is a tool used by our instincts to influence our behaviors.

We can each individually override that particular source of stress significantly when we begin to recognize in a setting that the stress is just an instinct triggered emotion and when we realize intellectually that the stress we feel is not evidence of real and functional risk for us in that situation.

When we intellectually recognize that the stress we feel is not functionally a real indicator of actual risk for us existing in that situation or setting we can usually allow that knowledge to defuse most or all of the stress.

In most cases, in the world we live in our own country, there is no actual risk to us in those situational minority settings. If there is not an intellectually perceived actual functional risk to us of any kind in that setting, it's actually possible in that setting to reduce the subconscious perception of risk that we feel significantly.

Situational Minority Stress Can Put Us On Full Innuendo Alert

It can be a good thing to do that stress reduction thinking deliberately in many situations where we are a situational minority. Life can be less stressful when that unpleasant instinct is situationally defused in those times

and settings where that level of risk is instinctively perceived but where we know intellectually there is actually no real risk.

For the people who do have those instincts situationally activated, a meeting that feels like a wonderful participative process for most of the participants in the room can feel like an emotionally draining and directly unpleasant experience for anyone in the group who is a situational minority.

The meeting can feel very unpleasant and stressful for anyone who did not perceive that specific group setting and that group meeting to be a gathering and collection of "us."

We can choose to overcome, manage, and even eliminate some of those stress feelings when we understand how instinct triggered they are. That is one of the reasons why we need to understand the emotional tools that our instincts use to guide our behavior.

When we understand those emotional tools, we can intellectually decide whether to allow them to have their full impact on us.

Mob instincts also can be deactivated by recognizing them for what they are and then choosing not to have them guide our emotions and behaviors. Knowledge about the mob instinct process and their related

emotions and thought processes can give us significant power over our mob instincts.

Intergroup rage can be deactivated when we realize that our rage was activated by perceiving the other group at an instinctive level to be "them."

Knowledge truly is power relative to those feelings.

Some Instincts Trigger Guilt — At A Purely Instinctive Level

Our instincts do use our emotions to influence our behavior.

We need to recognize the fact that, a mother who puts her child in day care so the mother can be employed and so the mother can have a job to earn a living for her family can be doing a very good thing for herself and doing a very good thing for her child and family in every respect — but that experience of putting a child in some kind of daycare can still generate instinct-linked stress, sorrow, and even guilt for the mother.

That sense of guilt can be purely instinctively triggered for the mother simply because the basic instincts of the mother can situationally trigger those emotions when the mother is separated from her child.

The guilt that can be felt by the mother in that setting isn't functionally the guilt that would result from the mother actually doing something or anything that is actually bad or negative for the child. The guilt

felt by the mother in that situation is purely an instinctive reaction to separation — a behavior modification tool that is used by our own powerful parenting instinct package to modify our behavior as parents in favor of always being with our children.

Overall, looking at the total situation, the child in daycare can clearly benefit in multiple ways both from the mother's job and from the daycare setting. There is no functional or objective reason for the guilt felt by the mother.

The guilt felt by the mother in that situation is purely instinctive. The guilt is not a legitimate judgment factor in any way that objectively evaluates maternal behavior for that situation based on any actual damage being done to the child.

But that instinct can still trigger a very powerful instinctive emotion and that triggered emotion can create significant stress, unhappiness, and guilt for the mother.

Knowledge is power. As with the situational minority stress instinct, understanding the source of that particular stress can be very useful in helping the stress-triggered person deal with it — even setting those feelings

aside entirely when the source of the stress and the triggered sense of purely instinctive guilt is fully understood.

Our Traitor Instincts Can Also Be Mitigated When We Understood Them

Likewise, as Chapter Two pointed out, the guilt we can each feel when our Traitor instincts are being activated by us being creating a relationship and interacting in a positive way with someone from another group can be managed and situationally eliminated from our emotions when we know that the feeling of guilt is being wrongly triggered by interpersonal interaction situations where we are not actually and functionally doing anything in that interaction that is any way actually traitorous or damaging to our own "us."

As noted in other chapters of this book — and in both *Peace In Our Time* and *The Art of InterGroup Peace* — we have very strong instincts never to be traitors. Cultures everywhere detest, revile, and generally punish traitors. Traitors are exiled or executed.

So learning to control that set of instincts that make us feel like traitors when we befriend people from other groups can be extremely useful

for us relative to creating the kinds and levels of new relationships we actually need to support intergroup understanding.

The emotions triggered by that set of instincts also include stress, unhappiness, anxiety, guilt, anger, and even, in some cases, fear at several levels — because we can sometimes fear the reprisal that could result for us from other members of our own "us" if they believe that we are being been a traitor to our "us" in some way.

We also very much instinctively seek the approval of our peers. Peer approval generates a set of powerful reinforcing emotions. We seek, want, and sometimes almost crave peer approval. There are powerful instinctive emotions that clearly guide our behaviors

Not being accepted by our peers or any acts of exclusions by our peers can generate a sense of rejection that is its own powerful sculptor for our individual and collective behaviors.

Our instincts clearly use our emotional desire and our need for peer approval as a major tool for getting us to align with our cultures in ways that help our cultures do their job of achieving our instincts.

That feeling of peer rejection and our desire for peer approval are both very powerful tools that our instincts use to get us to act in ways that are aligned with instinctive patterns of us-based group-aligned behaviors.

Personal Relationships Can Support InterGroup Trust

Those sets of instincts can divide us — or we can use them in ways that bring us together. When we understand the emotional appeal of being an "us," we can use that appeal to create a broader and more inclusive sense of us that extends beneficial behaviors to a broader set of people.

When we understand that entire package of behaviors, we can and should use the good feelings generated by a sense of "us" to help create layers and levels of intergroup trust that cause good and supportive behaviors for people and groups of people to "feel right."

Intergroup friendships can add entirely new and very rich levels of interaction and positive instinctive reinforcement to peoples' lives. We tend to dehumanize and even depersonalize one another in our usual intergroup paradigms and intergroup perceptions and we can feel stress in our 1-to-1 relationships with people from other groups.

When people come to appreciate and even celebrate each other's values, culture, and heritage, then we can very intentionally learn to see

more people as people and not just perceive people to be impersonal symbols of another group and triggers for entirely negative packages of behaviors and emotions.

The emotions that guide us into instinctive behaviors can be activated in favor of inclusive behaviors when we make those inclusive behaviors our cultural and intellectual expectations — in ways that trigger the emotional benefits of being with "us."

Success in our various intergroup and interpersonal settings and in those interactions can occur at a higher level when we can say — "He is my friend and he is black," instead of saying "He is my black friend."

Having a black friend — or a white friend — or a Hispanic friend — are all good. Very good, in fact.

It's Better To Have A Friend Who Is Black Than It Is To Have A Black Friend

But having a friend who is Hispanic or having a friend who is Black or having a friend who is White is even better than having a Hispanic, Black, or White friend.

To have the emotions that influence us relative to our basic behaviors work in favor of Peace, we need to build actual friendships that extend at a

personal and very real level between real people that trigger the emotional benefits of being “us” with those people. We need people to reach out to make friends with other people and to interact with other people. We need to have our instincts trigger emotions and thought processes that bind us to other people in positive and reinforcing ways in order to create the kind of interaction that will support and perpetuate Peace.

Instincts Use Emotions To Reward and Penalize Us

Our instincts guide us every day in multiple ways by using a wide range of tools that affect our moods and our emotions. We need to recognize the fact that some behaviors give us a sense of contentment and pleasure.

Some instinctive behaviors trigger happiness and joy. Other behaviors trigger anger, stress, fear, unhappiness, anxiety, and sorrow.

Each and all of those emotions can be created by instinctive triggers. We need to use our intellects and our rational thought processes to help us determine which instinctive behaviors we will use in our lives and we need to make decisions to act in ways that will help us overcome our most negative, formidable, and damaging instinctive emotions and behaviors.

We need to rise above our pure negative instinctive triggers to make conscious choices about how we will run our lives and then we need to

generate positive instinct triggers that will allow us to feel that those behaviors are, in fact, right for us to do.

We need to create a context where doing the right thing feels instinctively like the right thing to do.

That approach is, at its essence, the core of The Art of Intergroup Peace strategy and tool kit.

We Need To Trigger Alignment

There are actually half a dozen instinct-linked strategic triggers that we can use very intentionally in a wide range of settings to bring people together and to get people to function in an aligned way as a group — rather than just functioning as individuals. Those basic alignment triggers are important to understand because we do need to create alignment for people in a wide variety of settings.

The six alignment triggers can each be used to persuade people to band together and they can be used to get people to function as a group for at least a period of time relevant to each trigger.

We need to use that set of triggers to cause aligned behaviors to feel instinctively right. Those alignment triggers are explained in more detail in

the books, *The Art of Intergroup Peace* and *Peace In Our Time*, and they are also the topic of the next chapter of this book.