

MIRROR, MIRROR...

Did you ever notice how some people tend to look like their pets? Or how people from the same family tend to have similar mannerisms? I have two kids, a 7-year-old girl and a 3-year-old boy. If I'm just listening to them, I have a hard time telling them apart. The younger one has learned so much from his older sister that their speech, attitudes and behaviors are almost identical. Of course, that is to be expected. This is exactly how kids learn - by copying a more advanced model.

So, what does all this have to do with business, investing and success? As it turns out, kids aren't the only ones that learn this way. Adults learn through modeling, too. Recent research has identified brain cells whose only function is to help us copy what we are exposed to. These cells are called “*mirror neurons*.” This is why you can be having a great day, feeling happy and confident and then you run into that person (friend, coworker, family member) that sucks the joy right out of your bones by their very presence. The next thing you know, you are feeling negative and complaining also. Congratulations! The *mirror neurons* in your brain are working perfectly. And that is the problem. Like most things about us, this mirroring process is working **ALL** the time, even when we are not looking or don't necessarily want it to. This is why Robert Kiyosaki tells you to look at the six people you spend the most time with and recognize that you are looking at your future. Others have also said that your income/net worth tends to be within 20% of the average of people who you spend the most time with.

So, this process is extremely powerful - especially for “negative” emotions like fear, anxiety, depression and self-doubt. We can fight these negative influences in our lives, but it takes a lot of energy to keep the “dogs at bay.” Unfortunately, it also takes more effort to have our *mirror neurons* work for us in a positive direction. My team and I see this phenomenon all the time as we work with people on Mastery and Peak Performance. Someone reads a book and has an insight or makes a decision to change their life. They feel extremely motivated. But without consistent support once back in their old environment, they tend to slip back into their default behaviors, attitudes and programming (seem familiar to anyone?).

But it's not all bad news. Actually, it is really good news. You know another principle of how we, as humans, work and you can use it to move yourself forward. **So here are the action steps:**

1. Notice who you are currently around and consciously decide if that is where you want to be now and in the future. You may not want to “fire” all of your friends and family, but you can be aware of any negative energy and attitudes and then limit your exposure to them.
2. Seek out positive role models and spend time around them. This is extremely important because remember the “negatives” tend to be more influential. So, choose the most powerful role models you can find. This can be live and in the form of books, audios and videos.

Get consistent, positive support. Remember, success is a process, not an event. Small changes done consistently help you reach your goals and hone your abilities for future opportunities. Build a team of like-minded people and use professionals such as Success Psychologists and Performance Coaches.

This approach is exactly what I do to move ahead myself. I am very mindful of who I spend my time with and the influences I am exposed to. I consciously choose to be around and listen to people who are where I want to be or at least moving in the same direction. For example, this will be the third year I have attended Fast Track's Super Business Conference. Every year, I soak up as much of the presenters' essence as I can and then bring this influence back to my family and my team. My team and I also support each other in our personal and professional quest for Mastery (it's written right in our CODE OF HONOR) and we work with professionals of our own so that we can be at our best.

No one is immune to the powerful effects of *mirror neurons*, so instead of having them work at random (or against you,) follow these simple steps and harness their power to “Synergize Your Success.” END