

MEET THE PLAYERS – SQ IN ACTION

What do fencing, tae kwon do and wrestling have in common? Two sparring partners determined to take each other down. There can only be one winner.

We see it in the workplace when two people compete for attention or reward. It is easy to spot as the battle usually gets bigger until someone has to bow out. What is harder to spot is the *internal* sparring that goes on inside us, almost daily.

Meet The Players: Who are the competing partners? The ego and the Wise Advocate.

The Ego: Psychologists of Jungian ilk would claim we have many archetypal sub-personalities that are constantly vying for attention but let's keep it simple. The ego is easily identifiable by the characters it plays; the needy child, the belligerent teenager and the puffed up, defiantly compliant adult all show up at work - no matter our age. The ego's actions are usually driven by fear and deceptive brain messages that have been formed by our interpretation of past experiences and conditioning.

The Wise Advocate: Who is the Wise Advocate? Dr Jeffery Schwartz describes this part of us in his book, 'You Are Not Your Brain - the 4-step solution' as this:

'The aspect of your attentive mind that can see the bigger picture, including your inherent worth, capabilities, and accomplishments.'

He goes on to tell us this Wise Advocate can see the deceptive brain messages for what they are and how destructive they have been for us. The Wise Advocate wants the best for us, loves us, and encourages us to value our true self and make decisions in a rational way based on what is in our overall best interest in the long term.

Who wins? In any inner sparring contest or full-on battle, the Wise Advocate *must* win. And that is not always easy when there is so much to be undone for the ego to find a new level of responsibility and calm. At best we want it to show up as ego-strength. Character and personality are well formed and highly functional in a positive way.

Who loses out through our ignorance and neglect is our Wise Advocate. We search for wisdom and alignment to our values, and desire to live our Truth. These are the callings of the Wise Advocate within each of us. Yet we don't spend time getting to know this great, robust, compassionate part of our true nature.

Introduce the partners What do we do to put the Wise Advocate first in our lives?

Firstly, introduce the ego to the Wise Advocate. See the ego as the needy child or belligerent teenager and let it know that it is now being cared for by this very adult, reliable Wise Advocate. You can create a visualisation for yourself where the young you is met by this inner elder and is reassured by being shown better ways. Think Star Wars' Yoda and Luke....

Secondly, start bringing practices into your day that focus your mind on this potent aspect of itself and let it start to speak. At first it might have a quiet voice but over time it will become

your natural voice. You can use reflective practices like the **Eight Elements** you will find on my website at www.consciousleader.com.au. You must set aside regular five-minute intervals to breathe and focus within. When you feel hijacked by the ego, try taking your attention into your own core and asking the Wise Advocate what you could do better.

Trust your Self Jeff's term for this deep, eternal part of our being is also known as the Self in eastern wisdom teachings. It is the driving intelligent force that links us to the natural laws of life. It is *the* reliable source and we all have it within us, if we just learn to know it and trust it. The best way to do this, at first, is to recognise the moments in your day when you felt this wisdom or saw yourself utilising it in your work. Congratulate yourself. Ultimately, a regular meditation practice will anchor you firmly in it as your go-to place.

Why do it? The results are magnificent. More energy, greater clarity, expanded vision, centred emotions, deeper authentic feeling, easeful connections, and a genuine enthusiasm for life and service. Oh yes, and Love. Worth doing? Every day.

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