

The Anatomy of Trust

The anatomy of trust is central to EQ. The first pillar of emotional intelligence looks at emotional self-awareness. Often, I ask people to reflect on the degree to which they are trusted by others and often they don't know. Part of emotional self-awareness is knowing the impact of your behaviour on others. **Is what I am doing or saying building trust or eroding it?** It is good to be trusted. When people trust you, it will open doors for you. We all need to be trustworthy people just as God is trustworthy. The consequences of mistrust occur where the world has not been reliable. What are some of the consequences of mistrust? Isolation, Paranoia, Violence, Demotivation etc. I would like to be a trusted person and also a trusting person. Let's explore both concepts over the next couple of weeks. What words come to mind when you think of someone who you trust? For many of us it's words like reliable, competent, caring, safe, honest, transparent, direct, etc. These words do not have the same meaning but all result in trust.

3 Types of Trust

We can categorise the words mentioned above into three different groups because there are three major types of trust. As I share these with you, assess yourself and see where you are strong and where you are weak.

1. Functional Trust – I will do what I promised

- **Numbers 23:19** *"God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?"*
- **Psalms 89:34** *"I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered."*
- **Matthew 5:37** *"All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one."*
- **2 Corinthians 1:20** *"For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through him the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God."*

2. Relational Trust – You can feel safe with me

- **Proverbs 3:29** *"Do not plot harm against your neighbour, who lives trustfully near you."*
- **Proverbs 11:13** *"A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret."*
- **Ephesians 4:29** *"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."*
- **Philippians 2:3-4** *"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."*

3. Capability Trust – I am good at what I do

- **Proverbs 22:29** *"Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before officials of low rank."*
- **Colossians 3:23-24** *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."*
- **2 Timothy 2:15** *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."*
- **Exodus 31:3-5** *"I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts." (Ohiliab and Bezalel building the Ark of the Covenant and Tabernacle)*

Reflect on where you are in your trust bank account with people whom you are nurturing a relationship. You have a trust bank account with each of these people because trust is a currency. You don't want to take too many trust withdrawals by letting them down. You definitely don't want to end up in overdraft with these people. For each category of trust ask yourself, scale of 0 to 10, where am I in my trust bank account with them?

Why Trust Breaks Down

1. Failure to deliver on promises

- **Proverbs 25:14** *"Like clouds and wind without rain is one who boasts of gifts never given."*
 - **Ecclesiastes 5:5** *"It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it."*
 - **Matthew 5:37** *"All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one."*
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2. Hidden expectations about what will be achieved

- **James 4:1-2** *"What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God."*
- **1 Corinthians 14:33** *"For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord's people."*

3. Talking negatively outside meetings

- **Proverbs 16:28** *"A perverse person stirs up conflict, and a gossip separates close friends."*
 - **Ephesians 4:29** *"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."*
 - **Proverbs 26:20** *"Without wood a fire goes out; without a gossip a quarrel dies down."*
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4. Cliques and sub-groups

- **1 Corinthians 1:10** *"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought."*
 - **James 2:1** *"My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favouritism."*
 - **Romans 16:17** *"I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them."*
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5. Lack of communication

- **Proverbs 18:13** *"To answer before listening—that is folly and shame."*
- **Proverbs 15:1** *"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."*

- **Colossians 4:6** *"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."*
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6. Not raising problems – rather collecting injustices

- **Matthew 18:15** *"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over."*
- **Ephesians 4:26-27** *"In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."*
- **Hebrews 12:15** *"See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."*

Trust is a choice; you can choose to trust and to be trustworthy. Jesus is very trusting when it comes to us. He believes the best about us.