



WHY EMBRACING THOSE WHO THINK DIFFERENTLY IS THE BEST THING FOR YOU?

“Embrace positivity and empathy as a life and business strategy.”

Since childhood, I have loved tractors, sprayers, and virtually anything that makes noise, moves, and reshapes the environment.

However, I had an edge because, unlike most of the kids, my dad was the Kibbutz’s orchards manager and had a tractor, actually many tractors, at his disposal.

It only made me to love and desire more of anything related to or powered by tractors, including sprayers.

No wonder I grew up admiring and thinking that technological equipment and spraying chemicals are the most outstanding achievements of human kind.

NAPPING ON THE BARE SOIL

Years later, after completing my military service, I returned to my Kibbutz farm to work in the deciduous orchards.

I began by leading the transfer of crop protection from Conventional to Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which in reality turned out to be with more monitoring, yet still with many sprays.

I was dedicated to my duties and literally put all my effort and time into work. This is a gentle way of saying that 20 hours straight working days were not unusual.

If you have never sprayed, you should know that the nighttime is the best for spraying because there is no wind, and humidity is at its highest (best if over 60% RH).

That enabled me to use all 24 hours available in a day efficiently; daytime was dedicated to pests monitoring and taking care of the tractors, sprayers, and other equipment.

And the night time was kept and dedicated to spraying, which means driving a green, red, or white medium size tractor for 8 to 12 hours at 1.5 to 4.3 km/h, with the engine running at 2000 RPM.

The noise, the terribly slow ride, the vibrations from the engine, the gas mask... How can you not fall asleep? So I fight to keep my eyelids open.

I had spent so many nights spraying from sunset to sunrise after a day with no sleep that it became my habit to catch a nap around 4 am.

Not to lose precious time on the hustle around sleeping, I would save time by not going home, not getting to bed, and not getting decent sleep.

Instead, I would stop the tractor at the end of a row, and while the tractor's engine was still running (to keep mixing the chemicals), I would put my legs up on the wheel and stretches back in the seat.

Ten to twenty minutes later, I would open my eyes, step on the clutch pedal, push the gear stick into the second low-slow gear, and continue spraying.

At other times, when I had the urge for more comfort and space, I would step down from the tractor, put my head over my hands' palms, and while the tractor's engine was still running two meters from me, I would get my sweet nap on the bare soil.

That period in my life was rough, but what I learned during those long days and nights helped me to gain valuable knowledge and experience, which eventually changed the course of my life.

MASTER OF SPRAYERS

Still, while pest monitoring, spraying, and improving spraying techniques, not a day passed without me studying, progressing, achieving new professional goals, and mainly changing.

Before too long, I became an expert in spraying, particularly low-volume spray. I began lecturing and teaching other farmers how to improve their pest control by applying better spraying techniques.

Then I began publishing articles on spraying, IPM, and crop protection in the Israeli professional magazine.

Those days I was naive and did not imagine crop protection was possible in any way other than – spraying.

So, I advocated the concept and even wrote to my Kibbutz members' a short article about why there is no problem, safe, and legitimate to use spray for fruit fly control in their home gardens.

TURNING THE PAGE

It took me time to realize how wrong I was.

I then invested 15 years in the academy until I became an expert in fruit flies' meta-population ecology.

Afterward, I founded a company, Biofeed, to develop technologies, protocols, and solutions for zero-spray crop protection methods.

Then I founded Dream Valley, an international initiative to support nations and farmers to grow more and better quality produce, free of sprays (as much as they can), and selling their products to premium markets for premium price.

In this past year, I have been fortunate to lead the IBMA conference, designed to help over 550 million farmers in 175 underdeveloped countries improve their incomes based on novel business models and the values of sustainability, health, and social awareness.

Do I agree today with my crop protection approach in those days? NO! NOT AT ALL!!

Would I do it again today? NO WAY!

On Mon, 3 May 2021, 13:28 Eng. Mwamzali Shiribwa <[redacted]@[redacted].m> wrote:

Nimrod

Your article on (Why you should not do what everybody else does) has embarrassed me a great deal. I am an Agricultural Engineer in Kenya of long standing. I trained in Kenya and UK through my Masters degree. I have since retired from the public service and yet I cannot put a finger on what I have accomplished. Farmers are still as poor as I first met them in the early 1980s. I think I refused to initiate change and stick to it regardless of what my seniors thought of it.

My wife and I have started a program of giving back to society through a primary school I went to in the early 1970s. We have established a Young farmers club to hopefully encourage primary children to consider farming as a way of prosperity.

Keep up the good work you are doing

Regards

Mwamzali Shiribwa

Can anyone not see Mr. Shiribwa's change and not empathize with him after looking through his eyes and understanding his past worldview?

Today I know that without my “spraying period,” without the passion and dedication which led me to be one of the best in the field, I wouldn’t be where I am now.

I owe my life change to the double-edged sword attitude of being 100% sure and confident in executing what I do (in that time, spraying) while simultaneously being 100% sure *"there must be a better way to do it."*

Looking from a distance and through 25 years old Nimrod’s eyes, I realize that Nimrod's life circumstances led him to spray.

I thank young Nimrod for that period, which, no matter how challenging and wrong it was, without it, I wouldn't be who I am and where I am now.

The ability to look at reality through a stranger’s eyes, even if that “stranger” is a past version of you, is powerful.

It enables you to turn the page by understanding, forgiving, accepting, and proceeding to a new clean page. Apply it to yourself, apply it to others.

Empathy enables you to turn the page as often as you wish so you can continue impacting the world your way with tranquility, inner peace, and self-confidence.

Empathy - is the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within their frame of reference, that is, the capacity to place oneself in another's position. Wikipedia

EMPATHY

Empathy is strength; embrace it.

If I can understand and forgive myself, I can further nurture empathy to understand others.

This is when I value and thank for my many life experiences, making it even easier for me to empathize with and understand others in many other positions and activities.

With zero anger, I nurture my empathy to -

The general public - unaware of the dangers of excessive use of agrochemicals.

The Plant Protection and the Extension Service personnel and experts - confident that agriculture cannot survive without pesticide sprays.

The doctors and professors, i.e., experts, in and out of universities - do not envision that anything can be better than sprays.

The national leaders - who listen to their own experts and hence see limited versions of the possible future.

The investors - convinced that investing in Africa's agro sector is "toxic" to their portfolio.

Business people - underestimate ideas that are not theirs or have not been implemented by them.

Farmers - brainwashed into thinking agriculture can't exist without the massive use of chemicals and machinery.

The employees of agrochemical and technology companies - trying to sell "just one more litter/unit of chemical/product."

Traders and exporters in underdeveloped economies - ready to sell anything to break even and stay in the "game," including low-quality produce.

Friends, acquaintances and family members - trying to dissuade me from risking my future in developing "impossible" zero-spray crop protection solutions and then aiming my marketing efforts at underdeveloped economies.

Good people - fighting for a better, safer, healthier, and more sustainable world.

Remove anger and embrace empathy with zero judgment as a tool to change of yourself and others. If you can do this, you can change the world.

THE ATTITUDE OF WINNERS

Wherever I go, whatever I do, I take with me the empathy and zero judgment attitude.

Why?

Because if my goal is to bring CHANGE, I need to act with moderation, respect, and understanding of the other!

When I understand the other, I change, and when I change, I can change the other. Change starts from within.

Here are three examples -

IBMA – The International Conference on Business Models in Agriculture is the most important conference for the future of agriculture and farmers in non-developed economies. Period.

The conference management is young, full of life and energy, aiming to bring an eco-friendly/Green attitude to agriculture.

At some point, voices suggested enabling only "Green" companies to present, excluding the agrochemical companies. However, that would be against our approach of accepting everyone, including those with which we don't agree. Don't forget, by joining the conference; they would also hear us and others.

I hope that, like the IBMA management team, all participants would come with open minds and hearts ready to hear, understand, embrace new ideas and mainly cooperate to bring the long-needed change.

IBMA, with its empathy, helps stakeholders switch from old, inadequate business models to new dedicated ones.

BIOFEED - Biofeed's technological solutions, i.e., the Freedom series products, enables fruit fly management without sprays. However, when farmers ask about spraying, I answer, "*Of course, you can, if we see a need.*"

This kind of response is genuine and helps the farmer feels safer, secure, and more comfortable shifting from sprays to zero-sprays solutions.

Biofeed, with its empathy approach, helps farmers, extension services, and scientists to switch from old, inadequate crop protection technologies, protocols, and methods, into new age improved ones, with less or no sprays and health hazards.

DREAM VALLEY – For ages, the agro sector in non-developed economies has been at a standstill. Those agro economies wish to change but after repeatedly failing with the silver bullet of;

"Technologies and Funds would solve all of our problems," they are left paralyzed, without any clearly visible way and direction to proceed.

History repeatedly proved that regardless of the technology and funds, no one can transform a nation's agro sector without empathy and understanding of the current state, together with the dreams and vision it has for its future.

Get this - Technology and Funds are not a plan, the road, goal, vision, or solution to anything. They are merely TOOLS for those already having a plan, route, purpose, vision, and resolution.

Dream Valley, with its empathy motive and well-designed method based on the Israeli agricultural model, helps nations to transfer their agro sector.

Dream Valley takes those nations from their undesired and unwanted current state into a state of prosperity.

This is accomplished using tailor-made state-of-the-art ecosystems, business models, and technologies, resulting in an improved, brighter future for all involved.

TAKEAWAYS

- **EMPATHY**, understanding, moderation, patience, and acceptance of the other will help you advance your agenda, especially if it matches the overall trend and needs to change.

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**** Mental and Economic Freedom Are Interconnected ****

See you soon,

Nimrod



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P.S.

If you missed it, here is a link to last week's blog, "[Why Do You Do What You Do?](#)"

Links to earlier articles are on the blog of [VALUE CHAIN LINKS](#).

P.P.S.

Please look at the video series, "[The Agricultural Gap](#)." With short videos, mostly 2 to 4 minutes long, I explain the historical roots of the agricultural gap between Africa and Western countries.

I see this video series as "uncompleted," as I am waiting to gain more confidence before completing the chapters with The Solution, as I perceive it.

If you like it, don't forget to **share** it with those who need to see it and **Subscribe**.

***Change Begins With A Decision
That The Existing Reality Is A Choice
And Not A Decree of Fate***