

Self-Growth and Naikan Reflection



**George Dombi, Chemistry
Professor, University of
Rhode Island**



**Cy Leise, Emeritus
Faculty, Bellevue
University**

Description:

Many opportunities to self-change get preempted by evaluative emotional reactions that derail right actions in situations. The practice of reflection can increase awareness of the meaning of past experiences for future enhancement of actions related to the four Process Education (PE) roles of knowing, learning, growing, and self-growth. Naikan is an approach to life designed to enhance the four process education roles by focusing attention on actions while recognizing emotions but keeping them to the side, e.g., when one perceives feedback as negative. A mainstay of Naikan practice is three “universal” questions, here phrased to reflect PE performance and quality of life (QoL) emphasis: (1) Who (or what) helped me to make this performance or decision possible? (2) What did I do to make it easier on those people or things who helped me? (3) What problems did I cause to people or things who helped me do the performance or make a quality-of-life decision? The contention of the facilitators is that Naikan practice using the three questions for specific situations for each of the four PE roles can result in more “objective” information about reactions by highlighting positive actions from the moment. Depending on the number of participants, breakout groups will be asked to examine their own performance or experience examples of situations involving just one the four roles. The session will end with the spokespersons from each breakout sharing main insights about the value of the Naikan structure for interpersonal and affective insights that increase openness to self-growth and the journey toward one’s ideal self.

Outcomes:

1. Explain why neuroscience supports both PE and Naikan reflection.
2. Use the three universal Naikan questions as a guide for reflection on the four roles of knower, learner, grower, and self-grower.
3. Report insights about the value of the Naikan mindset for expanding consciousness of personal opportunities for self-growth.

Session Preparation

Skim the following resource to become familiar with the three Naikan questions
<https://positivepsychology.com/naikan-therapy/>

Critical Thinking Questions:

1. How does a personalized focus enhance consciousness of factors important for each role?
2. Why is it important to assess both introspective and social aspects of growth experiences?
3. Why is self-growth a capability dependent on getting relationships right?