CAUSALITY GUIDE

"What we expect, tends to happen"

Thinking through what it means to Swim with the Current leads us to the very bounds of curiosity about the actual source for why and how things happen. In other words, this question is really about causality.

What we're pinpointing here has less to do with a philosophical, existential debate as much as it does something concrete. Getting to the heart of causality puts into perspective what we can and cannot control in our individual lives.

There's a certain comfort in trying to control and make sense of whatever comes our way. In some cases, control is an illusion. In others, control is imposed upon us. One challenge with defining causality is that certain aspects about "cause and effect" are indisputable while others can vary based on an individual's belief system, which we addressed with our Belief System Assessor.

For example, some hold the belief that, "things happen for a reason." However, the impression with that expression is to associate it with something unexplainable, which more often tends to be a positive event. Do you think it makes sense to chalk things up to some sort of serendipity, shrug your shoulders and just go about your days? That's certainly the easy option.

There's a chart in the book, *Z-isms: Insights to Live By*, called the Causes of Occurrences, subtitled "How things happen." Its purpose is to offer some food for thought and remain self-contained, which is to say that it is entirely based on the author's own viewpoint as opposed to being sourced from external research.

As illustrated below, the chart has three columns: the left called "Source Causes," the middle being "Positive/Neutral Impact" and the right column labeled "Negative Impact."

It then categorizes five causes for how things happen to us, listed in the left column as follows: randomly, unintentionally, intentionally, magnetically and/or externally, which is specific to when someone else does something directly or indirectly to us.

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Something completely **random** can impact us either positively, negatively, neutrally or in some combination.

When we look at a cause being **unintentional**, it refers to something that was within our control or ability to prevent. However, the outcome either occurred in the absence of any action or as an alternative consequence. To put it bluntly, something unintentional in the negative column could have used a Problem Preventor.

Causes of Occurrences
(How Things Happen)

Source Cause	Positive/Neutral	Negative
Random Unavoidable	Fortunate Happenstance	Unfortunate Tragic
Unintentional	Passively Unplanned Inadvertent	Preventable Unnecessary
Intentional	Incremental Achievement Effortful Inevitability [ones' *why*]	Self-defeating Self-destructive
Magnetic (Law of Attraction)	Mindful Gratefulness Optimistic Expectations	Unmindfully Arbitrary Pessimistic Expectations
External Influence	Purposeful Kindness Ripple Effect	Manipulation (Spiders) Ripple Effect

Intentional causes are straightforward. On the positive side of our life experiences, we apply conscious thought, actions and willpower to accomplish something. It can be anything from simple, everyday tasks to fulfilling bigger goals through effortful achievement.

Things that occur **magnetically** refer to certain aspects of quantum physics, specifically related to the Law of Attraction, which is an expansive topic that we'll explore in the next Module. There we'll discuss the alignment of thoughts, emotions, words and expectations best summarized by the notion that, "What we expect, tends to happen."

There's a cross-section here - whereby positive outcomes result from intentionally harnessing gratitude versus an individual who experiences the unintentional, negative consequences of lacking mindfulness. Here's where we need to reemphasize the influence of perception and our expectations with how optimism and pessimism apply to the very same set of circumstances and tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies.

As described, the final category involves events that are caused **externally** by others that may or may not be within our control to prevent or mitigate. When someone's actions affect us unintentionally, they cause a somewhat random ripple effect that can impact us positively or negatively.

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However, more significant for our purposes is when others' actions are intentional and personally directed. Here's where a positive occurrence is the result of another person's love, support and kindness. In contrast are the negative consequences caused by other's actions. As explored, this results from intentional manipulation by Spidery individuals.

Respectfully, this chart does not incorporate any aspects of religious beliefs in a higher power as a source cause – mainly because these vary by individual interpretations.

As much as we can try to dissect why and how things happen - to get at the source from where the current flows - we have to leave some flexibility about causality for any number of combinations of these factors.

In instances when you are the source cause, which is to say you are the external influence that impacts others, just be mindful of the responsibility we all share to manage interpersonal energy with mutual respect. And, if – in fact – that has some connection to Karma, just remember that – as the saying goes - what comes around … goes around.

That said, the main point to reinforce is that whenever you experience that feeling of swimming upstream, find your flow and Swim with the Current!

This topic is critical to our quality of life. It cannot be overstated how this reference to the flow has a certain palpable energy, often more than others. The main reason for emphasizing this relates to Managing Energy and how the flow and experience of "being in the zone" are a constant. This differs from other topics we have and will explore that may be more situational and circumstantial.

The current is always there but may only be more noticeable when it strengthens in either direction. Some people are never conscious of it. Others may only experience it in random flashes. Those who practice mindfulness have their own interpretations. At the very least, this offers another data point to consider when making important decisions and the accuracy of your intuition. Ultimately, the degree to which that's true is a factor of self-trust, respect and belief.

Just to reiterate one last time, when it truly feels like your arms are getting tired or your head hurts from banging it against a wall about something or someone, take a pause. Recalibrate your compass and change course toward wherever you find the current flows.

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