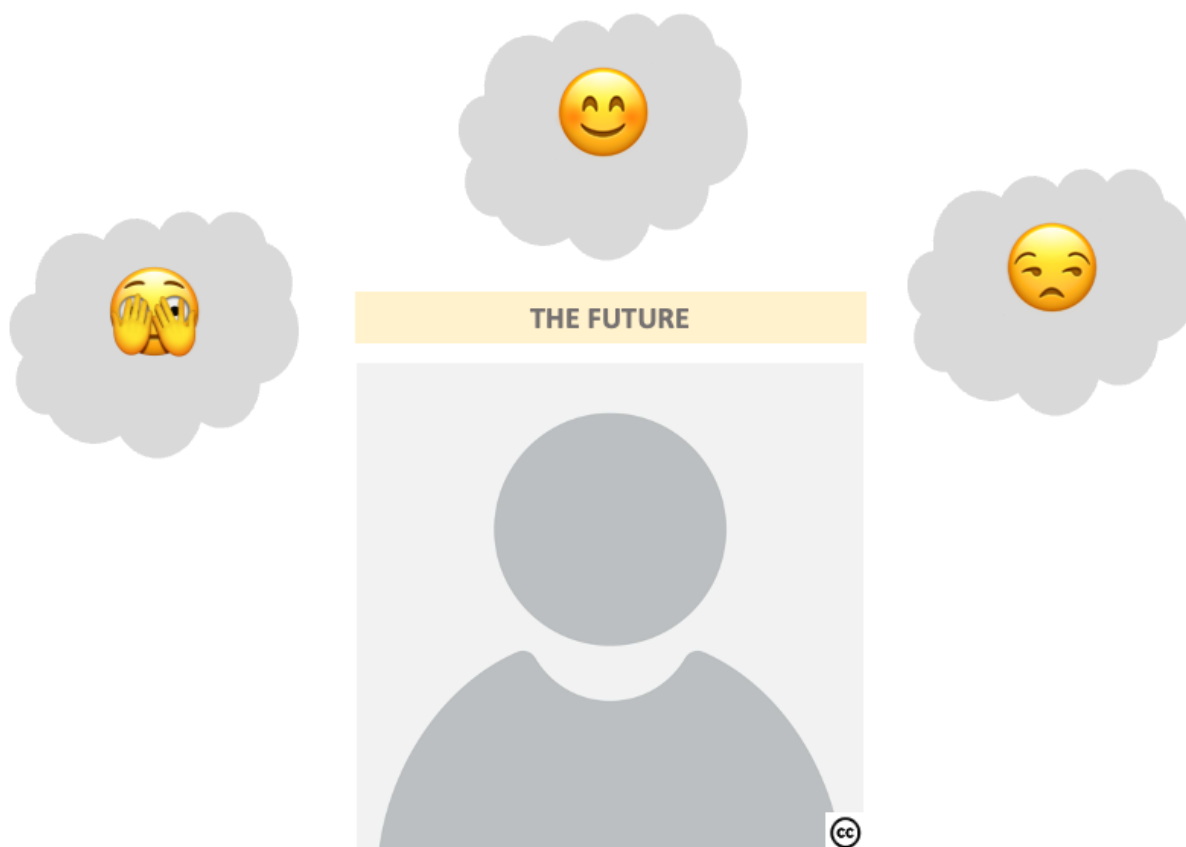


HPCG High-Performance Coaching
Newsletter #28, Ralf Wolter



Dear Reader,



Better than good resolutions for the new year

Did you make good resolutions for 2023? And did you implement any of them by now? Here is a theme that can guide you through the year - optimism! Unreliable, keep dreaming I hear some already saying. Here is the scientific background:

Society's optimism is declining rapidly. While 43 percent of Germans were still confident about the future in mid-2021, this figure has now fallen to just 25 percent by the end of 2022. In other words, three quarters of those surveyed believe that the world will not get better in the future, but worse.

This expectation is quite contrary to global development trends. Data on the platform "Our World in Data," operated by the University of Oxford, makes the discrepancy between reality and public perception particularly clear. Just take a little self-test right now: do you think the proportion of people living in extreme poverty is a) increasing b) stagnating or c) decreasing?

The correct answer is c), poverty has been declining almost continuously for the last 200 years. In the last 20 years alone, the number has nearly halved. Whereas 94 percent lived in extreme poverty in 1820, today the figure is only around 9 percent. But hardly anyone notices this impressive development. If you answered a) or b), you're in good company. 52 percent of people believe global poverty is rising. 28 percent believe it will stay the same. Only 20 percent think poverty is falling. Global figures for declining infant mortality, rising literacy rates and historically high immunization rates reveal similar positive trends.

The unrealistic pessimism expressed by the survey results is not only sad, but also dangerous. This is because any assumptions, whether wrong or right, shapes our individual view of the world and therefore also our expectations of the future. Expectations, in turn, often do not remain a theoretical construct, but develop their own effect because they influence action. Cognitive neuroscientist Tali Sharot explains that expectations and predictions are to some extent subject to the psychological concept of self-fulfilling prophecies. The simple belief that a positive outcome is possible fills us with confidence. Consequently, we are more motivated, and we put in more effort to achieve our goal. This extra effort naturally increases the likelihood of actually achieving the goal. A simple but very powerful concept.

This means, how we view the world and what expectations we derive from our view has consequences. The current world political situation may undoubtedly be difficult, and you may also be facing significant challenges in your personal or professional life. The key is to focus on constructive approaches to solutions. Because that reveals agency, a crucial psychological factor to replace fear with confidence.

I'd like you to identify three things in your personal or professional life that might seem (almost) impossible. Question your own beliefs: is this really impossible? Or could there be a solution? The human mind is built to find solutions. As long as you are determined about where you want to go, you will find a way.

Have a nice weekend! And if you need to work during the weekend, make sure that it is fulfilling.

Best regards,

Ralf Wolter

HPCG® Founder, Coach and Consultant

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