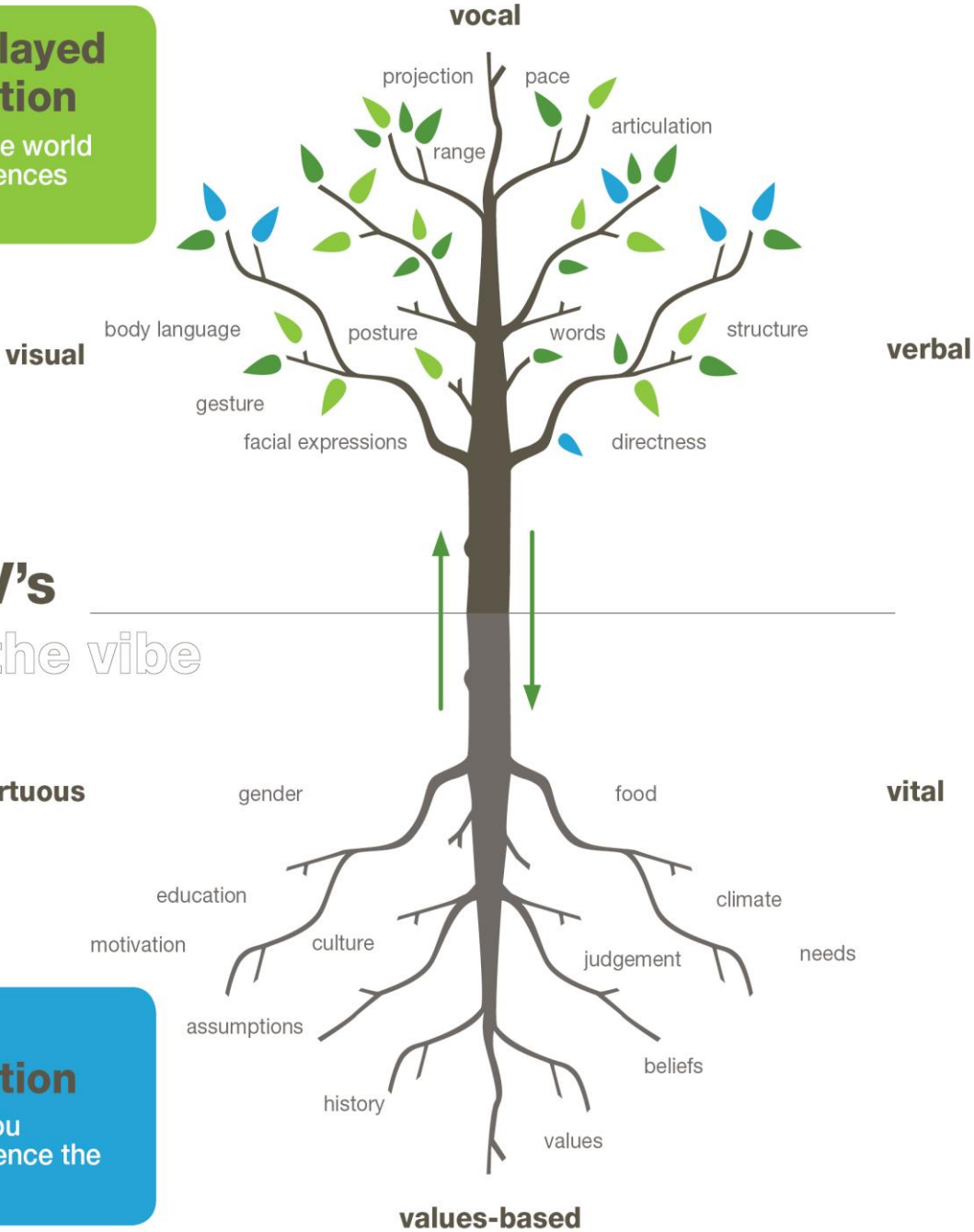


the  
**REDgum**  
model

**displayed  
emotion**

how the world  
experiences  
you



**felt  
emotion**

how you  
experience the  
world

# the REDgum model

*A tree needs both healthy roots and healthy foliage to survive – they each play an equally important role in the sustainability of a tree's life.*

As a metaphor for communications, the tree works well. That which we see, hear, touch, taste and smell – leaves, flowers, bark, foliage - is our external communications. It's the way we use our voices and bodies and faces to message the people around us. The way the world experiences us, if you like. Our internal messaging is signified by the tree's roots hidden within the earth. They include our felt emotions, processed history, sense of identity and values. Together they are the way we experience the world. The relationship between our internal and externalised communications is symbiotic, just like the REDgum's interdependent flow between roots and foliage.

## above the soil

When you look at a tree, all you see is the trunk and branches and foliage. You hear the wind whistling in the leaves. You might smell its blossom or feel the texture of its bark.

That's how you experience the tree. Similarly, the world experiences you through your Visual, Vocal and Verbal communications.

This creates your displayed emotional context, and *how the world experiences you.*

**visual**  
seen

How you look,  
Your body language,  
What you are wearing,  
Your facial expressions

**vocal**  
heard

The tone, pace at which  
you speak, range of  
pitch, articulation and  
volume of your voice

**verbal**  
said

The words you use  
and how  
they are arranged

All these external messages are interpreted by those who hear and see you. The gestures you use, your facial expressions and the volume in your voice might be judged as aggressive, or confident; perhaps nervous or trustworthy...or not. And mostly we're unaware of what these messages are that we're sending. Becoming aware through self-observation and practice enables you to be more deliberate in what you share of yourself through your visual, vocal and verbal messaging.

## virtuous

What's intrinsically good about you and what you represent?

## values based

What do you put before all else in your decision making?

## vital

What are you most passionate about?

## below the soil

Even though you can't see it, if you dig up a tree you'll find a root system that's as big as the foliage. There's more to trees than meets the eye, just like there is with people!

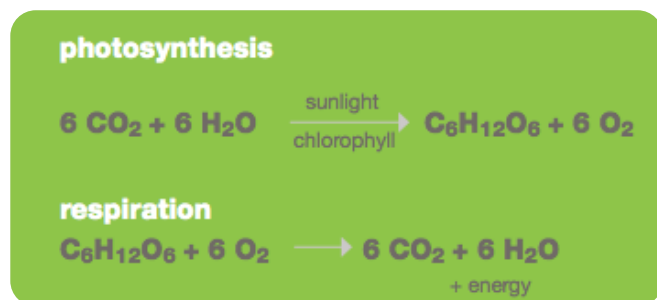
Your Virtuous, Values-Based and Vital elements are your roots – they are the aspects of you that are below the surface, the things that make you who you are, that have shaped the person you have become and they are *how you experience the world*.

This is where your *felt emotion* resides.

*Your roots give your visual, vocal and verbal communication their purpose.*

Remember the photosynthesis process? Sun shines on the foliage of the tree and the chlorophyll absorbs the sunlight and converts it into glucose/protein/energy that is sent down the trunk of the tree to feed the roots and help them grow stronger and deeper.

At the same time – through respiration - the roots of the tree are absorbing nutrients and water and sending them back up the trunk of the tree to help the foliage flourish.



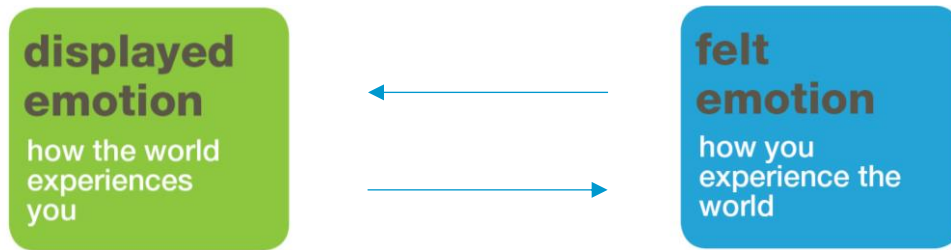
*... so what does that have to do with your personal brand?*

In the same way, there is a symbiotic relationship between the elements of you that are above the surface – your displayed emotion and the elements of you that are below the surface – your felt emotion.

Most of us understand that our felt emotion often (if not always) influences our displayed emotion. For instance, if you were having a bad day and felt terrible, the people around you will know about it through your visual, vocal and verbal communication. Similarly, if you are passionate or excited about something, that is also evident in the way you look and sound.

However, research shows that the opposite is also true. What do we mean by that? If you think of your visual and vocal communication as merely an intentional manipulation of muscles and

you manipulate them to exhibit a certain emotion (this could be confidence, happiness, assertiveness, etc) you will eventually start feeling that same way (beneath the surface).



Need an example?



If you were feeling particularly nervous before a presentation and you allowed your nerves (below the surface) to determine how you communicated visually, vocally and verbally this is what people might see and hear – a shaky, soft voice; trembling hands and legs; disconnected thought process that lacks clarity... The chances are your audience will be disengaged and that will make you feel worse. This creates a *feedback loop* that takes you down!



However, if you were nervous but you *chose* to speak with a higher volume, clear voice and *chose* to smile and have strong, open body language – your audience would perceive you as being confident and knowledgeable which in turn will make you *feel* more confident and knowledgeable. This creates a *positive feedback loop* that builds you up. The next time you experience the same challenge you'll feel more positive about it from the start.

*The more we can be deliberate about our external communications - how we communicate visually, vocally and verbally - the more we can influence the outcomes of our interactions.*

For more on the REDgum model, presence and leadership communications:  
[people@peoplemeasures.com.au](mailto:people@peoplemeasures.com.au)  
[redgumcommunications.com](http://redgumcommunications.com)