

Pondering Point

We all have little personal quirks that make us unique and provide a rhythm for how we get through the day. In fact, these quirks can happen so subtly and consistently that much like the noise produced by the regular tick-tock of a metronome, we call them **tics**. They can be physical, like the tapping of our fingernails when we are concentrating, to something more behavioral like nervous laughter or repeatedly clearing our throats. Though it may be endearing to some, can our tics be irritating to others? Quirks can give a first impression to those we are meeting for the first time. How might they get in the way of our communication? Are we even aware of what our tics are? Quirks can be positive and make us memorable. They don't always have to be a bad thing that we need to change about our personality. **Besides, if we eliminate these personal metronomes, are we removing what makes us unique?**

Why does it help to have awareness of these tics? Once we are aware of them, can we find humor in them? When we recognize our eccentricities, we can celebrate what makes us unique and adapt when necessary. There is a way to balance our quirks. Our environment and audience play a big part in how we are perceived. What's a quirk to someone may not seem like a quirk to someone else. **And let's face it – what makes us strange to some makes us unique to others.**

What are your personal tics?

What messages might that send to others?



Imagine... recognizing our quirks and the role they play in our interactions with others.

— From Pondering to Practice —

Activity:

Try This – Have a group discussion around what personal quirks are and how they can affect our lives.

- Is there a difference between a quirk, habit and a behavior or lifestyle?
- How can it be a distraction to others?
- How far should you go to adapt your quirk without changing who you are?
- At what stage does a behavior become a quirk?
 - Is it something we are born with or from a life experience?
- Does our lifestyle dictate our quirks?
- How might our quirks enhance our lives and our relationships with others?

Recognize what makes each person in the conversation unique and find a way to celebrate it!

Reflection:

- What are your personal tics?
- Have they ever gotten in the way of your communication or relationships with others?
- Have you ever found your quirks to be endearing or enhance your communication with others?
- Do you find yourself holding back your quirks?
 - Why?
- Who knows your quirks?

"In nature, nothing is perfect and everything is perfect. Trees can be contorted, bent in weird ways, and they're still beautiful."

– Alice Walker