

# The 4B Framework

*Bob · Bib · B(l)ab · Boobs*

*What the tenets are, why exactly these four, and how they hold together.*

# Parables show. Frameworks tell.

- The Bobology canon is built of parables. Parables are good at showing what a quality looks like when it's lived.
- Parables are bad at telling you what the quality is made of.
- The 4B is the shape of the answer when "shrug, read another parable" isn't enough.
- Four tenets. Three pieces of scaffolding. One creed.

§ I

**Bob**

*the nucleus*

# Bob is what survives the changes

*Erikson (1968), Identity: Youth and Crisis*

- The version of you still recognizable as you after a decade of change.
- Erikson: identity is a project, not a possession — built across stages, rebuilt under pressure.
- Bob is the part of the project that takes responsibility for keeping the rest in conversation.
- Personality is style. Beliefs are tools. Bob is what holds across style-changes and picks the tools up.

# Bob is a palindrome

*Parfit (1984), Reasons and Persons*

- A palindrome reads the same forwards and backwards — SOLOS, KAYAK.
- Bob's middle is symmetric: what goes out is sent from the same place it comes back.
- Parfit: maybe nothing metaphysical pins the you-at-five to the you-at-seventy.
- Bobbology's response: then you have to be the thing that does the work of being one person.

*"Without bob you ain't."*

§ II

# Bib

*nourishment, and the warning*

# We are smart but not at eating

*Polivy & Herman (1985 onward), restrained-eating research*

- Sleep, food, water, rest, the people who feed you back — one bucket, one discipline: noticing.
- Our prefrontal cortex can override hunger, thirst, exhaustion. That override is loud.
- Polivy & Herman: people who cognitively restrict food intake eat MORE under stress, because the cognitive lid amplifies rebound.
- The lesson isn't "trust your body." It's "the body is quiet — make a habit of asking which signal to trust this time."

# Interoception is a practice

Mehling et al. (2012), MAIA inventory

- Interoception = awareness of internal bodily states.
- MAIA measures it as eight trainable sub-skills: noticing, not-distracting, not-worrying, attention regulation, emotional awareness, self-regulation, body listening, trusting.
- You get better at it the way you get better at chess.
- Bib doesn't ask you to stay in touch with your body. It asks you to notice when you've drifted — and to come back.

*"The drift is the default. The coming-back is the practice."*

§ III

**B(l)ab**

*connection — with the L in parentheses on purpose*

# Bab vs. blab — the parenthesis is the discipline

- Bab — two syllables, the oldest noise infants make at adults. What's underneath language.
- Blab — bab with the L unleashed. Connection drowned out by its own volume.
- The L stands for the loud things: your loves, your losses, the words that can't be unsaid.
- The discipline is keeping the L present-but-governed: silent on purpose, released when the moment asks.

# Front stage / back stage

*Goffman (1959), The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*

- Goffman framed social life as a stage with a curtain.
- Front stage: what we perform to the room. Back stage: what we keep among trusted others.
- A person who blabs every L has no curtain. A person who never lets the L through has frozen it shut.
- Competent social actors keep the curtain operable — moving according to who is in the room.

# The maxim of quantity

Grice (1975), "Logic and Conversation"

- Grice's Cooperative Principle: conversation works because speakers honor four implicit maxims.
- Quantity (right amount). Quality (truth). Relation (relevance). Manner (clarity).
- B(l)ab is structurally the maxim of quantity: don't say more than the moment asked for — don't say less, either.
- The L is silent when the moment asks. The L is released when the moment asks.

# Strategic-Essential — the discernment

- Before letting an L out, ask: is this protection out of love, or concealment out of ego?
- Same question, different verbs: am I keeping this in because the other person isn't ready, or because I am not?
- The first is care. The second is hiding.
- The point of the parenthesis is not silence. The point of the parenthesis is that you choose.

*"B(l)ab is connection; the L is silent when the moment asks."*

§ IV

# Boobs

*pleasure as tenet, not as sin or salvation*

# Refusing both halves of the mistake

*Deci & Ryan (2000 onward), Self-Determination Theory*

- Pleasure as suspect: hide it, indulge only privately. (Stoic / certain Christian lineages.)
- Pleasure as point: life is for it. (Hedonism, in its various forms.)
- Deci & Ryan: hedonic well-being (pleasure, comfort) and eudaimonic well-being (meaning, growth) both matter — neither alone is enough.
- Boobs is the tenet that says: both, in proportion, tended on purpose.

# The hedonic treadmill — and why this matters

*Brickman & Campbell (1971), hedonic adaptation*

- Humans adapt to almost any positive change and return, after a while, to baseline.
- Pleasure-as-pursuit fails empirically: you cannot outrun the adaptation.
- Pleasure-as-tenet does not need to outrun it. It needs only to be there, tended, in proportion.
- Instruction: tend, don't escape. Pleasure is good. Pleasure as the exit door from the other three is not.

§ V

# The Scaffolding

*Calibration · Discernment · the Loop*

# Any tenet, overfocused, becomes a trap

*Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics Book II — virtue as the mean*

- Bib without bab → self-care turned hermitage.
- Bab without the parenthesis → blab.
- Boobs untethered from the others → escape.
- Bob without the other three → just an ego.
- Aristotle: virtue is the mean between two vices (excess and deficiency); phronēsis is the master calibration skill.

# Which mode am I in right now?

*Habermas (1981), Theory of Communicative Action*

- Strategic: oriented toward what I want to happen to me.
- Essential: oriented toward what is actually true here.
- Bib as strategic = dieting to look a certain way. Bib as essential = sleeping because you slept badly.
- Bab as strategic = networking. Bab as essential = sitting with a friend.
- The same action can be either. The discernment is the work.

# The loop is allowed to close

*Bateson (1972), Steps to an Ecology of Mind*

- Karma — the signal you emit.
- Adapterstanding — how the echo reshapes as it travels.
- Atavism — how the echo comes home, often years later, in shapes you didn't predict but recognize.
- Bateson: organisms and minds are recursive systems — every act emits information that re-enters and returns.
- Named loops are more honest than unnamed ones.

# When something feels off, ask the four in order

- Bob — am I still recognizably the person I was a year ago in the way that matters?
- Bib — am I sleeping, eating, drinking, resting? Getting energy back, or only spending it?
- B(I)ab — who am I in conversation with this week? Is the parenthesis honest?
- Boobs — when did I last enjoy something on purpose, with no exit-door motivation?
- Each tenet, asked clean, points back to a behavior you can change tomorrow morning.

# The four-line creed

*Tend bob.*

*Pay attention to bib.*

*Govern the L; let bab continue.*

*Hold boobs as tenet, not as exit.*

*Watch the dial. The four are held together. Bobble accordingly.*