



Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

Ed.TiC

DR. SELVA PANKAJ

FOR INTERNAL USE AND TEACHING
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VOLUME 4



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SADHGURU INNER ENGINEERING:
THE ONLY BONDAGE



NOTES

This is not a teaching, this is not a philosophy, this is not a new belief system – this is a method, a technology, that you have to learn to use in your life. Technology does not discriminate between who you are and who you are not, what you believe and what you do not believe. All you need to do is learn to use it.

This is a very subtle process of self-transformation. This is not something that you learn and remember, but something that you experience and make a part of yourself.

YOUR INNER EXPERIENCE

Everything that you do on the outside is worthwhile only if you can fix your inner experience. How you are within yourself determines all the other things outside. Nothing happens 100% your way. Nobody in your life – your parents, your friends, your partners, your children – does 100% what you want them to do. That does not matter. You must happen your way.

If this one person happened your way, would you keep him blissful or miserable? Definitely blissful. In this mind there is no subtraction and division, there is only multiplication and addition. Whatever you try to do, it will only become more and more. There is no question of one less.

Only what you perceive, do you know. The rest is all imagination.

DESIRE

What decides what you have for breakfast? You choose. What decides that today you choose to wear black not white, blue not red? What decides that this morning you hear an improvement message? You choose. What aspect of your intellect decides? Desire. You do things because you desire to. Your desire is deciding almost everything you do – you do things because you want to, or because you do not want to.





NOTES

With desire playing such a big role in our lives, we must take a closer look at it. What is desire? What is the nature of desire, and the origin? What is its ultimate destination? If you live in a big city, your neighbour has a big car, you want to have two cars like that. If you live in some remote society, you do not know about cars, but your neighbour has one big buffalo, you want to have two buffalos like that.

In other words, what you desire is not about you but about social exposure. In London you may desire certain things; elsewhere you may desire different things. One thing is common, wherever you are, you will desire something. What you desire is a social phenomenon, but the process of desiring is always there. Whatever people around you have, you want, or you want something that they do not have. It is in reaction to the social situation in which you exist.

What is the basis of all human misery on this planet? Unfulfilled desire. You want your home to be like something else, your bank balance, your husband, your wife, your job. So life is not happening the way you think it should be happening. The way you think it should happen changes every day, unfortunately.

So unfulfilled desire is the basis of all misery. As soon as you see this, you might think you could give up all your desire and you will always be blissful. If you kill all desire, you will go to heaven.

But if you took that seriously and from now dropped all your desire, you would not know what to do next. To move from point A to point B, you need desire. If there is no desire, you cannot progress. Will you eat if you have no desire?

Your mind lies to you – you think you want something, and then the moment you get there, you want the next thing. But your body does not lie. If you hold your nose and try not to breathe, after two minutes your body insists it wants to live. If you lose a lot of money one day, or your love affair falls apart, your mind might say you want to die, but your body will continue wanting to live.

If you look into your body, you will see a phenomenal desire to exist. Every cell in the body has its own desire. If some virus enters the body, the cells will pounce and do what they have to do because they have an enormous desire to live.

This body is a bundle of chemicals, and one chemical has a great affinity to act upon another chemical, to act upon each other. Suppose all the chemicals in your body dropped the desire to act upon each other – you will land as just a heap of chemicals.

Everything is made up of atoms, within each atom there are protons, neutrons, electrons. Electrons always want to run away, protons and neutrons always want to hold on. If all the electrons lost the desire to run, or all the protons and neutrons lost the desire to hold on, what would happen? Existence would cease completely.

The energy we call desire and the energy we call life are not two separate things. With no desire there is no life.



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Thought, whatever kind of thought it is, has an element of desire in it. It becomes an active desire when it starts actively seeking something. There is no thought in you that is not seeking something, even if you are seeking understanding, appreciation, or possession. Desire can be cloaked in so many ways, but thought itself is a desiring process.

So what should we do with this desire, that is the source of misery and is life? You must control your desire. You must not have too much desire, you must keep it small. If you do not dare to desire big, would you do something big? If you aim to the stars you will at least hit the lightbulb. If you do not aim for the stars, you will not get anywhere.

FEAR OF SUFFERING

That is what has happened to humanity. Fear of suffering has taken away all the immense potential that a human being carries.

Suppose you were sure that whatever you did there would be no suffering for you? Then you would have done many more things in your life. It is the fear of suffering that holds us back.

But if you reduce the size of desire, will the size of misery come down? If you lost \$2 million or \$1 million, you are still actually miserable. Somewhere else, a man with two cows has lost one cow – you might feel he has no business to be miserable. It is not comparable to your \$1 million loss. But in human experience, the loss of one cow can cause just as much suffering.

By reducing the size of the desire, you do not reduce the volume of suffering. Great calamities are not hitting you on a daily basis – these are little things. Somebody said something, somebody was meant to say something and did not, someone was meant to look at you and they did not. Little things still make you suffer.

Dotted lines for taking notes.





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We must understand desire and choose properly, to desire the right things. Desiring money is wrong, desire God. Desiring pleasure is the problem, desire paradise. Desiring for power is a problem, desire for peace.

Changing the object of desire feels different for a few days, but then it feels like the same thing. It is the same old problem, in terms of human experience.

You know what money can do for you, but leave the things you have read and heard from other people. By your own experience, what do you know about God? Nothing. So if you shift your desire to something you know nothing about, things will not get fixed. People coming out of temples, mosques, churches are not all bursting in ecstasy.

This fascinated me as a child, these people having an appointment with the creator. I never had the courage to enter the temple, so I just closely watched the people coming out. They were not discussing God when they came out, but discussing other people that were there. They cursed the creation and the creator. I always found people coming out of restaurants had more joyful faces than people coming out of temples.

INVOLVEMENT

Desire is the source of all misery and the source of life. When desire remains unfulfilled, people become miserable. If you want to know life, whether it is the food that you eat, the people you live with, or the work you do or whatever, the only way you can taste it is with involvement. That which you are not involved with, you never get to touch.

How deeply you enrol with something impacts how well you know it. If you want to detach from life, you must jump into the ocean. Can you detach yourself from something that matters to you? Only if you do not care can you detach yourself. You can make yourself lifeless. Detaching yourself means trying to avoid life. But shooting yourself in the head would work better. Detaching yourself works off and on, but really if you want to live, the only way to know life is with enormous involvement. How deeply you are involved is the extent to which you know life.

Whether you want to desire or not, you still desire. There is no choice about it. Even not wanting to desire is itself a desire. So you need to control desire. But the problem is that desire always remains unfulfilled. Desire is a must if you want to be alive.

What you call as myself has accumulated this body, and something more fundamental should be there, whatever that is. Only because you exist does this much accumulation of mind and body become possible.

The moment that what you call yourself gets identified with limited physical body, now desire is a natural process. It is not desiring money, wealth etc, but to break away from the limitations of the physical body.



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But you only let that happen in instalments. When you achieve something, you think that is it, then you want something else. You go in instalments. You have to understand that it does not matter where you get to, still you will long for more. What you are looking for is boundless nature.

EGO

The first result of this boundless nature being identified with a limitless body is that ego is born. Ego is like your shadow; the moment you have a body, you have a shadow. Your shadow is not good or bad. What determines the size of your shadow is the position of the sun, an external situation. That is how your ego should also be.

To perform different types of activities, you need different types of egos, but the problem right now is that the distinction has been lost as to what is you and what is ego. Imagine if you cannot distinguish between what is you and what is your shadow – you will start crawling on the ground. If the ground is carpeted you will crawl in comfort, but if stones and thorns come, you will cry.

This is how life happens right now, because you are crawling on the ground. Your whole experience of life right now is physical – you can see, hear, smell, taste, feel only that which is physical. Anything that is not physical in nature, you can neither hear nor see nor taste nor smell or touch.

When physicality is all that you know, desire is inevitable because you will be continuously longing to break away from the boundaries that are physical. That which you call as yourself cannot be contained within the boundaries of the physical – it is trying to find expression. Desire is essentially happening because it is the wrong identification that you have taken. You are believing that you are something that you are not. If you believe something that you have gathered is yourself, then desire will go on. Once the wrong application happens, desire is just one consequence.

Right now, most of the time you are in a state of mental diarrhoea, simply running. Your only comfort is nobody can see it. Anything that is in a compulsive state of action can only bring misery. Your mind is like that, but nobody can see it going all over the place.

With this mind, once thought is in a constant process, it is like you have eaten bad food. To stop the consequence, you must stop eating bad food.

Right now there is a wrong identification. You identify with things that you are not. If you disidentify with this, and sit here, your mind can be still.

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THE NATURE OF EXISTENCE

You are not the body: the body is an accumulation, and it is yours. But if you walk along the street as a body and someone hits your body, you will say 'don't hit me'. You are going around the world as a body. But when you sit still with your eyes closed, you can clearly see that you and your body are two different things.

'Who am I?' is a very relevant and important question when you pose it inward. If you go to somebody and ask them, you have lost it. That is a crazy question – it is relevant only when you turn it inward, then it is fine.

What is the nature of your existence? This is the most profound question you will ever face. If you look at it one way, you can clearly see you are the body. Another way, you can clearly see you are not the body and the body is yours. Another way, you can say you are neither this nor that.

If you do not know who you are, do you know where you are? And anything that you do, existentially, does not make any sense if you do not know who you are or where you are.

PSYCHOLOGICAL OR EXISTENTIAL

There may be a social buzz going on that you want to be part of. But you need to understand that if you avoid certain fundamental aspects of life, you will successfully avoid life process. Right now, you are not a life, you are a psychological case. All that you are experiencing is just thought and emotion. Thought and emotion is a psychological reality, not an existential reality, but because you are so highly identified with your thought process, you think that is the beginning and end of life.

If the sun disappears right now, in 18 hours' time everything that we call life will vanish from this planet. Except for a few microorganisms deep down in the earth, everything else on the surface would just vanish in 18 hours. So it is significant that the sun came up on time today. That is no small thing – it is the greatest thing. The planet is spinning on time. The whole solar system is fantastic, nothing is wrong, everything is going perfect today.





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But you have one nasty little thought growing in your head, and you say it is a bad day. So you are a psychological case. If you become an existential case, then you will say wow, it is the most magnificent day. Otherwise, it depends what is crawling in your head.

We have identified 100 billion galaxies and we know there are more. Our solar system is like a speck. If it vanishes, no one will miss it. Within that, planet earth is a micro speck. In that micro speck, this city is a super micro speck, and within that is you.

You have no context as to who you are in this existence. If you become existential, then you know your place in the universe; every moment you will be dripping with gratitude and blissfulness simply to be here.

If you just sit straight, a million forces are working on you right now. If we take away just a few drops from between your ears, suddenly everything will get distorted. You do not know what is keeping you in place, holding your life. It is too complex, way beyond anyone's intelligence or imagination, but we can still sit and talk.

When you are existentially conscious, there is not a moment of misery in your life. But if you are a psychological case, you are trying to adjust yourself as to what you should be. You want to be socially accepted, like everybody else.

If you are looking for a cure, there is a certain way to approach it. You have to see that you are less than a speck of dust but you think you are bigger than the universe. This is a distorted imagery.

INTENSITY

Let's say you want to play a game: you want to play football. When you come on the field, you have to have a strong desire to win. The desire should be more important than your life.

If you are philosophical, nothing much will happen if you kick the ball. But if you kick the ball like your life depends on it, then it will be magic. It is not the kicking of the ball, it is the intensity of the involvement. Almost half the planet watches the World Cup final, watching just 22 people kicking the ball around. If you look at it philosophically, it is nonsense. But the intensity of involvement with which they are kicking keeps the whole world up. It is the intensity of desire. Enormous desire ignites everybody.

This intensity of action is not possible if there is no desire. Desire is not the problem, it is just when it is happening compulsively that is the problem. If it happened consciously, you could engage it and play amazingly, and then roll it back when you are done. Right now, it happens as a compulsive process. Everything you desire can be wonderful, but it must be conscious not compulsive. Everything is like this, whether it is food or drink or whatever. If it becomes compulsive, just about everything becomes ugly.



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COMPULSIVENESS

Misery happens because of the compulsive state of the mind. If you were conscious, you would not create suffering or misery. If desire is in a compulsive state, then comes misery. A conscious process leaves you enriched in every way.

Misery is caused by the cyclical nonsense that happens in your mind; the cyclical process of thought. Something that happens around you does not cause misery – it is the way you compulsively react to it that causes misery.

The journey you need to go on is from unconsciousness to consciousness. Right now the only problem you have is that a large part of you is unconscious. If it becomes conscious, you will conduct it the way you want, which is pleasantness. If you become conscious, you will not react, you will act. If you are unconscious, you just react to what is around you. Somebody else determines the nature of your experience.

You live enslaved to situations around you. If you have a fear of suffering, you will avoid life, you will not dare to explore, in case something nasty happens to you. To avoid that, you will avoid all the beautiful people and everything in the universe.

You need a stable platform to handle your level of intelligence. Most suffering is self-caused, because your intelligence is working against you – stress, anxiety, fear, misery. So essentially unpleasantness means your own intelligence is working against you because you do not have a stable platform.

You do not need to control your mind, you need to liberate it. If it has to be liberated from misery, it needs a stable platform to handle this level of intelligence. Then this level of intelligence will work for you. Then you will live a grand life.





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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

HOW TO LIVE HAPPILY – SADHGURU



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If someone tells you that from tomorrow you must wear a certain type of clothes, immediately you will protest. If someone goes further and tells you what you can eat, or what time you should get up, you will scream for your freedom.

But look at yourself. Right now, somebody else is determining what should happen within you. Someone can decide whether you are happy or unhappy, whether you will be a pleasant human being or an unpleasant one. Is this not slavery?

Because everybody is like that, it seems to be normal. But it is not normal. Life around you will never happen 100 per cent the way you want it, and nor should it, because if everything happens the way you want it, what happens to others? Even machines will trouble you.

Let's talk about pleasantness, for which we have so many words: joy, bliss, happiness, peace, ecstasy. For unpleasantness: stress, anxiety, fear, tension. If your pleasantness is dependent on what happens around you, the chances of you being pleasant all the time are remote.

But only if you are able to create a distance between this and that is it possible. Many people have a habit to look up to the heavens when things don't work out for them. But the planet is spinning and you are not at the North Pole, so if you look up you are invariably looking up in the wrong direction. You don't really know what is up or down, left or right, east or west.

There is only one thing you can be certain of right now, and that is what is outward and what is inward. To examine that a little more: where do you see me right now? Within yourself. Where do you hear me? Within yourself. Where do you experience everything? Within yourself. Have you ever experienced anything outside of yourself. Everything that has ever happened to you – darkness and light – happens within you. Pain and pleasure happens within you, joy and misery happens within you.



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So, who should determine what happens within you? What should determine how that happens? Definitely you should determine what happens within you, and if you do that, your whole experience of life will be determined by you and nobody else but you.

The events around you may not be determined by you, but how your experience of life is on this planet is 100 per cent can be entirely determined by you if you take charge of this. If you leave it loose, just about anybody will determine it, perhaps even by accident.





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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

MARRIED OR NOT, CARRY THIS
WITH YOU – SADHGURU



Married or Not, Carry This With You – Sadhguru

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Which is the best way, getting married and staying on the path of yoga to reach the destination, or not getting married and going on the path of yoga?

I don't want you to travel on the path of yoga. Whatever path you are travelling on, take yoga with you. It will make the path easy and beautiful.

Whether you go north or south, if it is dark you take a torch. So you getting married is because of your needs – you were born a complete human being but because you have certain needs that are physical, psychological, social and emotional, you choose marriage. Marriage is supposed to be a package that deals with all of these needs.

Sometimes marriage will not fulfil some of your needs, so you get stressed and strained. But you must understand you married for your wellbeing, not as some sacrifice for someone else's sake. You better remember that all your life. You married and tied up that other person because you have needs – you did not do it for the other person's sake.

If you remember this, you will live in little gratitude, even if all of your needs are not fulfilled. If the other person does not fulfil any of your needs, you will not stay. But they fulfil some of them. In turn, you cannot fulfil all of the needs of the other person, but some of them you will.

However you have made it until now, it doesn't matter. If you are willing, within three days' time you can bring a semblance of peace. If not love, if not ecstasy, you can bring it to a peaceful state – if you are willing – in three days' time. At the very least you can shut up, and peace will happen.





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Don't walk the path of yoga, but whatever the path, you must carry yoga with you. If you carry yoga with you, it will light up your path, whichever path you choose.

You have chosen your path to meet your needs. If you have not yet done so, choose your path not out of your compulsive needs but out of your conscious needs. So when that stage of your life comes, it is time to look at your life and consciously see whether today's needs will mean something to you after five or ten years. Will it be worthwhile to tie up your life for the simple needs that you have today, or are these just passing needs? If it is a very strong need, you must marry. If it is a passing need, you can work out your needs without marriage.

Many people are like this and their needs are not very strong, but social structure tells them they must marry. It is not necessary. It must be your conscious choice, whichever way you go. If you choose compulsively, you will always take it out on the people around you, because you will feel like a slave and you won't like it. And they will take it out on you.

So it is not about what you are doing but how you do it. What you are doing is according to your requirements, but how you do it will determine the nature of your life.

Is it an advantage to walk single rather than walk with people? Yes, if you want to walk rapidly. In Africa there is a saying, 'If you want to walk quick, walk alone. If you want to walk long, walk in company.' If you are making a long distance journey, it is better to have company. If you are walking a short distance and want to be quick, it is best to go alone.

Gautama said another thing, when somebody asked him the same question. He said, 'It is better to walk alone than to walk with a fool.' That is his way of working – he is always discouraging to take company, because he says this life is a brief walk, so why do you need company? When you leave this body, it is a long place, and then I will be there. This is the offer.

You think life is long, and maybe you need company, so you take it. But how you conduct this company is very important. If you want to conduct it sensibly, one of the most important things that you need to do, particularly with your children, is make sure your psychological and emotional framework is around the basic fact of life. The basic fact of life is that you are mortal.

Your psychological and emotional structure should be formed around your mortality – this is most important. If you are constantly aware that this is a brief life, and any moment you may fall down dead, then you will conduct your life in a certain way. When you know time is ticking away, you have no time to get angry with somebody, to fight, to sit around depressed.

Because your psychological structure is organised around immortality, you have time to fight, be stressed, be frustrated and be depressed.



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It is very important that everybody organises their psychological and emotional structure around the mortal nature of our existence. After all, you are just a baton carrier between the last generation and the next. For a brief time it is in your hands, but afterwards, somebody is going to take it.

Handing over the baton to the next generation often happens in ugly ways, simply because people's mind is structured around a belief of immortality. If you are constantly aware that you are mortal, sense will naturally dawn upon you and you will have no time for foolishness.

Suppose you were aware that tomorrow you were going to die, would you spend today fighting? Your time is ticking all the time, not just when a doctor diagnoses you with a disease.

If you want to explore the immensity of what this is, then the time is ticking too rapidly. And time is an extremely relative experience. If you are joyful and blissful, even if you live to be 100 it is a very brief life, gone in no time.

So in this brief life, where do you get time for stress and strain? You make time only because you think you are immortal. That is your biggest mistake.

It is just a brief journey and you must conduct it as gracefully and as blissfully as possible. You do not know the cosmos but you must know this piece of life before you fall down dead.

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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

FIVE STEPS TO SELF-TRANSFORMATION – SADHGURU



STEP ONE: BALANCE

It does not take much to bring a reasonable sense of balance into your life.

One thing everybody needs to understand is that all human experience is generated from within. So, at any time, if you feel happy, joyful, miserable, ecstatic or in a state of agony, just know that it is happening from within. You can either take external stimuli or you can create your own stimuli, but essentially it happens from within.

If this one thing is not grasped, when you feel miserable you are not going to be able to change it. This is something that 90% of humanity is doing wrong. Whenever they feel miserable, they blame other things. If something is feeling unpleasant, the first thing to do is to look within. Are you eating wrong, sitting wrong, sleeping wrong or breathing wrong? Something is wrong with you, not with anyone else.

The moment you think that by kicking the wall you can fix yourself, then you have made a fundamental mistake and the harder you try, the further away from it you go.

This possibility of bringing balance to the system is the fundamental nature of yoga. The first thing is to bring balance. Once there is balance, you can build a tower. If not, whatever you build will only lead to trouble.

Anything standing up without balance is a problem. So the best thing is to lay down, stay close to the ground. If you grow tall, it will be a problem, so remain at the minimum. But that is a waste of thousands of years of evolution, and Mother Earth is not going to let you get away with it. If you try to make life go backwards, you will pay the price.

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STEP THREE: INTENSITY

If you do anything with a certain intensity and involvement, it does not matter what, then you are there.

You can do it with anything. Many of the early yogis were constantly angry, not about anybody, but simply angry. You have this understanding that a yogi must be calm and peaceful; a good man. The first yogi: can you call him a good man? He is a great yogi, but he is a drunkard. A great householder, but mad debaucher. All his friends worship him, but his friends are all demented beings. So do you call this man a good man or a bad man? He is neither, but he is fantastic.

You have to rise above your ideas of good and bad, like and dislike, and just become life in its peak performance. The mantras are like keys to another dimension of life – if you have gone through the necessary preparation, you can explode into a different level of energy and experience.

The first yogi is called Shiva because he is the closest to that possibility of delivering to a completely different dimension. God is everywhere, in everything, so it is not a question of something being sacred and something not. The moment you make that discrimination that something is good and something is not, you are finished, because you have divided the world.

When you say you want to become spiritual, you want to become all-inclusive. You want to transcend the limitations of the physical. Physical is exclusive – the more identified you are with the body, the more exclusive you are to something. That which is beyond the physical is all-inclusive.

So when you want to become spiritual, you want to cross the limitations of the physical, you are saying you want to become all-inclusive. If you want to be spiritual and you say only these people are sacred, not these, then you are not inclusive. You have divided the world and you are finished.

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People that divide the world according to their terms of good and bad, and hope to be spiritual, will never see it happen. You must stop the judgement.

When you do not see good and bad, whatever comes in front of you, you respond to it as it is needed, not because it is good or because it is bad but according to your own intelligence on what is the best thing to do at the moment. Whatever way you respond, whatever action you put forward, there will be a consequence. Whatever you do, there will be a consequence.

When the consequence comes, if you are going to cry, then there is no point. If you can take any consequence joyfully, do whatever you please. If certain consequences will upset you, then you perform your action a little more cautiously.

It is not a question of good and bad, what is God and what is not. God is everywhere, in everything, so doom is also God's name. You do not know what is God's name.

STEP FOUR: DROP THE CALCULATION – WHAT ABOUT ME?

Logic has to go step by step. Life is brief, so unless you are willing to jump a few steps, nothing will happen. For something phenomenal to happen, you have to jump a lot of steps. But you cannot jump these steps the moment you start thinking 'what about me?'; because you have brought yourself down to the most basic of logic. 'What about me' does not take intelligence. That is the most basic of logic, animal instinct.

The moment you bring yourself down to that logic, you won't do anything worthwhile in your life. It becomes all about you. You love, it is 'what about me'; you get married, 'what about me'.

Once you come to this thought process, you will only move one step at a time. In this brief span of life, you will not do anything truly worthwhile.

If it is about your family, your country, even your planet – it is still about you. Whatever is yours is important to you.

If we want to employ the logical mind, your body is just biodegradable material. The mindset will destroy the human being, not the activity, once he starts thinking about 'what about me'.

So all the fancy ideas that people have about themselves are just their own stuff. You are just a small mound on the earth, so just see yourself sitting here for the next 100 years. You will still just be a mound. This has been happening for millions of years, it is nothing new. The planet is just going to cultivate itself and fertilise itself. This little piece of shit that goes up and goes down thinks so much of itself. I say shit, but that is no bad thing... for anything to grow, you need it.



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With no body, there is no being. So we are not trying to belittle the body, but we must understand that because it comes with such a little expiry date, it is a nebulous happening, but it has great possibility of growing. So we must act quick – you can't go one step at a time, you have to go leaps and bounds.

Logic may make our growth very slow and laborious, focusing on 'what about me.' Either you make something fantastic out of it, or you don't. But it's not all about you. You might think you will go to heaven, but you are in heaven and missing it.

STEP FIVE: ASANA SIDDHI

The 84 asanas are 84 ways to make the body into your passage. It is not necessary for everybody to do 84 asanas... if they do one it is enough. Usually serious yogis practice only one asana. It is difficult for a thinking man to understand why somebody would spend his whole life trying to sit in a particular way, but if you learn to sit right and hold your body right, everything that you need to know in this universe you can know.

This is known as asana siddhi – if you can sit in a posture, stable and comfortable, for two and a half hours, then we say you have attained asana siddhi; you are in absolute comfort and at ease in a particular posture. If you can achieve this, you can know everything one can know internally.

How is this possible? How can you know everything you can know just by sitting? If you have a TV at home, that is just a box with a little bit of electronics. But it becomes a world by itself, and the whole world can stream into it simply because there is a receiving mode. If you set the antenna right, if it is properly adjusted, then the whole world flows into this box. If it is not set right, the same instrument has everything but cannot do anything.

This is how an individual human being is, he or she is who they are only because of what they perceive. Whatever you perceive it what makes you who you are.

The whole system of yoga is only about sitting and enhancing perception. If you hold a posture right and it matches with the cosmic alignment in some way, then everything that has happened in the creation until this moment, one can know. The memory of that is right here in your system.

In a codified way, it can be activated and ignited if it touches another dimension outside of yourself. Yoga is a powerful means to connect. Do not forget what yoga means.. yoga means union, two have become one. There are only two in existence: you and the rest of existence. In the rest of existence you may identify others, but there is essentially only two dimensions, because there are only two dimensions of experience within you.

You do not know what is up and down in this cosmos, what is forward and backward, these are all things made up for convenience.



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The only experiential reality is something called outward and something called inward – these are the two dimensions of experience. So yoga means to bring the union between these, inner and outer, you and the rest. When there is no you and other, and there is just you and you, that is yoga.

Asanas are a physical manifestation of approaching this ultimate union, because physical body is the easiest thing to work with. If you try to do something with your mind, it will play too many tricks. At least with the body, you know whether it is doing it right or not doing it right, whether it is cooperating or not. The mind, if you push it too hard, will play all kinds of tricks with you. But the body is not like that, it is a reliable factor if you work with it sensibly.

Then the yoga asanas will definitely lead to the possibility of ultimate union.

In the meantime, by getting into the postures, before ultimate alignment happens, an inner alignment happens which will lead to happiness, joyfulness, blissfulness and balance. Balance is something that modern societies have ignored and they are paying a huge price for that today. Whatever may be your intelligence, whatever may be your competence, education and qualifications, if you do not have the necessary balance, you will not succeed in your life.

The most important thing for people who are seeking to be successful, whether in retail, politics, military or whatever, is balance. Only if you have a balance that is not disturbed by external situations will you be capable of making use of the competence and intelligence that you carry within you. Otherwise, the most wonderful qualities that one may have will all go to waste simply because of lack of balance.






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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER



HOW TO USE THE LAW OF ATTRACTION
TO MANIFEST ANYTHING IN 2023 -
DR TARA SWART BIEBER,
NEUROSCIENTIST AND BEST-SELLING
AUTHOR 'THE SOURCE'



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You can literally change your brain, at any stage, any age, any mindset. It is life-changing, and you can achieve it through manifestation.

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Manifestation at its most basic is setting a goal and achieving it. Or it is making your dreams and desires into reality in the tangible world.

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Hard times teach us resiliency, but they are also the opportunity to make the worst times in your life the start of your best times. Neuroplasticity is about that ability to learn, to grow, to regulate your emotions, and build resilience.

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An example of neuroplasticity is gratitude lists. We can all write lists of things we are grateful for every day, and typically those are external things – friends, family, travel, financial freedom. But you can start writing internal things – my creativity, my resilience, my vulnerability. That is a game changer. It makes you think that whatever life throws at you, you have the tools within you to deal with that. Learning that whatever happens with the pendulum swing of your emotions, however high you go, you can go low as well. That gives you autonomy and agency in life.

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If you are going through really hard times, doing what you can through the process is important. Visualisation is really important – we know that can actually cause cellular changes in the body.

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We can merge spirituality and science.

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Neuroplasticity is the ability to be someone new, to be reborn, and it is absolutely based on science.

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There is still this incorrect perception that there is a cut off at the neck, and what goes on psychologically isn't related to your physiology. Another neuro myth is that emotions are bad –dysregulated emotions are bad, but emotions are good and we need them to survive. To have emotions, to understand what they are, to feel them and to be able to name them, is so important.

Another thing that gives you information is your gut, and that connection between the gut and the brain is something we have known about for a while. There is a real neural connection between the gut and the emotional part of the brain, and it is actually bi-directional, so if you're stressed that has an impact on your gut, and if you are malnourished or you drink alcohol, then the impact of that on your gut impacts your brain. That's not just through nerves, it is also through chemical messaging and through hormones.

Visualisation has an impact on you. Your gut bacteria are integral to all the cells in the rest of your body. So your immune system is connected to your gut, and then that is connected to your mental state, your brain, your skin. That is psycho, neuro, immuno endocrinology.

You cannot create a fantasy of what you want your life to look like without action. If your brain has seen something or experienced it through mental rehearsal, then when it comes across something similar in real life, that is less threatening. Uncertainty is the most threatening thing to your brain – anything new is a huge threat to your brain.

That is counter to neuroplasticity, because with neuroplasticity you can make yourself do something new every year. You can learn a language or learn a sport, and in the same way you can learn to look at life through a happier lens.





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It is a natural default for all of us to avoid loss and uncertainty. We like things to be safe, to be the same, and we like to know what is going to happen. The brain wants to look out for danger to protect us. You can make a vision board for a house or for travel – we can do it for the material world, but we can also do that for the emotional world.

Imagery is important for evoking a feeling. We notice all the time when something goes wrong; we don't always acknowledge when something goes right or is really good, particularly the small things.

It can help to stop doing meditation formally for 30 minutes a day, and to instead live mindfully all day. We can cook mindfully, eat mindfully.

Mental rehearsal is another thing requires work. Believing something is possible, or having an experience of doing or even imagining that thing, makes it more possible in your brain. There are studies that show that people doing weight lifting, where there were two groups doing finger weights and elbow weights, and within four weeks there was a significant increase in muscle mass. But there was a group that only imagined lifting weight, and they still saw an increase in muscle mass.

In another case, there were two groups of people, one practising free throws trying to improve their percentage, and the others just imagined making the perfect shot every time. By mentally rehearsing that, and not actually doing it, they also achieved an improvement in what they could do.

Intentionality is important. There is a big difference between people that forget to eat breakfast, and those that intentionally eat only between midday and 8pm each day and practise intermittent fasting. That is because of the intention – it actually has a different effect on your body.

In neuroscience there is a difference between intentional mind wandering and just slipping off into daydreaming. If you slip off into daydreaming, your attention isn't the best, so it's a bad sign in terms of focus and concentration. But if you intentionally let your mind wander, that leads to more creative thinking.

A lot of people try to do too much – they walk and listen to a podcast. Science tells us we should not try to multitask, so only listen to a podcast, or only walk, or actively sit and do nothing. That doing nothing can lead to more creative thinking, and it is just being, not doing.

During the pandemic and since, there is such an unknown huge consequence of what we have all been through mentally. There are people that don't like themselves, don't like what they are doing or don't like their partner, and they don't think that they can change. That is the power of neuroplasticity and mind over matter. Those people can change.

Often people don't understand how great they are, and neuroplasticity basically tells you that you are amazing. Your brain is amazing, and you are doing a tiny percentage of what your brain can do.

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Another example: there was a group of people in their eighties, split into two, so one group lived as normal and the other one was moved to retro fitted homes that looked like their homes did 20 years ago when they were 60, with photos of them when they were 60, and they read newspapers from 20 years ago. By the end of one week, they were taller, they had better musculoskeletal coordination, and in before and after photos shown to people that didn't know them they were rated as younger. So they were taller because of posture, because they believed they were younger.

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There was a third group that was the reminiscing group, who stayed in the same home but thought about being 20 years younger, and they also got improvements, though not as much.

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When people ask how you stay young, the answer is eat, sleep, hydrate and oxygenate, but don't stress about it because that is what will kill you. Being stressed is pro-inflammatory in your system, and if you have inflammation in your system it is ageing, it is bad for your gut, it is bad for your brain. So living an anti-inflammatory lifestyle is important.

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During the pandemic, when we saw chronic stress on a scale not seen by anyone alive today, similar to the world wars, that chronic stress was pro-inflammatory and it made our systems really dry. We are quite good at dealing with acute stress – running away from the sabre-toothed tiger – but not at chronic stress. So people had frizzy hair, they had skin problems.

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The wiring that is placed into your brain from childhood that is often subconscious includes boundaries within the family, within the community. People had boundary issues during the pandemic, because they were restricted, but didn't necessarily have their own space. Your skin is the physical boundary of your own body, but it is also psychologically very related to boundary transgressions. Looking at a person holistically is important.

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Roger Bannister was the first person to run a four-minute mile. Once he did it, several people then did it in the next few months, just because they knew it was possible. If you are embarking on something new, think about your own past successes. The chances are you have done something similar before. So you can tell your brain, you are worried about this, you are afraid, but you have done it before.

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If you haven't yourself done whatever it is, find somebody like you that has done that thing before and tell your brain it is possible.

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There are two layers of science that maximise that. One is your negative self-talk, so the inevitable voice in your head that says who do you think you are. Your brain has a defensive mechanism – it wants you to survive until you reproduce and it doesn't care about anything else. It isn't here to make you thrive, just for you to pass your genes on. In cave times, that helped us to survive as a species. In modern times it is no longer helpful.

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Neurogenesis, which is embryonic cells becoming fully formed neurons and then connecting up through synapses with established neurons and then maybe getting myelinated. Children can learn five languages at the same time, from a young age, because they have lots of embryonic neurons. For adults it is harder, but possible. Neurogenesis is embryonic cells becoming neurons, and it may not be happening much in the adult brain but the synaptic connection is happening a lot.

There are lots of people stuck in the belief that they are not smart, or they are not creative. But if you ask yourself what you want to do, you can change that belief. We can all change that narrative, and it is the key to unlocking things for so many people.

The brain is a very small percentage of your body weight, but it is a very energy-hungry organ, using up 20 to 30 per cent of what you eat. So you should eat in order to make the best decisions. When you are asleep, your brain is using up 20 per cent of the glucose that you have ingested that day. When you are focused on a task, it is using up 25 per cent of your dietary intake. When you are stressed, it is using up 30 per cent.

If you live in a brain-first way, everything else will fall into place – your cardiovascular, your gut – so hydrating foods and good fats are going to feed your brain. When you are learning something new, you are creating the pathway that should become the default pathway for your brain. Your brain is going to go down the most energy-efficient route, because that is easiest and what it knows and likes and uses least glucose. So you have to build a pathway that is so strong that it is stronger than the pathway that has been there since childhood.

If you were the person who would cry and yell and slam the door and walk out, you can change that. You can become somebody with good boundaries, self-worth, deserving of love. You do that by building the pathways, giving yourself the examples, and acting like that in life until you do believe it.

When you have no choice but to do the thing that you have to do, you do it. So ask yourself, have you gone to a Spanish-speaking country on your own, to a village where nobody speaks English? That is the best way to learn Spanish.

None of us want to go through hardship, or see those we care about go through hardship, but it can be taken as an amazing opportunity. Even with the hardest things, there has to be an opportunity that comes out of it, otherwise it was for nothing.

We can talk about the six ways of thinking: logical, emotional, intuition, physicality, creativity and motivation. Trying to build all of those pathways in your brain is important.

Even if life is fine, and everything is okay, keep doing that work because when you need it, it will be there. It is important to be practising and rehearsing when things are good so that they can stay good. When things are tough, that is when it is time to use what you have learned.



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The one thing you should go away and do after this is make an action board – create a collage by hand by looking through magazines. Be open to being drawn to an image. Manifestation is so incredible when it starts to happen that you almost have to be careful what you wish for, because it is going to happen. Do not limit yourself to things only you can consciously think of, so you can leave some open space. And you should update your action board once a year.

One of the things about the action board is that it must be visible to you. It should also be in a place that other people can see it – because a lot of people gather the images but don't stick them up, or create the board but hide it away in the wardrobe. That equates to not believing that you deserve those things. There is a boldness to putting it on display.

Repeatedly looking at it also creates an imprint on your brain. There is something in your brain called value tagging, which is how your brain prioritises what's important. So today, if you were to read the LA Times, you would receive more information than somebody would receive in their lifetime a hundred years ago. We are overly bombarded with data, so the brain naturally filters things out that aren't important to us. The brain is wired for survival, so it prioritises things important for survival. And it does that in both a warm and a cold way, so it does it both emotionally and logically.

So if you repeatedly expose your brain to images of the things that you want, you are more likely to notice things that are related to that in your day-to-day life, and you are more likely to take those opportunities. On the negative side, people that repeatedly looked at images of the Twin Towers falling on 9/11, who had no personal connection to New York, could get PTSD just by repeatedly looking at those images. So the power of neuroplasticity, both for good and bad, is that huge.

If you channel it proactively for the things you want, you are more likely to both notice and grasp the opportunities that come up in your life. With an action board, you are setting a clear intention, starting to walk on the grass, laying the groundwork for those things to happen.

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The key elements of this include abundance, which is overriding the negative thinking; manifestation, which is bringing into reality the things that you desire; patience; harmony and universal connection, so it can't be something that is bad for other people; and magnetic desire, which is probably the most important part. That is basically the emotional intensity. Neuroplasticity is grown through repetition and emotional intensity. Even a traumatic experience can bond people, so it is similar to that, which is that your emotional intent is so strong and so aligned, and your motivation is so strong, that you don't give up. That is magnetic desire.

The final piece is to create the action board, look at it daily, and then believe that it is already true. Start experiencing the feeling that the things you want are already here. Start being grateful for them before they happen. When you achieve things on your action board, you can move them to a section marked 'Manifested', which reinforces to your brain that good things happen and you can achieve the things you want. It is the self-belief that if you can achieve one thing you can achieve the next thing.

It is hard to attract and manifest what you want if you are not grateful for what you already have. If you are ungrateful that you are not achieving things, they are not going to come faster.

The natural gearing of your brain is to focus on the things you don't have, so overriding that is a really healthy and powerful thing to do in modern life, because it makes it more likely that you will get those things.

You are so much more amazing and powerful than you believe you are. Who you are inside and what resources you have gained through wisdom are more important than any qualification and job title. True love, living with love as your primary motivator, is the most important thing.

Neuroplasticity means that you have the power – at any age, at any stage, with any mindset – to train your brain and become everything that you want to be. That's greatness, and it's in everyone.





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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO DO THE
IMPOSSIBLE? -
STEVEN KOTLER, BESTSELLING
AUTHOR OF MINDVALLEY'S THE HABIT
OF FEROCITY



*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes

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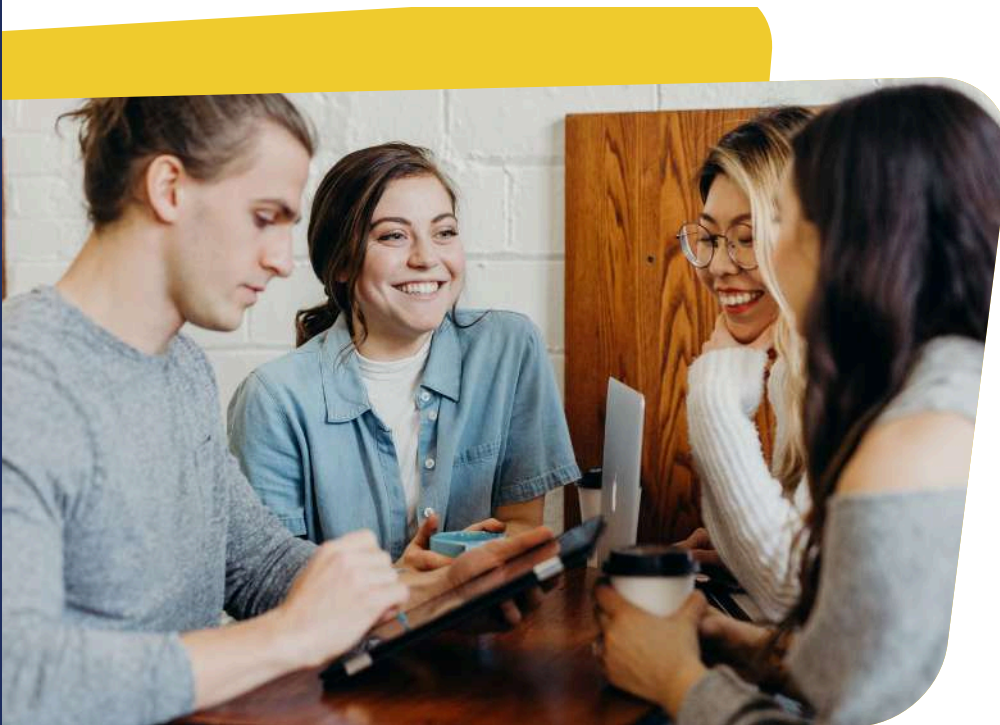
What does it take to do the impossible? What does it take to achieve paradigm shifting, never-seen-before breakthroughs consistently?

Kotler came to this question of impossibility through journalism. In the 1990s, when he became a journalist, action adventure sports were a really hot topic. So back then, surfing, skiing, rock climbing and the like were grabbing a lot of attention and he spent the better portion of 10 years chasing extreme athletes around mountains and across oceans.

If you are not an extreme athlete and you spend all your time chasing extreme athletes around mountains and across oceans, you tend to break things. Kotler broke a lot of things and took a lot of time off. When he came back from time off, the progress he saw was astounding – stuff that was impossible four months previously was not just being done, it was being iterated upon.

This caught his attention for a number of reasons. First is that back in the early 1990s, action adventure sports were a punk rock pastime, practised by rowdy irreverent people without a lot of natural advantages. Most of the people he spent time with had very little education, almost no money and came from horrifically difficult childhoods. And yet here they were on a regular basis reinventing what was possible for our species. They were extending the limits of possibility.

For example, surfing is a very old sport dating back to 400 AD. From 400 AD until 1996, progress was really slow – incremental at best. The biggest wave anybody had ever surfed was 25 feet. Above that, everybody believed it was impossible and there were physics papers written about how it is impossible to paddle into a wave over 25 feet or surf a wave over 25 feet. But two decades later, surfers are routinely pulling into waves over 100 feet tall.



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Kotler took this question into every domain imaginable and wrote a lot of books about it. In Tomorrowland he focused on maverick innovators that turned science fiction ideas into science fact technology – who did the impossible of literally dreaming up the future. In Bold, he looked at upstart entrepreneurs – Larry Page, Jeff Bezos, and Elon Musk – who had built world-changing impossible businesses in near record time.

What he discovered is that it doesn't actually matter where you look – action adventure or business tycoons or elsewhere – in every domain acute human performance has the exact same signature. It is a state of consciousness known to researchers as flow.

You may know flow by other names... you might call it runner's high, or being in the zone. Flow is a technical term, defined as being in an optimal state of consciousness, where we feel our best and we perform our best. More specifically, it refers to those moments of rapt attention and total absorption, where we get so focused on the task at hand that everything else just disappears. Action and awareness start to merge, the sense of self vanishes, and time dilates. Sometimes time slows down and you get that sense of freeze frame; more frequently it speeds up and five hours go by in five minutes. Throughout, all aspects of performance, both mental and physical, go through the roof.

Flow science is actually quite old, dating back to the late 1880s, which was the very first time someone figured out that an altered state of consciousness had a radical impact on performance. Signs of flow took a huge step forward in the sixties, seventies and eighties thanks to Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, often called the godfather of flow psychology. He was the chairman of the University of Chicago Psychology Department and he conducted one of the largest global studies on optimal performance ever done.

He learned three things about flow that are fundamental. The first thing he discovered is that flow is definable – it has seven core characteristics, including uninterrupted concentration in the present moment, vanishing of self, time dilation and so forth. Because it is definable, it is also measurable. We now have extremely well-validated psychometric instruments to measure flow.

Csikszentmihalyi also discovered that flow is universal, in that it shows up in everyone, everywhere, provided certain initial conditions are met. And he discovered why it is called flow. In his giant study, the vast majority of the people that he spoke to said that when they were at their best, in this state, every idea, every action and every decision flowed seamlessly and effortlessly from the last.

So flow is actually a phenomenological description – it's how the state makes us feel. Interestingly, for the state to make us feel flowy, and for every action and every decision to lead seamlessly, perfectly and effortlessly to the last, flow has to be as close to near-perfect high speed creative decision-making as we can get.

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Kotler took part in an experiment designed by Stanford neuroscientist David Eagleman. He was hoisted 150 feet into the air and then dropped into a circus net. He had a perceptual chronometer on his wrist to try to figure out why time slows down in a flow state. The experiment was semi-successful, and what all this neuroscience has taught us is that a lot of our old ideas about ultimate human performance are wrong. In fact, the most famous of these old ideas is the 10% brain myth, which is the idea that at any one point we are just using a small proportion of our brains, so ultimate performance, aka flow, must be the full brain on overdrive.

It turns out to be the opposite. In flow, we are not using more of the brain, we are actually using less of the brain. The technical term for this is transient – meaning temporary – hypofrontality. That's the opposite of hyper, and it means to slow down, to shut down, or to deactivate. Frontality is the front of your brain, is an extremely powerful part of your brain that handles complex logical decision making. It handles long term planning; your sense of morality and willpower.

In flow, this portion of the brain shuts down. It is actually an efficiency exchange – the brain is trading energy it needs for efficiency and shutting down non-critical structures. When it shuts down the pre-frontal cortex, all kinds of crazy things happen. Why does time pass so strangely in a flow state, for example? Time, it turns out, is calculated all over the prefrontal cortex and as parts of it wink out, it can no longer separate past from present from future. We are plunged into a state the researchers describe as 'the deep now'. The deep now has a huge impact on performance... if you think about most of your fears and anxieties, very few of them are in the right here, right now. They are very often horrible things that happened in the past that you'd like to avoid happening in the present, or they are scary things that might happen in the future.

When we end up in the deep now, anxiety disappears and our stress hormones flood out of our system. The nervous system actually resets, and the same thing happens to your sense of self. So self is actually a network – a bunch of different structures in the prefrontal cortex that are linked together – and, like any network, as parts of it start to wink out, the network starts to collapse. Again, our sense of self is impacted, which has a huge impact on our performance. When your sense of self disappears, your inner critic gets silenced. We get this loss of self-control, loss of fear, and as a result, risk-taking goes up. Creativity goes up because you are no longer doubting your crazy ideas.

In addition to these changes to neural anatomical function, in flow we also get a huge boost in neurochemistry. Neurochemicals are nothing fancier than signalling molecules – they are one of the ways the brain talks to itself and talks to the body. In flow, we get five of the most potent neurochemicals that the brain can produce. If you really want to understand why flow allows us to do the impossible, understanding these neurochemicals is key.

All five of them amplify physical performance – everything from increasing strength, deadening pain and amplifying muscle reaction time. More importantly, they impact cognitive function. The state impacts the three sides of the high-performance triangle: motivation, productivity and learning.



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Starting with motivation: besides being performance-enhancing chemicals, the five chemicals that show up in flow are pleasure drugs. In fact they are the five most potent pleasure drugs the brain can produce, and flow is the only time it appears that we get all five at once, which is why flow is the most addictive state on earth. Researchers say flow is the source code of intrinsic motivation. But when you look at that McKinsey study, and you find people 500% more productive in flow, this massive boost in motivation is one of the main reasons for that.

Something similar happens to creativity. Creativity has been called the most important skill of this century and the number one thing we need to thrive. It is also a massively misunderstood concept. Under the hood at a mechanistic level, creativity is fairly straightforward: it happens when the brain takes in novel information, uses that information to connect older ideas, and uses those new ideas that it creates to do something startling and new in the world.

Flow, and the neurochemicals that show up in flow, surround this process. When we move into flow, we take in more information per second so data acquisition goes up. We pay more attention to that information, so salience goes up. We find faster connections between that incoming information and older ideas, so pattern recognition goes up. And we find faster and farther flung connections between that incoming idea and older ideas, so lateral thinking goes up. On the back end, when we have to turn those new ideas into something in the world, risk-taking goes up.

So creativity is surrounded by flow, and as a result in studies we see that flow can amplify creativity by between 400 and 700%, so it is a huge spike. Even cooler, Teresa Amabile at Harvard discovered that that heightened creativity can outlast the flow state by a day, even two. What that suggests is that flow doesn't just train the brain to be more creative in the moment, it actually trains the brain to think more creatively over time.

The final piece in the puzzle is learning. We live in a fast-paced world. If you want to succeed you are going to have to speed up your rate of learning. Flow does this for you. So quick shorthand for how learning works in the brain: the more neurochemicals that show up during an experience, the better chance it's going to move from short-term holding into long-term storage. Flow is this giant neurochemical dump. As a result, in studies run by the US military on radar operators and snipers, they find that learning rates in flow increase 470%.

The really good news is that we now know that flow states are hackable. We have discovered that flow states have triggers: these are preconditions that lead to more flow. There are 20 of them in total, but the first thing you need to know is the most obvious, and that is that flow follows focus. It can only show up when all of our attention is focused on the right here, right now. So most of these triggers drive attention into the now.

There are 20 triggers and they come in two flavours: individual triggers and group triggers that help individuals and groups move into a version of flow. We've all experienced group flow: sung in a church choir, participated in a group brainstorm where ideas are just flying off the wall, for example. All of these 20 triggers drive attention into the now.

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INDIVIDUAL TRIGGERS

Passion/purpose
Risk
Novelty
Complexity
Unpredictability
Deep Embodiment
Immediate Feedback
Clear Goals
Challenge/Skills Ratio
Creativity/Pattern Recognition

GROUP TRIGGERS

Complete concentration
Shared Goals
Shared Risk
Yes and...
Close Listening
Autonomy/A Sense of Control
Blending Egos
Familiarity
Equal Participation
Open Communication

So the first of these individual triggers is passion. We hear a lot about passion these days, and the only reason it matters is that we pay more attention to things we believe in, which drives flow, and flow drives performance.

On risk: why did action adventure sport athletes experience such a spike in the 1990s? Because risk levels started going through the roof, and risk drives focus and drives flow.

If you are interested in applying these triggers in your life, there are a lot of different ways to do it.

When it comes to flow in organisations, you can do it in small, medium or large versions. In group flow, one of the most potent of group flow triggers comes from improvised comedy, with the idea that you always say yes. This means ideas have to be additive, they have to lead somewhere. It doesn't mean you can't critique other people's ideas – you can, but it has to be additive when you do. At Amazon, group flow is so important to Jeff Bezos, and it is so easy for managers in big organisations to say no to new ideas, that Jeff has institutionalised the yes. He has a policy called The Institutional Yes, which is at Amazon if you want to say no to an idea, you can't just say no, you have to write a two-page paper and post it on the internal company website, telling people why you're saying no. They make it very hard.





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To talk about flow in organisations at a medium level, a really good place to look is Montessori education. Ten years ago, Csikszentmihalyi and a University of Utah researcher named Kevin Rathunde went looking for the highest flow arenas they could find that weren't in action sports. One of the things they discovered was Montessori education. Montessori education is an extremely high flow education and its accelerated learning and amplified creativity means Montessori kids tend to outperform others on every single test you can give them, from intellectual tests to social skills.

Montessori education is built around three important flow triggers. The first is autonomy – we like being masters of our own ship and we pay more attention to stuff when we are driving the bus. Montessori education is self-directed learning; the kids get to choose what they are working on.

The next thing Montessori has is uninterrupted concentration – it is built around 90-120 minute blocks of uninterrupted concentration. That is probably the foundational flow hack.

Lastly, deep embodiment, which means paying attention to multiple sensory streams at once. In education, that means emphasising learning through doing, engaging your hands and your eyes and your senses to pay more attention.

In extreme high-performing environments, like working with the Navy seals or working with elite action adventure sport athletes, what you see people doing is literally building their lives around flow triggers. You have got risk, you have novelty, complexity and unpredictability. All these things grab attention and drive it into now.

Any place you see the culture of innovation, like Silicon Valley for example, you see lots of passion, lots of novelty, complexity, unpredictability, lots of risk and therefore massive amounts of flow.

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Another technological advance is transcranial magnetic stimulation – essentially which first involved a radar operator from the US Air Force shooting a weak magnetic pulse through her prefrontal cortex and artificially inducing flow.

They did this crazy experiment at the University of Sydney where they took 46 people and gave them a nine-dot problem to solve – connect nine dots with four lines without taking your pencil off the paper in 10 minutes or less. It was a very complex creative problem-solving challenge that required a lot of pattern recognition and thinking. Under normal conditions, less than 5% of people can solve it, so in the original study group no one solved it.

Then they took a different group of people, gave them transcranial magnetic stimulation, knocked out the prefrontal cortex and amplified pattern recognition and creative problem solving, and then 43% of people solved the problem in record time.

The Air Force has discovered that radar operators that have to detect fancy patterns over long periods of time perform better this way, so they are using it before people go on duty. There are stockbrokers using the same thing before they go onto the trading floor because they can spot more patterns. In Silicon Valley, they are setting up shops where people are doing this not for what it does for cognitive enhancement but because it also, by quietening the prefrontal cortex by turning off the inner critic, resets the nervous system. So it is being used to treat depression and anxiety.

The other thing that is happening is we are getting a lot faster at this stuff. Back in the 1990s, University of Wisconsin neuroscientist Richard Davidson discovered that Tibetan Buddhists who had 30,000 hours of cushion time could put their brains into a really radical state of consciousness where the brain waves were very similar to flow. That is three decades' worth of work, so it's not really practical advice for most of us in the real world.

What we have discovered is that we can use these same EEG headsets to record the brainwave patterns of people that have used 30 years learning to meditate, and then we can use neural feedback to train normal people to move in that direction. We can compress what used to take 30 years into about six weeks of work. We have discovered that even four days of focused meditation is enough to start to enhance cognitive function.

It turns out the vast majority of people find flow doing knowledge work – using their brains, being creative, architecture, coding, and writing. That is probably what most people in this room do all day every day.

Why does all this matter so much? The reason is 3 minutes, 59.4 seconds, which is the amount of time it took for Roger Bannister to run the world's first four-minute mile. When he did that, it was an absolute impossible. There were editorials written in the New York Times by doctors saying it was going to kill him. It also took forever to run that first four-minute mile...

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if you look at mile times, they dropped about a quarter second per decade for 70 years leading up to that. When Roger Bannister ran the first four-minute mile, a month later somebody broke his record. A couple of months later it was broken again, and within 10 years teenagers were breaking that record.

How is that possible? The physical challenge that took us forever to get to didn't change, so all that changed was the mental frame we build around that task. What used to be impossible was suddenly viewed as possible, and that suddenly made it a whole lot more possible. This is known to researchers as the Bannister Effect and what it really is an extremely tight coupling between the mind and the body. You have to believe you are capable of achieving the impossible before you can actually achieve the impossible. There is no other way around it.

This is the reason to focus on flow. This knowledge puts a wonderful and yet terrible burden on each and every one of us. Ask yourself what kind of impossible grand challenges you could go after, what could you solve in your own life, if you could be 500% more productive, 600% more creative, or if you could cut learning times in half. That is exactly what is available to each and every one of you today, and what you choose to do with this information is entirely up to you.





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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

ENEMIES, KARMA, INTEGRITY & SUCCESS – SADHGURU



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LEADERSHIP

Leadership is about inspiration, insight and integrity, Sadhguru said, more than humility. Someone trying to be a commandant, even at home with the family, will discover it doesn't work. Giving orders should not become a habit. There are moments in our lives, and situations when we are in intense activity, where there is no room for debate and what a leader says must be done. There cannot be a debate on the battlefield.

So officers must, even if it is not their natural way, exhibit a certain level of command and force, otherwise situations will not work. But that will not work elsewhere.

What a leader needs is integrity first of all, which means that in their thought and emotion, everything is not about themselves but about the larger wellbeing.

Integrity is not just a bunch of morals or values or ethics. Integrity means that one's intentions have become larger than personal.

Then, people will respect a leader if he has some insight. Making someone a leader is, in some way, placing them on a perch. If you sit on a perch, you must see something more than others are seeing. If you sit on a perch and still see no better than those down below, then you will become an object of ridicule. So it is very important that a leader develops insight to see things clearly.

Another important aspect of leadership is that it is not your words that inspire people. Nobody is going to listen to words. The important thing is to live in such a way that you burn with such intensity that people cannot help catching fire and being intense along with you.

HUMILITY

What is humility? Humility comes not because you present a certain kind of behaviour. Trying to be humble may make you pretentious. It is better you have pride in what you are doing, because then that takes care of you stepping on other people. Above all, we need to understand we are a tiny speck in this solar system. Nature has given us so many privileges of experience, but if we look at the life of the planet and who we are, we are a small pop-up and we will pop out one way or another.

If we understand the context of the time that we occupy here as human beings, the space that we occupy, and who we are, then we are just a tiny speck. If you are conscious of this, there is no need for humility.

As a rule, Sadhguru said, when his daughter was growing up he made sure nobody taught her anything. He said no need for ABC or 1, 2, 3 – leave her alone and just let her grow up. So she grew up like that, and she didn't understand she was a child, she just treated everybody as equal, she called all adults by their first name, and she was just fine. Then he had to put her in school after some time, and when she was about 12 something happened at school and it disturbed her.



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She came home and complained he was teaching everyone so many things but not teaching her anything.

Sadhguru told her he was not there to teach anyone anything unsolicited. If she was asking, he would teach her. And he told her that all she needed to know about life was never to look up to anybody. Never look up to anybody and never look down on anybody – just see life the way it is. Then you will navigate your way through life effortlessly. That is all it takes, we don't need humility and nor do we need arrogance.

MORTALITY

We need to come to terms with the fact that we are mortal, Sadhguru said. This life is mortal in nature and you cannot think you are going to live forever. A time will come where you must be ready to ease your way through. You must understand that you come at a certain time and go at a certain time. You don't want an untimely death but when the time is up you must be willing to go. If you are not willing to go, you will definitely make it miserable for yourself. If our children are not willing to let us go, that will also make it miserable.

So it is extremely important that we handle both life and death with a certain wisdom and understanding that we are not here for good. Our time here is limited and how we use it is important. Life quality is not going to be enhanced by simply stretching it by another few months, or a year or two. If we are observant of the life forces within us, we will see when life is not going to revive itself.

Tubes and needles are not the way to go. It is important to live well and to die well, because death is the last act we perform in life. There is nothing morbid about our mortality – it is a fundamental aspect of our existence. Only if we are conscious of this reality will we plan and enact our life in as beautiful a manner as possible.





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RIGHT AND WRONG

People who think in terms of right and wrong are too absolutist about life, Sadhguru said. Life is not about absolutism, it is about layers. In a sense, the creator and creation are wrapped into the same thing. Our very body has been created from within. So this piece of creation and the source of creation are mixed up.

Right now, this sense of right and wrong is because we have a linear way of thinking, looking at everything in black and white. Let's say man and woman – this is absolute, you are one or the other. But you are here because a man and a woman came together. So just because you are a woman does not mean your father made no contribution, and the same if you are a man. You are a mix-up of man and woman. On the surface, you are just a man or just a woman but deep down you are both because how can you say your mother or your father doesn't exist within you.

What is right, what is wrong? People who think they are doing the right thing are always the cruellest and the most horrible people. A whole lot of people that think they are empowered by a divine authority have done the cruellest things in the world.

Sadhguru said please don't think in terms of right and wrong. Our actions have to be appropriate to the situations in which we exist. What we did 1,000 years ago won't fit into today.

It is not about right and wrong, it is about the appropriateness of our existence in a given situation. When we act, any action we perform, we must know the consequences. Will my actions bring wellbeing to myself and everybody around me? If you hold this one thing within you, you don't have to worry about what is right and what is wrong. As long as your volition is inclusive, your intention is inclusive, and everybody's wellbeing is included in your intentions, you need not worry about right and wrong.

It is not about the action, it is the intention that matters. You must fix the direction of your life so that it is always inclusive, whatever you do, to include everybody's wellbeing.





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SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Sadhguru said accepting failure is a dangerous process – you may get used to it. You can learn from your failure, he said, but it is better you learn not to fail.

But our idea of success has to be engineered properly, he said, because now our idea of success is about being better than somebody else and a certain kind of lifestyle. That is why there is so much anxiety if something doesn't work as planned. We must understand that the most precious thing in our life is life itself – there is nothing else we have. We may think we have many things but it is all psychological. The only thing we have is life. Success and failure is not about one or two events that happen in your life. It is just that no matter what life threw at you, you knew what to do. What life throws is not always our fault, but what we make out of it is 100% our choice.

If you are exercising this choice always, you are a successful human being because you know how to be. We are the only creature that is referred to as a being because the success of this life is that we know how to be. If you know how to be, you will keep yourself in a most fantastic state of experience, because profoundness of experience is the most important thing.

Right now, you may think you are successful because of whatever your idea of success is. Some think that is money, wealth, alcohol, love, knowledge or pleasure. But essentially you are seeking profoundness of experience, Sadhguru said, and once you know how to sit here with a profound experience of life, you are a successful human being.

We must understand that the human experience essentially comes from within us. Whether it is pain or pleasure, joy or misery, agony or ecstasy, it comes from within. If we take charge of this we will choose the highest level of pleasantness.

So if you being joyful and loving, and that is down to your own nature, then every relationship will work well. Whatever sort of relationships you make, whatever your career, you will do it to the best of your ability. There is substantial evidence now to show that only when you are in a pleasant state of experience does your body and your mind work at their best.

For you to succeed in this physical world, this is all it takes, Sadhguru said. You must have a few brain cells working properly and limbs to do what you need to do. But without getting your body and your brain to function according to your needs, you will not be successful. You will only be successful by accident, and that leads to anxiety. Your success must be rooted in your competence, figured out in your mind, and for that to happen you must be in a pleasant state of experience. Whatever else is going on, you must never be the issue in your life.

Right now, the problem in most people's lives is their own emotions, which become the greatest impediments they are facing. You must make sure you are never the problem in your life. This is our mission – to make sure human beings are not tripping on their own feet.

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KARMA

First of all, karma is not a theory, and it is not a punishment and reward system, said Sadhguru. Karma is a self-recording process – every experience that happens to you, every perception that you have, this system goes on recording so that a large part of your life need not be thought through every moment. A large part of it can be handled automatically – you can walk, for example. If you look at the physical laws involved in a human being walking on two legs, it involves an enormous amount of physics. But today you can just get up and walk without thinking.

This is all karma – there is genetic memory, there is evolutionary memory, there is conscious and unconscious levels of memory, articulate and inarticulate. This whole body is memory.

Right now, you may not remember how your great great grandfather looked ten generations ago, said Sadhguru. But his nose is sitting on your face right now. Your skin tone comes from your forefathers many centuries ago. This whole framework of a human being is a consequence of a certain amalgamation of memories. These memories allow you to function and this is your karma. Without it you wouldn't know one thing.

Karma is not a concept, it is not a punishment and reward system. It is just that you exist only because of your karma. Your karma is not conscious, it simply happens in a compulsive and instinctive manner. For any other creature, functioning instinctively is fine. Once you become human, you're supposed to function intelligently and consciously.

Karma is not a problem, you exist because of your karma. You don't suffer because of your karma; you suffer because you react to it or you react to somebody else's karma. It is in reaction that you suffer. There are only two kinds of suffering – physical suffering or mental suffering. Physical pain is one thing, but multiplying that in your mind is called suffering.





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Physical pain is important for our survival. If there was no physical pain we wouldn't protect our body, we would rip it up. Physical pain is an essential part of our survival process, but suffering is a physiological reaction to either physiological or social situations around us. Karma is vital for our existence – it is not the problem. You are an individual only because of your karmic matter. It is just memory of things that have already happened.

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What happened 10 years ago is not alive right now, and what is going to happen the day after tomorrow is not alive right now either. So you should not suffer that which does not exist. You must understand your joy is also your karma, your misery, your suffering. Karma means you are doing it. When you say 'my life is my karma,' you are admitting your life is your own making.

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This is the most dynamic way to exist and this is the only culture on the planet that looks at life like this, said Sadhguru. A whole lot of cultures believe their life is managed from somewhere above. But we are sitting on a round planet that is spinning all the time so we don't even know which is up and which is down.

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Karma is a very dynamic, adult way of looking at life. This is my making. Right now, if I am joyful and this is my making. If I am miserable, this is my making. This is the most dynamic way to exist because if you see it is your making then you can fix it. If it is God's making you cannot fix it. That is a big difference.

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RELATIONSHIPS

Life is like juggling a ball. If you are alone it is just one ball so it is easy to do. You become two, then two balls, requires a bit more attention. Then you become four, you have four balls to juggle. So how many balls can you juggle joyfully? That is how many you should pick up.

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Sadhguru told how a top executive of a global company came to him some time ago in a deep state of distress and said he couldn't take all the stress. Sadhguru told him he should get fired; there must be many other people aspiring for that job. If he got fired, he could walk on the beach. He was not happy with that. So if you're in a job, you suffer; if you're married, you suffer; if you're single, you suffer. The problem is not the wife or the job or the world. Whether you suffer or not is essentially with you.

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What the world throws at you is not your choice but what you make out of it is your choice. You can keep you the way you want. What the world does to you that is how it is. What you do to yourself is in your hands. Your life is your karma. Nobody can decide how you will be right now, except yourself.

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Today you are here and many of you have children, and you clearly know that with your children, unless you say something logically sensible they are not willing to take it from you even if you happen to be a loving, doting parent. Because for the first time in the history of humanity, the human intellect is more cultivated in more people than ever before.

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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

THE IDEAL EDUCATION: SIR KEN ROBINSON WITH SADHGURU



*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes

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Sir Ken Robinson: We are creatures that grow from small beginnings, and what we grow into depends on several factors. One is the conditions that surround us and one is the extent to which we engage with the life within us.

For the past 20 years, education has become a strategic issue around the world. When I was a student, nobody was very interested in what was happening in other countries in education. I was growing up in England and we didn't really care about what was happening in Finland; those in America cared little for what was done in Spain.

But now governments are interested and education has become a strategic issue, because of the nature and pace of globalisation. Education has been seen as a process to encourage competition and economic success between countries. That has led to the most corrupt and sterile form of education that you can imagine for our children. Our children are suffering from higher levels of stress than ever before. More and more kids are not graduating from high school. I hate the expression 'drop out' – in America today, something like 30% of kids that start the ninth grade don't complete the twelfth grade.

If you were running any kind of enterprise and you lost 30% of your clients every year, you might wonder whether it was the clients at fault or your enterprise. To call these kids drop outs makes it sound like they failed the system, when in fact it is much more accurate to say the system has failed them. I don't know any kid who doesn't want to learn – children are born with infinite possibilities and a massive appetite to learn.

In the first 18 months of life, children learn to speak and nobody teaches them. You don't teach them as a parent – it's far too complicated and you wouldn't have the patience. Kids absorb language through their skin. You nudge them and correct them, but you don't teach them. If they grow up in a home where there are six languages spoken, they will learn all of those.



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The problem they have is with education, which is the time when we start to decide to systematically teach them things. Many of the rhythms of education are obstructive to the natural rhythms of learning.

My premise is that children are born with immense natural capacity, they have a tremendous appetite to learn, and education has become the problem.

When you say what is the aim of education, my take is that all of us are born into two worlds: the world that existed before we came into it and will be there when we're gone; and the world that exists only because we exist. That is the world of our private consciousness, the world of our self, of our own anxieties, hopes and aspirations.

Education is filled with the outer world, and most of the problems that children experience are to do with their inner world. So as I see it the role of education is to help children understand the world around them and also the world within them, so that they can become compassionate, fulfilled and engaged individuals. For me, the great deficit in education at the moment is the extent to which we fail to engage the child's inner world and recognise how much they could become if we invested enough of our time and effort into understanding what their possibilities are.

Sadhguru: There is no perfect school anywhere and I'm glad, because this aspiration for perfection everywhere is very death-oriented. It is something that most people have missed. The nature of life is never perfect, only death is perfect. Never has death happened imperfectly and never has life happened perfectly. If school is about life, then there is no perfect school.

Having said that, someone once said that education is a necessary evil. It is a necessary evil because there is a resident evil in the world. We have very convoluted aspirations, in the sense that most parts of education are trying to manufacture cogs for the larger machine that we have built. Our children are the fuel, unfortunately. We have to put them into some slot where they'll function well.

The world is no more about people but about the economic engine we are driving. It has become bigger than us. We have to keep the engine going and we are scared to stop it for a moment. The problem is we have created a world where, if our economies fail, we will be depressed. If our economies succeed, we'll be damned for good.

Talking about a school as a way of manufacturing cogs for the machine, every nation has its own system. If I have to shape you into a particular shape, that is a cruel process. But now, we can't let the machine fail – it needs spare parts. It constantly has to absorb, and humanity is the spare parts – our children are the fuel.



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This is why I have addressed education in three different dimensions. There is one form of education called Isha Vidhya, which is for the rural masses in India, where the problem is that they are in an economic and social pit that they cannot get out of by themselves. The only ladder for them is education – employment-generating education.

But there are reasonably well-to-do people that might have gone through that in the previous generation, but this generation need not think about how to earn a living. They are looking to expand who they are, so we have Isha Home School, which caters to that. This kind of education costs money, so only people that can afford it can do that.

There is another form of education where people are not interested in serving this machine or that machine. They want individuals to blossom, so we have Isha Samskriti, where there is no academic education of any kind, they only learn music, dance, art, Sanskrit language, Kalari (which is the mother of all martial arts), English language and yoga. These children are a treat to watch. This is how children should have been.

At the age of 15, for three years they go into monastic life. Compulsorily they must go and compulsorily they must come out at 18. They cannot continue and must get back to normal life. This is for discipline and focus, but you cannot make the entire world like that. This is an ideal to work towards, and the idea of this kind of school is just to develop the human body and the human brain without any intention of what they should become. They can become whatever they want, but the human body and mind should grow to their fullest capability and attention is the main thing.

An indiscriminate and unprejudiced attention is what we're trying to evolve in the children – which they learn to pay attention to everything in the same way, that they don't divide the world into good and bad, high and low. They learn to pay the same attention to everything. I guaranteed them one thing – if you enter the school the commitment is 12 years – and I guaranteed they would not get a certificate at the end. No one ever asks for my certificate. I said doors in the world may open a little slowly but when they open they will stay open, because it is not by qualifications but by competence that you open doors.

It is just that everybody is in a mad race. Your children should do better than your neighbour's children – this is a disease.

Why education has become a problem in the world is because people become who they are based on what they have gathered. This is unfortunate. Right now, whether it is material things or knowledge, it makes people who they are. No, who you are and what you have gathered is two different things. This is a really important distinction. What you gather is just information and things. Information is a thing by itself. It should not determine who you are.

I keep repeating to people that whatever I have gathered does not determine who I am, because the biggest problem in the world is that from the day you are born all kinds of people are trying to teach you something that has not worked in their life.

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Sir Ken Robinson: One of the major problems is that we didn't have systems of mass education as we know them now until pretty much the middle of the 19th century. They were invented, made up, as part of industrialisation. It was associated with the big move from the countryside to the cities to provide a workforce for the economy. It was a massive piece of social engineering and that is why the system is shaped the way it was. We needed a majority of people to do blue-collar work, which is why we had a relatively broad base of elementary education, and a relatively small group of people to do clerical administrative work in suits, which is why we had a small university sector.

In Britain, we all used to take an exam at 11 that determined what sort of school we went to. It was really an IQ test, but people thought of it as a blood test that told them how smart they were. Actually it was just their capacity to do that type of test, and like a driving test, you could get better at it. A lot of people were trained to do it and got through it.

But the consequence is we created this system where there were a small group of winners who did very well by it, and a lot that didn't. Part of the problem is that the system of education is burdened with certain ideological assumptions, and one of those is a whole set of ideas about intelligence. The whole ideal of Western education is to get people to university, and therefore we have this deeply mistaken assumption that intelligence is the same thing as academic ability. Academic ability is very important but it is limited, it is an ability to do certain types of deductive reasoning and certain types of critical discourse.

The upshot is that if you're not very good at that you are thought not to be very smart. If you create a very narrow conception of ability, you create a very broad conception of disability and inability.

I'm from Liverpool in England and I went to school across the city from Sir Paul McCartney. I wrote a book a few years ago called *The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything*, and I interviewed lots of people for that, one of whom was Sir Paul McCartney.





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I asked him if he enjoyed music at school and he said no, and his music teacher didn't think he had any talent. One of the other people in the same music programme in the same school was George Harrison. The music teacher didn't think he had any talent either.

I said to Paul, would it be reasonable to think there was this one music teacher in Liverpool who had half The Beatles in his class, and he missed it? And he said yes. That's quite an oversight. But if you create this narrow view of ability, you automatically create this issue.

In the 1950s there was a big polio epidemic that ran right through America and Europe and I got it – I am one of seven kids and I was the only one who got it, and the only one on the street. I was in hospital and I ended up going to special education from ages 5 to 11, which is what they used to do. I was in a school that had lots of kids with polio, cerebral palsy, partially sighted, blind, deaf kids. Cerebral palsy is a terrible thing to deal with because you're fighting your body all the time. If you try to speak and it has affected your face you sound as if you are talking nonsense, but it is just that you can't get the words out. A guy sitting next to me couldn't grip a pencil with his fingers but he could grip it in his toes. He had beautiful writing, better than mine actually.

We were surrounded by people like this. My classroom at school was like the bar room scene from Star Wars, with people in varying degrees of decrepitude being brought in. But nobody was interested in what people's disabilities seemed to be. We were interested in what they were good at, and if they were smart or interesting. The fact is that many of the things they had difficulties with weren't what really defined them, but if you have trouble writing or speaking it is assumed you have some associating mental incapacity. That is why you get this big conception of disability.

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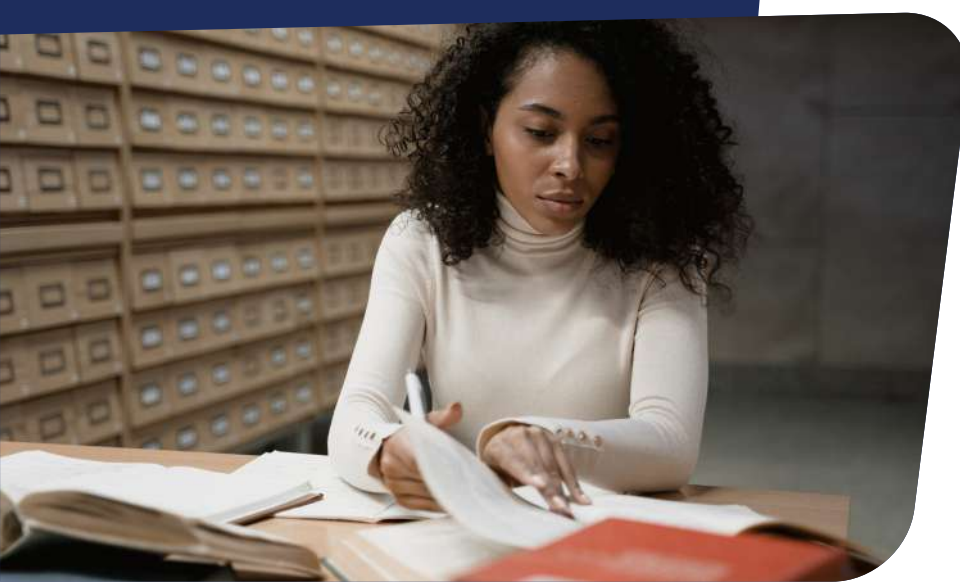
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If you reframe the conception of ability, suddenly you discover all these talents and possibilities that were inherent all the time. That is a dramatic example of what happens in mainstream education – all kinds of children are told they have problems who don't have them. They're created by the system. It's the problem with the system that we need to address. If you reframe ability, all these problems people seem to be suffering from suddenly disappear. If you find the things they're good at, if you create an environment that is holistic and addresses spiritual and physical development and recognises that human life is not linear, it's organic, then you have a completely set of conditions under which people will flourish.

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We now have a system based on competition, a narrow view of ability, and one in which people are medicated to stay with the programme. They're being pathologized for losing interest in what is essentially very boring stuff. We sit them down all day long and wonder why they fidget. We know what to do in education, and that's about taking it to scale. That doesn't mean replicating it, because there's no perfect school. There are no two schools alike as there are no two individuals alike. But there are principles you can apply everywhere and getting those principles in place is the big challenge now.

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Sadhguru: As we are looking for an evolution of the human being through the education system, the education system should always be evolving itself. When we are thinking of the perfect school, we are thinking of fixing it somewhere. That's what needs to change. As one can develop muscle by doing certain things with the body, one can develop intelligence.

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If a child goes through 20 years of education and comes out with a PhD, they say 70% of intelligence is irrecoverably destroyed. We are mistaking information for education. By deadening the brain with too much information, the possibility of intelligence is lost. What we accumulate and who we are should remain separate.

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What we are mistaking to be inner world is still external in my perception, because a child's fears, ambitions, aspirations are all external – inspired or infected by the outside situation. It is not natural aspiration of life. The natural aspiration of life, if you leave someone uninfluenced, is always to expand, not to become less. But if you look at today's education, which is purely intellect based with no other dimension of intelligence in it, intellect has been mistaken for intelligence.

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Your intellect can function only with the backing of your memory, or your intellect functions with accumulated information. If I take away all your memory, your intellect is quite useless by itself. But there are other dimensions of intelligence within you, which do not need the support of memory. If education systems do not focus on activating these dimensions of intelligence, you will find factory workers, not a genius in every home. What you need is innovative intelligence.



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Innovation is not about developing the next iPhone. Life is not better with a new phone – maybe we are doing more things but equally confused and struggling as we were before. So the point is not about what we have gathered, which is useful for creating comfort for the world but not for wellbeing for ourselves and the world. If wellbeing is to happen we have to access dimensions of intelligence that are not intellectual, because intellect cannot function without accumulated information.

If you function always out of accumulated information, you naturally get associated with it. So depending on what you have accumulated, you become that kind. Then another kind and your kind go into conflict. The purpose of education is to expand horizons of human beings and that is not happening. The more educated somebody becomes, the less they can get on with others. Once you become educated you become isolated. This is the nature of intellect – because you are employing only one wheel out of four wheels of your car. If you drive on just two wheels, you may be good at it but everybody around you will stop. If you drive on four wheels, everybody will drive with you.

So other dimensions of intelligence have to come, otherwise the moment you get intellectual in some way you exclude the world. The way of our education has been to butcher the existence into tiny fragments and we're trying to fix the fragments – it's not going to work like that.

If education has to become holistic, the people who deliver the system need upgrading in a big way. Every system can be made to work well. I have seen in India the most rudimentary system of state education. I found some schools are as good as pig sties in terms of what they are producing. Some are doing wonderful work, with the same stuff. It is the people who deliver – if you upgrade the people, it makes a big difference. If we're interested in future generations of our humanity, the best people in the world must go into teaching. But right now the lowest grade of people are going because everything is determined by economics and how much you are paid.

What you accumulate should not determine who you are – as long as that is so, economic values will rule. As long as economic values rule, it is the muscle that rules and not intelligence.

Sir Ken Robinson: How do we create inspiring teachers or give them the room to foster different skills in pupils? There are several strands to organised education, and one of them is the curriculum, which is what we want people to learn. So a big part of the argument is we need a different sort of curriculum. At the moment in America, for example, we have a very narrow form of curriculum that is based primarily on a fairly impoverished view of science, technology and maths.

I say impoverished because maths can be a fantastically invigorating discipline. Years ago, I asked a professor of pure mathematics at the university I worked at how you would assess a PhD in pure mathematics. He said there are two criteria – originality, in other words how creative it is and whether it breaks new ground. And the second is aesthetic, which matters because mathematicians believe that maths is the purest way we have of describing some of the truths of nature, and since nature is inherently beautiful, the more elegant the proof the more likely it is to be true.

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To a mathematician, mathematics is a beautiful abstract language like poetry. And the problem people have is they don't speak maths. If you don't read music, if you look at a page of notation what you see is a visual puzzle. If you read music, you don't see a puzzle, you hear a symphony. It's the same with maths; mathematicians who speak maths see a symphony, not a puzzle. So a lot of the problem in mathematics is a literacy problem.



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So part of it is we have a limited conception of these disciplines and a fairly impoverished view. What I'm arguing for, and it's implicit in what I understand of Sadhguru's schools and what he's been telling us, is you need a broad curriculum that recognises that education has a whole range of functions and we have to address physical development, spiritual development and our emotional development. Then all of that is tied up with a bigger view of consciousness.

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Therefore, you need a school curriculum which has the arts, the humanities, sciences, technology – not in a hierarchy but equally and co-equally important. It is important for every reason and also because for some kids that is where their real lives are going to lie.

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The second part of education is pedagogy, which is how we aim to teach people these things, and teaching is the most important part of that. The reason Sadhguru is having the effect he is having on the world is because he is such a brilliant teacher. Teaching is what this is about, and teaching is not something that can be reduced to direct instruction. It is not about telling people what to think, it is facilitating knowing. It is creating conditions where people will come to understand for themselves by probing them, questioning them, raising their curiosity and giving them some techniques. To reduce it to a process of giving information to people is not good – I really don't like this language of 'delivering the curriculum'.

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Great teachers know that instruction may be part of it, but the larger part is enabling, facilitating, piquing people's curiosity, engaging them and inspiring their imaginations to see the possibility in something. It's a very sophisticated process and one of the reasons our education system has stumbled is that we have demeaned the profession of teaching, we haven't respected it in the way we should, we don't compensate people in the way they need. The best teachers aren't necessarily the ones with the best degrees – that's a big mistake we have made.

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The third bit of education is assessment, and that is important. I can't think of any education process that doesn't benefit by people making assessments of it. But assessment is not testing – assessment is about making judgements on what is going on, whether it is worthwhile, and how people are progressing. All great teachers do that, they sense whether this is happening or not. You don't have to give people numbers for that.

In America, we have ended up with a very narrow curriculum which has been compressed because there was a piece of legislation passed 20 years ago called No Child Left Behind. What happened was the government decided America was falling behind in the international race for education and it had to compete and the children were the foot soldiers. The way standards had to be raised was through standardised testing – it's a terrible mistake to confuse standardisation with raising standards.

Then they released this opportunity to the publishing companies. On the one hand you have conformity as a big principle of the current system, and if you want conformity you need compliance, and that is what the standardised testing movement is about. This is a business and it's really stifling our children at the moment. In 2013, the National Football League in America was a \$9bn business. The US domestic cinema box office was an \$11bn business, and the education testing and support industry in America was a \$16bn business in the same year. It's massive, so it's a business. That is what is squeezing the life out of our children.

Governments have taken a view that the way you raise standards is by focusing on the curriculum and on testing, and the opposite is true. The only way you improve education is by focusing on teaching. Because in the end it is children that are trying to learn, and that is an expert, personal job. This is a personal process of cultivating interest, curiosity, talent and an awareness of the world around you, if we lose sight of that and the role of teaching we end up in the mess we're in.

The good news is this can be changed, and it is changing. But it couldn't be more urgent. We currently face on earth challenges that are without precedent in the history of humanity. On the one hand you have exponential growth in technology and its impact on culture, on economy and on the way people live. That has revealed all kinds of possibilities, many of them miraculously good. There are things we are capable of now we couldn't even contemplate 50 years ago.

But the big problem is that our spiritual development seems to be lagging a long way behind our technological capabilities.

The second thing is our population now is accelerating at a rate where we are already the largest generation in the history of humanity. It took the whole of history to get to a billion people in 1800, and in 1930 it was two billion, 1970 three billion. Between 1970 and 2000 the population of the earth doubled from three to six billion. We are now heading for nine billion by the middle of this century, and we know the earth can't handle it.



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There was an interesting programme on the BBC about how many people the earth can sustain. We all need food, fuel and water to survive, and air to breathe, and if everybody on the earth consumed food, fuel and water at the same rate as the average person in India, the earth could sustain a maximum population of 15 billion people. So we are halfway there. But of course we don't all consume as they do in India. If we all consumed at the same rate as the average person in North America, the earth could sustain a maximum population of 1.5 billion. And we're five times past that, and that's on current methods of production.

We are heading to an abyss here, and if we don't change course by the middle of this century we are going to need four more planets to make this work. These problems aren't being caused by the rest of life on earth, but by human beings. It's a problem of consciousness, and of creativity.

People talk about saving the planet, and the general conclusion has to be that the planet will be fine. It will shake us off like a rash.

There was a very good observation by HG Wells, the science fiction writer, who said that civilisation is a race between education and catastrophe. And there is some truth in that – education in the sense of developing our capacity and our understanding of ourselves, each other and the world around us. If we don't take seriously these principles then we are condemning our children to a bleak future, and the idea that all of this can be solved by fuelling the profits of the testing companies is hard to comprehend that anyone would take that seriously. It is a case of terminal myopia and it really couldn't be more important.

It is about principles: it is about conditions, it is about having a holistic view of humanity, of children's growth and potential, recognising the power of teaching, and recognising that you need to get these balances right and that we can do it.

Sadhguru: In terms of my experience of school, I went to school only when it was absolutely necessary. I had very innovative ways of staying away from school, because right from my childhood one thing that got stuck in my head is that if someone is saying something that means something to them, however simplistic or stupid it is, I am willing to pay full attention. But if someone is saying something that doesn't mean a damn thing to him or her, but it's some big stuff, I'm not interested in that. Because why should I listen to something you're not interested in.

Essentially this instruction business comes from this. When you think you need to instruct somebody, you have assumed that those whom you instruct are of a lower intelligence than yourself, which is a severe mistake. There are sufficient scientific papers to show everybody, every one of us, who are 30 years of age, are not as intelligent as a 6-year-old child. The only reason we look smarter is because we have information and the child does not – we are just showing off this information.

If we bring the teacher training process and take away the word instruction, instead bringing inspiration and transmission as a way of life for the teachers, every school system could become a fruitful process. A child would sit up and listen.

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Our school is a seven-day school – there is no holiday and no weekend. This may be shocking for America. If one knows the joy of learning, why would they want to take a break? Activity needs to be adjusted according to the child's ability to do things. So in a month we have four to five activity days that are not determined. It is always a surprise for the child. They will never know when it is activity day. Academics are well woven with arts, music, everything, to such a point that when pupils come to years 11 and 12 they all want to get into professional colleges. In India, you don't get into a professional college unless you have 99.5%. The Delhi University has a legend of refusing children that got 100 out of 100, because there's no space for them.

This marks madness catches up and the parents go mad. We have spent 10 years bringing arts, music, and culture into their lives – everything will be dumped and just maths and science is done. So I made the years 11 and 12 into three years. If you want to come, you come, because we invested so much in art and culture and then when you get to 16 years of age you drop everything and go into the professions. You are a doctor who cannot sing, you are a dangerous doctor. If you are an engineer that doesn't understand the engineering of your own body, then you cannot dance.

So we made two years into three years and the children go a year after everyone else. It is not a race – education is not a race. A year later they go more mature and more complete. We did this and almost 90% of parents want their children to do that extra year, because we bring many aspects of management and business that are not in the curriculum, and music, theatre, art. That is working out wonderfully for the children. They are coming out much more rounded.

When the school started, the first question that came was whether I was going to give them a spiritual teaching. I said a spiritual teaching is for the stupid that have lost life sense. If you allow human intelligence, if you know how to nurture human intelligence without influencing it, that is how intelligence is inflamed. You don't need to influence – everybody wants to influence.





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This wanting to influence comes from a religious thread in the education system, a very strong sense of opposites – good and bad, right and wrong, good and evil. The political parties look like two different religions, because it is such strong opposites. That is not what democracy is about – you should be able to switch from one side to another.

This is very much present in education, this strong sense of opposites. This is where there is something that education systems can pick up from the East, where we don't have a strong sense of opposites, because our gods are devils also, our devils are gods also, you cannot determine what is beautiful, what is ugly, because everything is one big happening.

If you want to nurture human intelligence, this strong sense of opposites has to go. There is no one in this room that is 24 hours good or 24 hours bad. It is just when you are conscious you function in one way and when you are unconscious you may do something lousy. This happens to every human being.

A conditioned intelligence will tend to do a certain thing. The purpose of education is to decondition the intelligence, so that it becomes an active intelligence, adapting to situations, doing the right thing for situations in which it exists. Today, in some way education systems are trying to condition the intelligence this way or that because there is a strong thread of religion in there. There is a strong sense of opposites that cannot meet.

Sir Ken Robinson: If curiosity is the engine of achievement, how do we keep it? If creativity can be valued as literacy is valued, how do we hold onto that?

The Western rational view is that thinking is a process of making distinctions, seeing differences between things and making things into categories. That's been a brilliant success in many ways. A really good example of this is the taxonomic process in the natural world, which gave us an amazing system of classifying natural things into genus and species and sub-species. If you go into a natural history museum, you can see all of this at work.

Dotted lines for writing notes.



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But if you leave the natural history museum and go to the countryside, you don't see that classification. In life, these things are all mixed up, they cross-pollinate the environment they all depend upon. That's the principle of economy – it's all about relationships and not about separate categories. In schools, we divide the arts and the sciences, but it's just a device because in the world all the scientists I know are deeply affected by aesthetic interests. Look at the world of engineers. I'm a big advocate for dance, and in most school systems dance is out of the picture entirely, even though I think it's as important as maths.

You can talk about your liver and your kidneys as separate entities but they only function together. It's the only way it actually makes sense. It's about how these things connect that matters so much.

So the better way is to see that thinking is all about relationships and making connections, so we end up in school saying 'are you a scientist or an artist?', and it doesn't have to be a choice.

When I talk about creativity I often ask people how creative they think they are. Many people that are creatives will say they are not really very smart, or people that think they are very creative will say they're not very intelligent. In fact, creativity and intelligence aren't separate. They are functions of the same thing. Creativity is about having fresh ideas and that's a function of intelligence. Creativity is not separate from literacy.

Creativity seems to be the hallmark of human intelligence, however you describe it. There is something prior, which is imagination. The imagination is the power to bring into mind things that aren't present, and creativity is putting that to mind in some way. The best evidence of the power of human creativity is that we all create our own lives. Every human life is a unique achievement. There have been 100 billion people on the planet and every single life has been different.

Human beings don't live, as others seem to, only in the direct physical world. We live in worlds of ideas and beliefs and values and cultural references. We all live in virtual worlds, and it's what the great cultural conflicts are about, when people's perception of the world comes into conflict – the great religions tearing each other apart out of ideas.

Creativity is the starting point of education – you have to help people see that many things that we think are provisional and can be changed, they can be recreated. There is another realm of possibilities people can come to occupy and inhabit. Teaching is about enlivening the capacity to ask questions, the sense of intrigue about the world around us. It is that that gets killed in schools when it comes down to testing and taking instruction.

Sadhguru: The thing is you can't raise children, you can raise cattle. Children grow up and you can only create a conducive atmosphere. You can have two children with the same genetics, same home, same school, and they will grow in different directions. There are different ways to perceive the same thing. The receptivity in our minds works in different ways.



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In yoga, there are ten dimensions of receptivity. I'll talk about five because the other five are too esoteric. These five are referred to as centres of sleep, centres of memory, centres of imagination, centres of right perception and centres of perversion. It is there in all of us. Let's say the same information comes to all of us right now. Someone who is sleepy will perceive it one way, someone who is deep into memory will perceive it another way, as will someone in a heightened sense of imagining, or equanimity.

Whatever I give you, depending on from which centre you perceive it, it becomes that. So you may have two children with all inputs the same and they will go in different directions. The important thing is, when you say picking up a young child and saying you're the Dalai Lama or similar, then you are trying to influence them powerfully. An intelligence should not be influenced. An influenced intelligence is a dangerous intelligence, because an intelligence that is not influenced will always be the solution. An intelligence that is profoundly influenced is always a divisive intelligence, because it is me versus you, with a strong sense of right and wrong.

For example, right now there is an Islamic state and we need to look at this in reality. There is somebody out there who believes in something that is more precious to them than they're life. When a man is willing to die for his beliefs, you have to at least recognise he is genuine. There is no better proof. But the result of that is another thing – the consequence of that firm belief is another thing, but you have to appreciate that this man believes in something far more precious than his own life.

Every life holds its own life of highest importance, whether ant or elephant. He does everything possible to live, because life is precious.

Sir Ken Robinson: All the figures support that view that children from middle class and wealthier backgrounds do better at school, do better at tests, and children from impoverished backgrounds do less well. Non-graduation rates are much higher in impoverished backgrounds, of which there are many more than there used to be. That is true of our African American communities and Hispanic communities.

It is also the case that although it would be wrong to say that if you don't graduate from high school you go to jail, that's not true. What is true is that a very high proportion of people in jail, over 60% in America, did not complete high school.

That economic element to all this is significant and it is creating a chasm in the country. It has to be addressed in an urgent way.

America prides itself for being the best country in the world. But nobody has a guaranteed place any more. In the middle of the 19th century Britain had the largest empire in human history – the biggest military programme, the biggest economy, the biggest colonial programme. If you had gone to the court of Queen Victoria in 1870 and said the empire would be over within a generation, no one would have believed you, but it was. By 1918 we had lost a generation of people in another foolish war, we were virtually bankrupted by it, in 1939 it all happened again and by 1945 it was finished. I was born in 1950 in Liverpool and we played in bomb craters and were on rationing.

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America is living a dream at the moment that all this is completely sustainable and can carry on in perpetuity, but it won't. America is the most powerful place on the planet at the moment, but it is haemorrhaging generations of children with no economic hope and no purchase on a life that can add up to anything so far, wallowing in all kinds of crime and drug abuse. To say this isn't the consequence of America's economic policy is delusional – it is down to a flagrant disregard for the wellbeing of the people. With so much wealth concentrated with such a small group of people, this is a serious issue for the country.

Sadhguru: Empires have closed down without any major disasters like WW2. In India, many empires rose that spread right across the subcontinent and then they just closed down by themselves without any war or external interference. There was a time when 36% of the world's economy was Indian and everybody wanted to go to India. That economy just closed down simply because they were doing so well and they decided they needed to protect themselves. That was their biggest mistake. In trying to protect themselves, what was a very transparent culture, they tried to become little introvert and they successfully did it. Then came the invasions and all the other things.

But one of the biggest undoings for India was they became introvert and thought they needed to protect themselves. Before that they embraced everything. The walls of protection that you build are also walls of self-imprisonment.

Sir Ken Robinson: I didn't have a terrible time at school. The school I went to broadly worked for me. I went to a grammar school – although I am very keen to qualify the importance of academic work, it worked for me and I rather liked it. But the thing I disliked most about it was I was put on a fast track at school which meant I had to drop things. I liked art at school but I wasn't allowed to do both art and German. I was told German would be more useful and I was baffled by that. The implication was that somehow art was useless. Most school curricula are still divided into two groups of subjects – useful ones and useless ones. The useless ones are art, music, dance and so on. We never did music at school because it wasn't thought to be relevant to the academic track.

One thing I have often argued is that dance in schools is as important as maths. To most western people that sounds like a bizarre exaggeration. But it's not – we are physical creatures. To watch dancers at work is the most extraordinary thing, because it's a holistic activity.

Sadhguru: The way I perceive the world, life does not respect grading and it is only schools and education systems that respect grading. In the end, who does well in the world is not determined by how many marks they got, but they are given an extra advantage because they got so many marks.

I remember these monthly tests and monthly report cards given out at school. Some children would strut around with pride and some would be afraid to go home. Whenever it was given to me, I just gave it to my dad. He would open it and I had no idea what was happening – it was a communication between my teacher and my father. I never once opened and saw what was written in it.



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When the final test or exam came, my concern was I didn't want to be left behind so I always passed that one. But I wrote my paper only for the pass mark. Throughout my entire education, I was just waiting for the bell to get up and leave. My only concern was to keep up with my friends – except for that I had no interest in anything. I paid enormous attention to every detail of what was around me, but I was not interested in grades.

This is one thing I feel we have to bring to our children, which is the ability to attend to something whether it is important or not important. My father, being a very high level academic and a physician, was meant to be a strict disciplinarian but it didn't work on me. Every evening I was meant to read my textbook, so I would open the book, find a little speck on the paper and that would absorb me for the next two hours. I would sit like that for two hours without reading a single word.

The mistake we have made is to set strong opposites of what is important and what is not important. If human intelligence applies itself to every little thing, every little thing will explode into the cosmos by itself. That is what a human being is here for, to enhance life in such a way that no other creature can do. But we have taken strong positions on what is important and what is not.

Right now the only thing that is important is what serves our economic engine. What will earn you more money? That is the fundamental base question. If we do not remove this from our education system there will be no education, there will only be one more manufacturing unit.

Sir Ken Robinson: There are brilliant public schools in America and public education is one of the jewels in the crown of America's achievement over the last 200 years. There is a growth in charter schools and independent schools, but for most kids public school is their only shot. Getting public schools right and not giving up on them should be a major priority for any President. There has been a clear attempt to break up public education, or at least to bring the profit motive into it.

Education worldwide is estimated to be, just on the economic front, a \$5.5tr business, which is why so many big tech companies and entrepreneurs are getting into it. I'm not against people with good interesting ideas getting involved in education, as long as we keep remembering it is children and young people we are dealing with and they are not there to make people profits.

The community college system is fantastic and more and more people are going to community college because the costs of going to college have become so ridiculous. Student debt now is \$1.3tr, more than all credit card debt. That is an amazing asset in America.

The importance of getting teaching and learning right is key. None of us should have as our priority making America the most powerful country in the world. If I were in England, I wouldn't want Great Britain to be the most powerful country. I think the issues now are bigger than countries and international competition is not terribly helpful. We need a much bigger, global and compassionate view of what we are trying to get done, with much more collaboration and integration of interests.

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For example, by common consent the best education system in the world at the moment is Finland, and Finland set about revising its education system about 40 years ago around the same time that America did. America went down the road of standardisation and testing and narrowing the curriculum, and it hasn't worked, with billions of dollars spent with no improvement and massive frustration on the part of teachers, principals and others.

Finland, meanwhile, created the best education system on earth by student achievement, retention, engagement, satisfaction, fulfilment, professional respect for teachers, satisfaction of parents, and stability of communities. It has become an exemplary system, and insofar as they matter at all, these international league tables show Finland close or near the top too on areas that are tested. A Finnish education is not based on competition it is based on collaboration. Schools work together, teachers work together, universities work with schools. There is no standardised testing in Finland. There is a 100% graduation rate.

People say you can't compare Finland to America, and in population terms Finland has a population of 5.5 million and America is at 310 million. But the fact is that education in America is organised mainly at the state level and there are 30 states in America with populations smaller or equal to Finland. It is not that we should all try to be Finnish, but that the principals apply.

We talked about the industrial revolution and the origins of education in that, around conformity and compliance. But the real comparison is not with industrial manufacturing but with industrial agriculture. That completely subverted the old organic systems, based on mechanisation, which meant that you could cultivate single crop farms as far as you could see. The other innovation was chemical fertilisers that made it possible for things to grow bigger and faster. And the third innovation was pesticides, because once you created these big monocultural farms they lacked the natural protectiveness that mixed farming creates. So we had to soak things in pesticides.





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That worked for many years, but the problem is it eroded topsoil around the world, poisoned waterways, polluted the oceans and it is not sustainable. The whole world depends upon a very narrow sphere of topsoil that only covers part of the world, and without that we can't grow enough food. Industrial agriculture is destroying that. That is what happened in the Dust Bowl of Oklahoma and in other parts of the world too.

So the system has been really successful but it's completely unsustainable and it's unnatural. The same thing with animals, which we're keeping in terrible compounds, pumping them full of antibiotics and hormones. The thing about industrial agriculture is it is all based on output and yield, and getting the animal or the plant bigger. Organic farming is based on the opposite principle, which is they don't focus on the plant but on the soil. If you get the soil right through natural processes of crop rotation and composting, you don't need the pesticides and you don't need to keep renewing the soil because it does that itself. Organic farmers know that if you get the soil right, you create the conditions for growth.

The same thing exactly happened in our school system – we had these industrial systems that focus on output and yield. We have created these sterile, inhuman conditions in our schools where people are not learning even though we are getting data. Along the way we have eroded the culture of learning.

If you get the culture right then things grow. Applying those organic principles to all schools will see the problem start to right itself.

Sadhguru: Education is not a production line, it's an organic happening. You cannot create an education system independent of the society in which it exists. Some principles from Finland will work in America. Children are not just learning from their teachers, they're learning from the street and the culture around them. So you cannot ever develop an education system independent of the ecosystem that's happening.

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Are we as a society willing to in some way cultivate the ecosystem that is suitable for a child to grow up in the best possible way? That is a question we should all ask. Are we going to do what we like or are we going to be conscious of how every action we're performing will impact future generations.

Educating a child is not just a teacher's business or a parent's business or a school's business. It is happening all the time. So a more responsible attitude towards this, a larger consciousness around this and how everything that you do our children are seeing. What will happen to them tomorrow if they start doing what you did at 18? This is something that all of us need to pay some attention to, because education is not just happening in the school; a child learns equally from outside.

This entire approach of bringing creativity – the most important thing that schools are missing out on is exposing children to more natural phenomena in the world. They've become isolated cocoons of their own, living through their phones. It is very important every school invests in taking children out and exposing them to natural phenomena and different thought processes in the world, different cultures. So that there is a more homogenous approach to intelligence and we can really cultivate an organic system where everybody grows to be a product of their full potential.





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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

DEVELOPING AN INCLUSIVE CONSCIOUSNESS – SADHGURU



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Today we are taking a moment to reflect on the times that we live in, and what they require of us as individuals and as companies. We all feel passionate and emotional about the things we see on TV, the elections we participate in, and the news we read. But we have to find ways to integrate our thoughts and emotions more constructively, so that we can more skilfully navigate these dynamic times and have impact.

If we understand that the way we think, feel and act is about consciousness, we are mistaking a flower for the soil, we are mistaking expressions for the source. This happens everywhere – people think that by changing attitudes their consciousness will change, but no. By changing attitudes, certain actions will change, and yes that is positive and beneficial. But it is not truly transformative.

To define the distinction between change and transformation, change means the residue of the past will remain, but transformation means nothing of the past will remain. Transformation is what is needed if you want to create a new world and let a new generation have a fresh life.

Someone said leave the dead to the dead, and that’s significant. It is not coming out of recklessness or unconcern, but with the view that you must be a fresh life. You can learn many things from the past about how to conduct yourself, but there is nothing to learn from the past about how to be. Because you are a complete life for yourself and you don’t have to learn how to be a life from the past. Maybe you have to learn how to be a good engineer, or how to be something else in society, but you don’t have to learn how to be life because the past has nothing to do with that. This is a fresh life, and a complete life.

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Consciousness is that dimension that is the very source of who we are. Our intentions, our actions, our thoughts and our attitudes are a consequence of it. In other words, we are trying to fix the consequence without fixing the source.

The nature of being human is this: There are four dimensions of our mind. In modern societies, the nature of our education has constipated our minds in such a way because we are largely just using one dimension that we call intellect. The other dimensions of mind are buddhi, ahankara, manas and chitta, to use Indian terminology.

What buddhi means is intellect: the nature of intellect is to slice things open and see. If you leave the world in the hands of your intellect, your intellect will chop it into a million pieces and will want to chop it further and further depending on how sharp your intellect is. The sharper your intellect, the more you dissect the world, and you cannot stop because that is the nature of intellect.

You must apply intellect only to know the material aspects of life, but you can't know life this way. If a doctor wants to know some aspect of you, he will take a biopsy, but he cannot know you as a person or a life by dissecting you. Similarly, you can know parts of the world but you can't know life. Intellect has been over-energised in the last 100 years, where we think thought is supreme.

Is it because we exist that we think, or that because we think that we exist? Because we exist, we may think. Because people are in such a state of mental diarrhoea all the time, nonstop, they think that is more of an existence than existence. But we can just live here without thought. Think when you want, use your mind when you want, but otherwise just keep it still, like your hand. You must be able to do this with your mind. Just because you lost control of your mind, you think it's everything.

Thought has been over-energised by people and the very nature of the thought is such that you think it must be logical. What someone is thinking may be illogical to you, but they have found their own logic. The most extreme person you have met has their own kind of logic. Trying to use logic to arrive at inclusive consciousness is wrong. You are using a knife to stitch, which won't work.

The next dimension of intelligence is ahankara, which means identity. In modern societies, we have not cultured our children to culture their identity. The fundamental identity for you is always your body. This racial thing that concerns all of us, our first identity is with the body. The colour of our skin becomes part of that. We identify with the body because our experience is limited to this – it is what we mean when we say 'me.' Naturally you identify with your body as you and how you look. Somebody else looks different, whether in gender or race or fashion, so this is you and that is them.

But whatever the colour of our skin, our religion or our gender, we are inhaling and exhaling the same air. We have not cultured our children from an early age that your identity should be universal. In India, traditionally, before you start a child with education the first chant they must do is that their identification is with the entire cosmos.



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Without this, you should not give education to a child, because education is seen as an empowerment. You should not empower a person who has limited identifications, because it doesn't matter whether it is their individual nature, or a family or community, or race, religion, nature. Once you have limited identity you will cause disharmony, and you will cause cruel things thinking you are doing the right thing.

This is ahankara – this identity that wills the intellect. Hold the right identity from an early age, and know your identity is with the entire cosmos because nothing happens here without everything's involvement in you. We are sitting on this round planet that is spinning and going at great speed in the middle of nowhere; how many forces are keeping us in place? So there is no way we can exist without the involvement of all this. But talking about this intellectually is not going to help, because just trying to understand this intellectually is using a knife, and so further you will divide.

There is another dimension of intelligence within you called manas, which means a huge silo of memory. There are eight types of memory in this: elemental memory, atomic memory, evolutionary memory, karmic memory and sensory memory. In the karmic memory there are two dimensions: one is the bank of memory that determines the very shape and size of your body, and the other, which is right now in play.

Then there is an inarticulate memory, which you can never articulate, which is finding expression. When you see a chair you know this is where you should sit, and you don't even think about it because there is a memory in you. When you see a glass you know how to hold it. This is not simple and without this knowledge you cannot do this – there is an enormous memory that allows you to do almost everything automatically. An inarticulate memory is constantly in action, and then there is articulate memory, which is a very miniscule part of your memory.

Dotted lines for taking notes.





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The next dimension of intelligence is most important and this is called chitta. This is an intelligence without an iota of memory in it, unsullied by memory. Memory means a boundary – we are always dealing with information and what you know is always a boundary. What you do not know is a limitless possibility. We have misunderstood the power of ignorance. Always in the yogic system we identify with our ignorance and never with our knowledge. That is where the possibility is. Chitta is unsullied by memory and is just pure intelligence.

Right now, if you eat an apple, it turns into a human being – you cannot do it with your brain. Even your brain is created by what you eat. There is an intelligence here that is capable of transforming anything because it is making use of the memory and the manas and making this happen. But the most important dimension of intelligence is chitta. In today's education systems there is no effort to dig into deeper dimensions of our intelligence. We are too enamoured with our own intellect and using this knife to stitch everything.

Identifying with the cosmos is just another thought, and as a thought it doesn't do much. It is very easy to love the cosmos because it is not here with you; when you have to love somebody next to you there are more problems. The instinct of wanting to set up boundaries is so deep – if you see a dog peeing all over the place, he is building a kingdom. Every human being does the same thing because there are two dimensions of your intelligence. One is designed to create self-preservation, which is your intellect. But the chitta dimension is designed to make you expand. Once you have come as a human being, this is your fundamental issue. Whoever you are and whatever you are in your life, you want to be something more. If that happens, you want to be something more. This is the nature of being human – there is one dimension that always wants to expand, and another dimension that always wants to build walls.

If you build a wall, you feel safe. After two days, the walls of self-preservation are also the walls of self-imprisonment, so you want to break them and build a new wall. After some time, you feel that is not it and you want to expand again. These two dimensions are not opposing each other, they are complimentary. There is only one thing about you that needs preservation and that is your physicality. This body must be preserved because if you break it you cannot fix it. Everything else in you – your thoughts, your emotions, your ideas, beliefs and philosophies – can be replaced and you can come up with new ones. So each evening before you go to bed you should pulverise today's thoughts, beliefs and experiences and leave the dead to the dead.

The experience of life can cause two things. All this is nice when small things happen, but when really major things happen to you the wounds are so big that they often don't heal in a lifetime. So the choice is this: the experience of life can either be made into a wound or into wisdom. You can either become wise or become wounded. If you become wise, you will become a solution; if you become wounded, you will become one more problem. It is a choice we have.



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Right now there is water in a glass, and it is definitely not you, but if you drink it, it becomes you. What is it that you did with this water? This is inclusiveness, making it a part of you. Take your right hand and touch your nose – is that you? Touch the chair on which you are sitting – is that you? How do you know? What is the basis of this? How do you know what is you and what is not you?

On your hand there are sensations and on the chair there are no sensations. So you are saying that whatever is within the boundaries of your sensations is you, and whatever is outside that is not you. Now, the boundaries of your sensations are such that if you make your life energies exuberant, you will see they will expand. If there was a moment in your life where you felt so joyful that tears came to you. At such a moment, if you put your hand six or eight inches from your body, you will feel sensations. If we chop off your right leg, the leg is gone but still the sense of the leg remains intact for a period of time. This means the sensory body has a structure of its own. If your energies become very vibrant and exuberant within you, your sensory body expands.

If your sensory body becomes big enough, the person next to you becomes part of you and your experience. If it becomes as big as a hall, all the people in the hall become part of you. If you close your eyes and rub your hands briskly for two minutes, then keep your eyes closed and hold your thumbs three or four inches apart, suddenly something happens between your two hands. The sensory body has expanded and you can feel something happening right there.

It is an effort to include someone who is not a part of you as yourself. If this happens in a very basic physical level we call it sexuality, if it happens emotionally we call it love, and if it happens mentally it gets labelled as greed and ambition and conquest. But if it happens in the level of your sensory body, we call this yoga. Yoga means union. Union does not mean you cause the union, but you allow yourself to experience it. You loosen up the walls of self-preservation.

Why you want somebody close to you, and why you want a loud one in your life, is because you want to loosen the walls of self-preservation, so you don't have to worry about protecting yourself. Suddenly you feel one with them. And once you feel one with them, in some way you want to be in touch with them, because you are trying to loosen up your sensory body in such a way that you can experience that which is not a part of you as a part of yourself.

This need not be limited to one person, and this need not be biologically connected. If you can sit here with life at its peak you will experience the whole universe as yourself. Then you are a yogi.

For those that are sceptical, being a sceptic means you don't believe anything unless it truly makes sense to you. Most people are just darn suspicious about everything, so they are not sceptics, but they have a fear that everything around them can be wrong. Suspicion means you made a conclusion about something you do not know, believing something positively or believing something negatively is not different. They are the same thing – you believe something you do not know.

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Sceptic means whatever I do not know, I do not know. I don't assume things in my life. I think everybody should come to this much sense and straightness in their life, that what I know, I know, and what I do not know, I do not know. That is perfectly fine. I do not know is a tremendous possibility. Only if you seek to know, long to know, can the possibility of knowing arise. If you are a sceptic, you are the ideal candidate. If you are a believer, we have to debrief you because you assume too many things you do not know.

We must understand that our intellect needs data to function, and without data it is useless. Everybody knows everything right now not because they went and saw it but because they Googled it. Intellect feels stupid without data. The nature of intellect is that it feeds upon data. Data comes from what you see, what you hear, what you smell, what you taste and what you touch. In the very nature of things, these five sense organs that are the main agents of gathering information for you are all outward bound. You can see what's around you but you cannot roll your eyeballs inwards and scan yourself. If an ant crawls across your hand you can feel it, but there is so much blood flowing within you and you cannot feel it.

You cannot use your sensory organs to turn inward. There is another dimension of perception that needs to be activated. The sense organs are instruments of survival that come on when you are born. Whatever is needed for survival for any biological creature turns on at the time of birth because it is needed. But anything beyond survival, would not have entered your life without striving. Anything you know, from the alphabet to reading, writing, using a computer, you know because you strived. Without striving, anything beyond survival will not enter your life.

There are two fundamental dimensions within you – the instinct of self-preservation and the longing to expand limitlessly. This is essentially a human problem on the planet, because no other creature wants to expand limitlessly. They are only thinking of survival. Only humans have full stomachs and still see countless problems. For every other creature, nature has drawn two lines within which they live and die, but once you become human there is only a bottom line.





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So what humanity is suffering and confused about is not their bondage but their freedom. All these identities – of race, creed, colour, religion, nationality –are trying to set their own bondage. Because no bondage has been given by nature. Creating that bondage helps people feel secure somehow. People get identified with a symbol, a word, a flag, whatever – they are trying to create some artificial barrier of their own. Once they create this boundary and someone else has another boundary, they clash.

If we cannot make our own minds peaceful, how can we make the world peaceful? What is happening in the world is just a manifestation of the nonsense that is happening in our heads. If we were truly peaceful human beings, we would not fight.

The main lesson we need to teach our children is never to look up to anybody, and never to look down on anybody. Then you will just look out at life. Right now, something is good, something is bad, something is devil, something is sin. You divide the universe in a million different ways. The instrument that broke the world into pieces is your intellect, and then with that you try to fix everything. That is not going to work.

Racism is disastrous, in the 21st century, but it has always happened. At one point it happened legally and now it is happening illegally. These things happen because we are using our intellect to fix problems – we are using a knife to stitch a problem, and that is not going to work.

In this cosmos, we are not even a speck of dust, but still creation has given us each an individual nature to experience these things. Countless people that lived on this planet before we came are now topsoil and have become part of the earth. You can transform your life, really everything is a part of you and you are a part of everything. If you can experience everything around you as you experience the 10 fingers of your hands, then you will see life becomes tremendously beautiful. When people bury us, we know we are part of the earth, but right now we forget it.

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The beauty of this existence is that it is the filth that has become the flower. In your mind, filth is different from flower, but in existence they are the same. Your nose may not like the filth, but a pig likes the filth. It is just that in our mind, with our intellect, we are breaking everything. This breaking is only a psychological reality – it is not existentially true. The air that you breathe, the water you drink, the earth that you walk upon, the trees that you sit under, everything in this world is life and life-making material for you. If you forget this, you will treat it as a commodity. If you experience it, that this is actually what is making your life, then you will see that the most fantastic thing about this universe is everything is one but everything is separate at the same time. This is what gives us an experience. If you want to know what is life you have to step out of this bubble called psychological reality and step into existential reality. Then you have a taste of life, otherwise you are just a bundle of thoughts, emotions and opinions.

It is time that you approach this human mechanism in a scientific way, thinking how to make it into a fully-fledged possibility. Every life in this world is only trying to become a fully-fledged life, whether it is a bird or an animal or a tree. We know what a fully-fledged worm or a fully-fledged insect is but we do not know what a fully-fledged human being is. Even if I make you the king or queen of this planet, still you will ask for the stars, because something within you that is longing to be infinite.

Finiteness will come to you only through identification with your physicality, because the nature of physicality is a boundary. You accumulated this human body – it is yours, but it is not you. You are living your life without experiencing the life that you are. Your entire involvement is with your physiology and psychology. It is time that you experience the life that you are. This life that you are doesn't come with boundaries, it is only the body that has boundaries that you must stick to.



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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

FASTING FOR SURVIVAL,
BY DR PRADIP JAMNADAS



Fasting for Survival, by Dr Pradip Jamnadas

*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes



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HISTORY OF DIET

About 12,000 years ago people changed and started going into agriculture. Before that, you were a palaeolithic being that drank lots of water and hunted and ate rarely. That genetics was evolved over two and a half million years, and then in the last 12,000 years, people started agriculture, so food changed. The genetics didn't keep up – you did not change genetically as your diet changed, but the population grew and agriculture got easier.

Then, in the last 200 years, diet changed again and now we are industrialised and started eating processed foods. Vegetable seed oils are totally processed – you need massive factories to produce them and we now consume them like they are going out of style. Those oils are in all processed food and yet that food, if you look back at your entire evolution, only just came to you. How do you expect your body to respond genetically and hormonally to that food that you only just introduced.

Before you put anything new in your mouth you have to decide whether it is in keeping with your genetics. In fact even agricultural products are thought provoking. Agricultural products are fine, but in 1880 we invented the steel mill and we made flour that changed the glycaemic index of our food completely. We have changed as we have moved along, so our diets have completely changed.

The palaeolithic being only ate once a day, during the daytime, because it was dangerous to eat outside at night time. Our body is made to fast and it is made to feast, so you should be fasting and feasting. If there was no food around and your energy levels just went down and down and down, you would be dead in 24 hours. That does not happen, and fasting doesn't kill people. We are used to fasting, and when we are sick we fast. There is a wisdom in that, and that is the body saying eating is dangerous and eating takes up a lot of energy.

WHAT HAPPENS IN FASTING

The first thing that happens when you stop eating is, in the first 12 hours, your body wipes up all the glycogen in your liver and in your muscles. That is a normal process so your glucose level will be maintained. Then when it comes to protein, vitamins, energy, fat... you have plenty of those in your body. You have about 50,000 calories stored in the form of fat that need to be unlocked.

So for the first 12 hours you use up your glycogen stores and you feel okay, unless you're a sugar junkie. Then you're going to want to eat, but your sugar will never drop. Your blood sugar will come down if you fast for seven days but you will not become hypoglycaemic and have an attack unless you are on insulin or taking diabetes medication.

So how does the body keep the sugar up? After 12 hours, new glucose is being made from protein. It is not the protein in the muscles – protein is always being turned over in your body, but this time the protein that is normally turned over turns into glucose.



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So your glucose level is maintained for another 12 hours or so. During this next 12 hours there is a small increase in ketosis. The body senses that you have very little food coming in and the fats in your body start to be utilised. The only way fats can come into utilisation is if the insulin levels drop. When your insulin level is high, you store energy. When it is low, you pull energy out of the fats.

Now the fat stores open up and the fats start being devoured, converted into triglycerides and fatty acids. The fatty acids flood the bloodstream and, as you can't utilise fatty acids, they go to your liver and get converted to ketones. Ketones can be utilised by every cell in your body and this is the great breakthrough.

You are told that the brain is an obligate glucose user but that is absolutely wrong. There was a study done in Britain where they brought the blood sugar down to 30, but they pumped the patient full of ketones. They were all sitting there talking and having fun. The brain can utilise ketones – after a seven-day fast, up to 70 percent of the energy utilisation of the brain is from ketones. And the brain likes it: there are even studies showing that when the brain utilises ketones it burns more cleanly.

So there is a small increase in the ketones and by 24 hours you have ketones representing maybe 10-15 percent of your entire energy source. You feel just fine because ketones are giving you all the energy you need. Then, another 12 hours go by, so we are now at 36 hours, and the ketones go higher. By the fifth day of fasting, you will have a lot of ketones.

You can measure your ketones in your urine to see when you become ketogenic. If you have been on a low carb, low sugar diet you will go into ketogenesis earlier than somebody who eats a lot of sugar, because they have a whole bunch of glycogen in their liver to go through first.

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THE ROLE OF INSULIN

Insulin holds the key to opening up the fat stores. If you want to utilise your fat stores, you have to drop your insulin level. There is only one way to do that and that is to fast. You can choose which fasting programme you want to be on but the trigger is insulin; while insulin levels are high, you cannot lose weight.

You must get your insulin level down, and fasting will do that because if you don't eat you are not going to make insulin. As your insulin level drops, your body becomes sensitive to it. When you eat in a normal state you produce a lot of insulin. Once you have been down for 24 hours, now you eat that next meal, you are going to make a much lesser amount of insulin. Your body deals with a meal differently to if you had eaten in a fed state.

Eating after a fast is metabolised totally differently to eating in a fed state. You will produce less and less insulin over the few days after you have fasted for just one day. Look at the rewards in your body. You ought to fast at least one day because it will give you a sustained benefit for days as your insulin sensitivity is improved.

As your body becomes more sensitive to the insulin, it produces less insulin and so you are unlocking the fat stores and burning fat. If you are overweight, this is the way to burn through fat. If you still eat five times a day but eat smaller amounts, it doesn't work – you lose a little but you lose more muscle than fat. Your metabolic rate will go down and your body will reset and gain that weight back.

This is because it is not natural – when you were a palaeolithic being you didn't just nibble at the carcass and then come back and eat five times. It is totally unnatural to do that and the body's physiology is in keeping with that. You are supposed to eat when the food is available.





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BENEFITS OF FASTING

Aside from the insulin and fat-burning benefits of fasting, the body also increases the metabolic rate. During a fast, after 18 hours, your epinephrine levels increase, your adrenaline levels go up, your metabolic rate goes up, your cortisol levels go up, so you start feeling better. You are looking for your next kill and you are pumped up ready to chase it.

The body also starts producing a hormone that goes to your brain and tells your brain to switch on. You actually make new brain cells. Show me a drug that can do that. But in a fast you can do that because nature wants you to learn from the situation and get out of it stronger.

Then there are growth hormones. If you fast, just a two-day fast produces a 2,000 percent increase in your growth hormone production in a man and 1,300 in a woman. It is the best way to boost your growth hormone levels, which keeps you young, replaces your dead skin and helps your muscles grow.

There is also a condition called autophagy, which starts at about 18 hours of fasting and gradually increases to a maximum at three days. Autophagy means that when you are nutrient deficient, the body senses there is no nutrition coming in, and levels of a protein called mTOR go really low.

Autophagy takes your cells and because it needs energy it recycles. So the cells stay alive but it takes intracellular organelles, breaks them down, packages them into lysosome and exports them out of the cell. Once exported from the cell into the bloodstream, the bloodstream recognises some new building blocks and the body re-utilises those intracellular organelles. So you are recycling your cells. That cell is now deplete of its old, non-functional parts, so you basically rejuvenate your cells.

If you are constantly eating you will not rejuvenate those cells, but the biochemistry is so beautiful that these cells are now functioning better, they are younger and they are more resilient to disease. Autophagy makes the cells better and younger, like a reset switch. When you then eat, because you have had autophagy, a signal goes from those cells to the bone marrow to make new stem cells.

These stem cells come out of the bone marrow and go into the organs and replenish cells that have died and change the machinery in those cells. So there is a whole rejuvenation process and you are a younger, better, more resilient person than you were before.

Fasting boosts your growth hormone and boosts your stem cells, as has been well documented not only in humans but in animals too. There is so much science behind this.

The next benefit is the stem cell mobilisation that occurs, and to get the maximum benefit of that you really need to fast for long enough for the bone marrow to come in, which means you must reach that state of replenishment.

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FASTING AS TREATMENT

All of us can do it. If you do a seven-day water fast, there are studies done in Boston that show that your lifetime probability of getting cancer is reduced by 70 percent, and in some studies even higher, because the cells that are going to die off in the state of a fast are the cancer cells. Studies have been done that if you fast a person for only 36 hours and then give them chemotherapy, they are going to tolerate the chemotherapy better, going to have fewer side effects, and it's going to be the death of cancer cells while the normal cells are going to be more resilient. There will be less death of normal cells. When you're fasting, your normal cells become more resilient, so when you give the chemo, only the weak guys die, which is the cancer cells. You have strengthened the others.

I predict that in the next 5 to 10 years there are going to be major cancer treatments associated with fasting. It can also be useful for autoimmune diseases. There are numerous studies to say that if you have inflammatory bowel disease, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, or any of these autoimmune conditions, you should fast for three days if you get a flare up. It is the most potent thing you can do as an anti-inflammatory. Because first and foremost your bowels are totally quiet, there is no energy being used for digestion, so your body's energy resources will be utilised to repair yourself. A lot of autoimmune diseases start from your gut as well, so give your gut a chance to heal.

Diabetes also definitely gets better with fasting, because the insulin resistance gets better. What about Alzheimer's? Sometimes the best thing you can do for someone with Alzheimer's is give them lots of liquids and don't feed them for three days; neurologically the fog will go away and the confusion will get better. There is no harm in trying because no one will die in three days.





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PREPARING TO FAST

A three-day water fast means you only drink water for three days. You need to drink lots of water because you will pee a lot. As your insulin levels go down, insulin holds on to water and once there is no insulin that water leaves your body. So you will notice that you pee a lot, which means you need to drink more when you're fasting.

Electrolytes will be conserved by your kidneys, which are very good at holding on to electrolytes. There are plenty in the body. If you don't take on sodium the last molecule of sodium will be re-absorbed by your kidneys. Not a single molecule will be in urine. So the kidneys will not allow you to lose sodium or potassium. If you're starting out with a half-empty plate you may get some depletion, but you can get that tested and on re-feeding you can improve that.

It is unusual to get electrolyte imbalance but if you do get it, take a pinch of salt in the water and you'll find that the cramps get better, the dizziness get better and the headaches get better. It should be Himalayan salt, because that also has some magnesium and things in it. Dizziness is usually due to low blood pressure because your blood pressure comes down. If you get dizzy because you're fasting, drinking water will help. Cramps are due to the salt again, and in the evening put yourself in a bath with a tub of Epsom salts, or get some liquid magnesium, and that will make you feel better.

Patients complain they get hungry, but hunger comes and goes. There is an increase and decrease depending on the circadian cycle. So all you have to do is pay attention – if you're hungry, drink some water and you'll feel better. Half an hour later the hunger has gone. Keep your mind busy, do something, the hunger will go away. Patients don't continue to be hungry all day long.

Hunger comes, hunger goes. Most patients find the second day the hardest and then from the third day onward they actually feel good. The third and fourth day of fasting can feel phenomenal. On the fifth day, people want to go running. You have got to get over that hump. You have to know you are going to face a challenge but it will get better.

So who should do the long fast and who should just do intermittent fasting? First and foremost, if you just want to be healthy, eat once a day. At the most, twice a day in a six to eight-hour window. That is called time-restricted feeding, and if you just want general maintenance, want to lose a little bit of weight, want to stay healthy, don't want the diseases of modern man, then start eating less frequently. No snacking in between, because a snack will increase your insulin and break your fast.

So on a daily basis that will give you a little bit of autophagy, a little bit of ketosis, and you'll burn fat. Your body will learn to take food in when you're eating, burn the glycogen and then for four hours or so it will pull out some from the fat. So it creates a nice cycle.

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Then once a week you can extend that further by just skipping the evening meal also. So instead of a 24-hour fast, it becomes a 36-hour fast once a week. That will give you a huge immunity boost because your stem cells have kicked in. Thirty-six hours is a magic number, and it is doable. To tell everybody to do a three-day fast or a five-day fast is kind of tough. People have done seven-day fasts, 14-day fasts, but they are doing it because they have severe diseases they want to get rid of. They will do a seven-day fast every six months. The rest of the time they do time restricted feeding. Eating in a time-restricted routine is good for all of us. But our whole life revolves around eating too much.

GENETIC EXPRESSION

When you are in a fasting state, the body mobilises enzymes called SIRT-1 molecules. They go up in your body, and that binds with acetal groups on your histones, which are on your DNA and mean the DNA can start making proteins. That is called genetic expression, so you can see how your diet affects which genes are going to be expressed, and those genes make proteins and carry out the impact on your body. So the SIRT-1 actually activates a gene called the FoxO3 gene, and that activates lots of other genes, and what they do is very exciting.

It activates all the antioxidant genes in your body naturally. So you don't need to go and buy Vitamin C and Vitamin E and all these things. One of the most important vitamins involved with gene expression is Vitamin D. If you are Vitamin D deficient, your gene expression is handicapped. So when things happen to you and you're not eating or you get sick, your body's genetic material cannot reveal itself in a normal way. Without Vitamin D you are handicapping your own ability to repair your body, and 90 percent of you are Vitamin D deficient. Vitamin D is involved in over 300 different reactions and most of them are to do with genetic expression.

The FoxO3 gene is also really important for DNA repair, activating DNA repair mechanisms. Your DNA is bombarded everyday by radiation, toxins and food, so it crumbles every day. FoxO3 repairs your DNA. Apoptosis is cell programmed death, so it controls that. Old cells get cleared away and then there is protein structure and maintenance, stem cell mobilisation, all down to the FoxO3 gene. If you want to get good FoxO3, you need to have Vitamin D in your system and you need to be eating the right food, which means no processed food, just what we could eat millions of years ago – so meat, vegetables and fruit.

Fruit is over-rated. You get to the end of the season and you are meant to eat the fructose to get your through winter, but now winter never comes and you keep eating the fruit through the year. Fruits are good for you but stick to one colourful fruit a day. Eat fruit with a low glycaemic index fruits – those with a high GI include watermelon, all the melons, kiwi, grapes, bananas. The best things are apples, peaches, pears, plums, apricots, because they have a lot of fibre and a low glycaemic index.

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Different diets turn these genes on and off. When you eat sugar, you turn on a gene called RAS/PKA, which turns off autophagy, increase production of insulin, and basically makes you more inflammatory. Sugar causes inflammation on the body. Fructose causes insulin resistance in the liver. So sugar is bad for you – it is a poison, it is totally processed and it was never found in nature.

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If you don't want cancer, heart disease, diabetes, inflammatory conditions of the bowel, then don't get old. All these conditions are conditions that occur with ageing. The best way to stay young is fasting, keeping your weight down and eating the right foods. Then your genetic material will stay young. We are getting older younger because of what we eat, our lifestyles, our sleep patterns, our stress patterns.

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When we all went on a low-fat diet, we became nutritionally weak because we didn't get all the good things. When you eat natural fats in natural ways, let's say fish or vegetable, it comes with everything in it, and your natural fat will get absorbed.

STARTING TO FAST

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The first thing you need to do if you want to start a fasting programme is to cut down on your carbs – you cannot just jump in. So you should have no processed foods, nothing refined, no sugar except for water, tea or coffee.

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If you do a three-day or four-day fast, when you start eating again you may have a problem. That is because if you are nutritionally already eating the standard American diet you don't have enough phosphate in your body. When you start eating you are going to be phosphate deficient because all of a sudden the new stem cells need building blocks, and one of the building blocks is phosphate to replace the cells that are lost. Phosphate deficiency causes tremendous muscle weakness and muscle aching. When that happens, you need to go and get some bone broth. Even during a fast, you can have some bone broth, because it has a lot of glycine in it and it has got a lot of phosphate and minerals, which will help you overcome problems. So when you are refeeding use bone broth.

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When you are doing fasting, if you are taking diabetes medications, they will cause a drop in your sugar level and that could be dangerous. Insulin should not be taken, but don't stop it without your physician knowing. You have to involve your physician. With my patients, I stop insulin and tell them to check their sugar levels every day. For two or three days they may have high blood sugar but that is not going to hurt them. Most of them can come off insulin after fasting. Six months down the line, they can go back to eating five times a day but most people stick to time-restricted feeding.

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One study done in monkeys about fasting took a standard group and gave them 30 percent less calories. The control group had milk protein, corn oil, sugar, and unlimited feeding times. Then they looked at the outcome at five years. Those who had restricted calories had 50 percent less cardiovascular disease, and greater than 90 percent no diabetes, just by cutting calories down. Our food is so full of calories, and the more calories you eat the more diseases you are going to get.



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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

NAPOLEON HILL – THE LAW OF SUCCESS IN 16 LESSONS



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Napoleon Hill, The Law of Success is a 1925 book – actually in the form of a set of 15 separate booklets – by Napoleon Hill. It was released as a limited edition of 118 copies and was given to many of America’s most successful individuals, all of whom had contributed to the book’s content. *The Law of Success in 16 Lessons* is an edited version of Napoleon Hill’s first manuscripts which was reworked and first published in 1928.

The work was originally commissioned at the request of Andrew Carnegie at the conclusion of a multi-day interview with Hill, and was based on interviews with over 100 American millionaires across nearly 20 years, including such self-made industrial giants as Henry Ford, JP Morgan, John D Rockefeller, Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison. *The Law of Success* was first presented as a lecture, and was delivered by its author in practically every major city and in many smaller localities throughout the United States over a period of more than seven years.

THE MASTERMIND

You can do it if you believe you can.

This is a course on the fundamentals of success. Success is very much a matter of adjusting oneself to the ever varied and changing environments of life, in a spirit of harmony and poise. Harmony is based upon an understanding of the forces constituting one’s environment, therefore this course is in reality a blueprint that may be followed straight to success, because it helps a student to interpret, understand and make the most of these environmental forces of life.

Before you begin reading the Law of Success lessons, you should know something of the history of the course. You should know exactly what the course promises to those who follow it, until they have assimilated the laws and principles upon which it is based. You should know its limitations as well as its possibilities as an aid in your fight for a place in the world.



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The course has been created for the serious minded person, who devotes at least a portion of his or her time to the business of succeeding in life. The author of the Law of Success course has not intended to compete with those who write purely for the purposes of entertaining. The author's aim in preparing this course has been of a two-fold nature: first to help the earnest student find out what are his and her weaknesses, and second to help create a definite plan for bridging those weaknesses.

The most successful men and women on earth have had to correct certain weak spots in their personalities before they began to succeed. The most outstanding of these weaknesses, which stand between men and women and success, are intolerance, cupidity, greed, jealousy, suspicion, revenge, egotism, conceit, the tendency to reap where they have not sown and the habit of spending more than they earn. All of these common enemies of mankind, and many more not mentioned, are covered by the Law of Success course in such a manner that any person of reasonable intelligence may master them with little effort or inconvenience.

You should know at the very outset that the Law of Success course has long since passed through the experimental stage, and that it already has to its credit a record of achievement that is worthy of serious thought and analysis. You should know also that the Law of Success course has been examined and endorsed by some of the most practical minds of a generation.

THE HISTORY OF THE COURSE

The Law of Success course was first used as a lecture and was delivered by its author in practically every city and in many of the small localities throughout the United States over a period of more than seven years. During these lectures the author had assistants in the audience interpreting the reaction of those who heard the lecture so he learned exactly what effect it had upon people. As a result of this study and analysis, many changes were made.

The first big victory was gained for the Law of Success philosophy when it was used by the author as the basis of a course with which 3,000 men and women were trained as a sales army. The majority of those people were without previous experience in the field of selling. Through this training they were able to earn more than \$1 million for themselves and paid the author \$30,000 for his services, covering a period of approximately six months. The individuals and small groups of salespeople that have found success through the aid of this course are too numerous to be mentioned in this introduction, but the number is large and the benefits they derived from the course were definite.

The Law of Success philosophy was brought to the attention of the late Don R Mellett, former publisher of the Canton Ohio Daily News, who formed a partnership with the author of the course and was preparing to resign as publisher and take up the business management of the author's affairs when he was assassinated on July 16, 1926. Prior to his death, Mellett had made arrangements with Judge Elbert Gary, who was then Chairman of the Board of the United States Steel Corporation, to present the Law of Success course to every employee of the Steel Corporation at a total cost of something like \$150,000.



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This plan was halted because of Judge Gary's death but it proves that the author of the Law of Success had produced an educational plan of an enduring nature. Judge Gary was evidently prepared to judge the value of such a course and the fact that he analysed the Law of Success philosophy and was preparing to invest a huge sum in it is proof of the soundness of all that is said in the course.

You will observe in this general introduction a few technical terms that may not be plain to you. Do not allow this to bother you, make no attempt at first reading to understand these terms. They will be plain to you after you read the remainder of the course. This entire introduction is intended only as a backdrop for the other 15 lessons of the course, and you should read it as such. You should read it many times as you will get from it on each reading a thought or an idea that you did not get on the previous reading.

In this introduction you will discover a description of a newly discovered law of psychology which is the very foundation stone of all outstanding personal achievement. This law has been referred to by the author as a mastermind, meaning a mind that is developed through the harmonious cooperation of two or more people who ally themselves to the purpose of accomplishing any given task. If you are engaged in the business of selling, you may profitably experiment with this law of mastermind in your daily work. It has been found that a group of six or seven salespeople may use the law so effectively that their sales may increase to unbelievable proportions.

Life insurance is supposed to be the hardest thing on earth to sell. This ought not to be true with an established necessity such as life insurance, but it is. Despite this fact, a small group of men working for the Prudential Life Insurance Company, whose sales are mostly small policies, formed a little friendly group for the purpose of experimenting with the law of mastermind, with the result that every man in the group wrote more insurance during the first three months of the experiment than he had written in an entire year before. What may be accomplished through the aid of this principle by any small group of intelligent life insurance salespeople who have learned how to apply the law of mastermind will stagger the imagination of the most highly optimistic and imaginative person.

The same may be said of other selling groups who are engaged in selling merchandise and other more tangible forms of services than life insurance. Bare this in mind as you read this introduction to the Law of Success course, and it is not unreasonable to expect that this introduction alone may give you sufficient understanding of the law to change the entire course of your life.

It is the personalities that back a business which determine the measure of success the business will enjoy. Modify those personalities so they are more pleasing and more attractive to the patrons of the business and the business will thrive. In any of the great cities of the United States, one may purchase merchandise of similar nature and price in scores of stores, and yet you will find there is always one outstanding store which does more business than any of the others. The reason for this is that at the back of the store is a man or woman, or a team, who have attended to the personality of those that come into contact with the public.

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People buy personalities as much as they do merchandise and it is a question whether they are influenced more by the personalities with which they come in contact than by the merchandise.

Life insurance has been reduced to such a scientific basis that the cost of insurance does not vary to any great extent, regardless of the company from whom one purchases. Yet, out of the hundreds of life insurance companies doing business, less than a dozen companies do the bulk of the business of the United States. Why? Personalities. Ninety nine people out of every 100 that purchase life insurance policies do not even know what's in their policy and, even more startling, do not seem to care. What they really purchase is the pleasing personality of some man or woman who knows the value of cultivating such a personality.

A DEFINITE CHIEF AIM

Your business in life, or at least the most important part of it, is to achieve success. Success within the meaning of that term most covered within this course on the 15 Laws of Success is the attainment of your definite chief aim without violating the rights of other people.

Regardless of what your major aim in life might be, you will attain it with much less difficulty after you learn how to cultivate a pleasing personality and after you have learned the delicate art of aligning yourself with others in a given undertaking, without friction or envy. One of the greatest problems of life, if not the greatest, is that of learning the art of harmonious negotiation with others.

This course was created for the purpose of teaching people how to negotiate their way through life with harmony and poise, free from the destructive effects of disagreement and friction, which brings millions of people to misery, want and failure every year. With this statement of the purpose of the course, you should be able to approach the lessons with a feeling that a complete transformation is about to take place in your personality. You cannot enjoy outstanding success in life without power, and you can never enjoy power without sufficient personality to influence other people to cooperate with you in the spirit of harmony.





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THE 15 LAWS OF SUCCESS

This course shows you step by step how to develop such a personality. Lesson by lesson, the following is a statement of that which you may expect to receive from the 15 Laws of Success.

1: A definite chief aim, will teach you how to save the wasted effort which the majority of people expend in trying to find their life’s work. This lesson will show you how to do away forever with aimlessness, and fix your heart and hand upon some sort of definite and well-conceived purpose as a life work.

2: Self-confidence, will help you master the six basic fears with which every person is cursed: the fear of poverty, the fear of ill-health, the fear of old age, the fear of criticism, the fear of loss of love of someone, and the fear of death. It will teach you the difference between egotism and real self-confidence, which is based upon definite, usable knowledge.

3: The habit of saving, will teach you how to distribute your income systematically, so that a definite percentage of it will steadily accumulate, thus forming one of the greatest known sources of personal power. No one can succeed in life without saving money – there is no exception to this rule and no one may escape it.

4: Initiative and leadership, will show you how to become a leader instead of a follower in your chosen field of endeavour. It will develop in you the instinct for leadership which will cause you gradually to gravitate to the top in all undertakings in which you participate.

5: Imagination, will stimulate your mind so that you will conceive new ideas and develop new plans that will help you in obtaining the objective of your definite chief aim. This lesson will teach you how to build new houses out of old stone, so to speak, and will show you how to create new ideas out of old well-known concepts and how to put old ideas to new uses. This one lesson alone is the equivalent of a very practical course in salesmanship and it is sure to prove a veritable goldmine of knowledge to the person who is earnest.



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6: Enthusiasm, will enable you to saturate all with whom you come in contact with interesting new energy and ideas. Enthusiasm is the foundation of a pleasing personality and you must have such a personality in order to influence others to cooperate with you.

7: Self-control is the balance wheel with which you control your enthusiasm and direct it where you wish it to carry you. This lesson will teach you, in a most practical manner, to become the master of your fate and the captain of your soul.

8: The habit of doing more than paid for is one of the most important lessons of the Law of Success course. It will teach you how to take advantages of the law of increasing returns, which will eventually ensure you a return in money far out of proportion to the service you render. No one may become a real leader in any walk of life without practising the habit of doing more work and better work than that for which they are paid.

9: A pleasing personality is the fulcrum on which you must place the crowbar of your efforts, and when so placed with intelligence, it will enable you to remove mountains of obstacles. This one lesson alone has made scores of master salesperson. It has developed leaders overnight. It will teach you how to transform your personality so that you may adapt yourself to any environment or to any other personality in such a manner that you may easily dominate.

10: Accurate thinking is one of the important foundation stones of all enduring success. This lesson teaches you how to separate facts from mere information. It teaches you how to organise known facts into two classes – the important and the unimportant. It teaches you how to determine what is an important fact and how to build definite working plans in the pursuit of any calling out of facts.

11: Concentration, teaches you how to focus your attention upon one subject at a time until you have worked out practical plans for mastering that subject. It will teach you how to align yourself with others in such a manner that you may have the use of their entire knowledge to back you up in your own plans and purpose. It will give you a practical working knowledge of the forces around you, and show you how to harness and use these forces in furthering your own interests.

12: Cooperation, will teach you the value of teamwork in all you do. In this lesson you will be taught how to apply the law of the mastermind described in this introduction. This lesson will show you how to coordinate your own efforts with those of others in such a manner that friction, jealousy, strife, envy and cupidity will be eliminated. You will learn how to make use of all that other people have learned about the work in which you are engaged.

13: Profiting by failure, will teach you how to make stepping stones out of all your past and future mistakes and failures. It will teach you the difference between failures and temporary defeat – a difference that is great and important. It will teach you how to profit by your own failures and by the failures of other people.



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14: Tolerance, will teach you how to avoid the disastrous effects of racial and religious prejudices which mean defeat for millions of people who permit themselves to become entangled in foolish arguments over these subjects, thereby poisoning their own minds and closing the door to reason and appreciation. This lesson is the twin sister of the one on accurate thought, for the reason that no one may become an accurate thinker without practising tolerance. Intolerance closes the book of knowledge with the belief that you have learned it all. Intolerance makes enemies of those that should be friends; it destroys opportunity and fills the mind with doubt, mistrust and prejudice.

15: Practising the golden rule, will teach you how to make use of this great universal rule of human conduct in such a manner that you may easily get harmonious cooperation from any individual or group of individuals. Lack of understanding of the law upon which the golden rule philosophy is based is one of the major causes of failure of millions of people who remain in misery, poverty and want all their lives. This lesson has nothing whatsoever to do with religion of any form, nor sectarianism, and nor have any of the other lessons in this course on the Laws of Success.

When you have mastered these 15 laws and made them your own, as you may do within a period of between 15 and 30 weeks, you will be ready to develop sufficient personal power to ensure the attainment of your definite chief aim. The purpose of these 15 laws is to help you organise all the knowledge you have, and all you acquire in the future, so you may turn this knowledge into power. You should read the Law of Success course with a notebook by your side, for you will observe that ideas will begin to flash into your mind as you read, as to ways and means of using these laws in advancing your own interests.

You should also begin teaching these laws to those in whom you are most interested, as it is a well-known fact that the more one tries to teach a subject the more one learns about it. A parent of young children may so indelibly fix these 15 laws in their minds that this teaching will change the entire course of their lives.

Power is one of the three basic objects of human endeavour. Power is of two classes – that which is developed through coordination of natural, physical laws, and that which is developed by organising and classifying knowledge. Power growing out of organised knowledge is the more important, because it places in one's possession a tool with which one may transform, redirect and to some extent harness and use the other form of power.

The object of this reading course is to mark the route by which the student may safely travel in gathering such facts as they may wish to weave into their fabric of knowledge. There are two major methods of gathering knowledge, namely by studying, classifying and assimilating facts that have been organised by other people, and through one's own process of gathering, organising and classifying facts, generally called personal experience.

This lesson deals mainly with the ways and means of studying the facts and data gathered and classified by other people. The state of advancement known as civilisation is but the measure of knowledge the human race has accumulated. This knowledge is of two classes – mental and physical.

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Among the useful knowledge organised by the human race, we have discovered and catalogued the 80-odd physical elements of which all physical forms in the universe consist. By study and analysis and accurate measurement, we have discovered the bigness of the material side of the universe as represented by planets, suns and stars, some of which are known to be over 10 million times as large as the little earth on which we live.

On the other hand, we have discovered the littleness of the physical forms that constitute the universe, by reducing the 80-odd physical elements to molecules, atoms and finally to the smallest particle of the electron. An electron cannot be seen – it is but a centre of force consisting of a positive or a negative. The electron is the beginning of everything of a physical nature. Molecules, atoms and electrons: to understand both the detail and the perspective of the process to which knowledge is gathered, organised and classified, it seems essential for the student to begin with the smallest particles of physical matter. These are the A, B, Cs with which nature has constructed the entire framework of the physical portion of the universe.

The molecule consists of atoms that are said to be little invisible particles of matter revolving continuously, with the speed of lightning, on exactly the same principle that the earth revolves around the sun. These little particles of matter, known as atoms, which revolve in one continuous circuit, are said to be made up of electrons, the smallest particles of physical matter. The electron is nothing but two forms of force; the electron is uniform of but one class, size and nature. Thus in a grain of sand or a drop of water, the entire principle on which the whole universe operates is duplicated.

You may gather some slight idea of the magnitude of all this next time you eat a meal by remembering that every article of food you eat, the plate on which you eat it, the tableware and the table itself are but a collection of electrons.

In the world of physical matter, whether one is looking at the largest star that floods the heavens or the smallest grain of sand to be found on earth, the object under observation is but an organised collection of molecules, atoms and electrons revolving around one another at inconceivable speeds. Every particle of physical matter is in a continuous state of highly agitated motion, nothing is ever still, although nearly all physical matter may appear to the physical eye to be motionless. There is no solid physical matter. The hardest piece of steel is but an organised mass of revolving molecules, atoms and electrons.

The electrons in a piece of steel are of the same nature, and move at the same rate of speed, as the electrons in gold, silver, brass or pewter. The 80-odd forms of physical matter appear to be different from one another, and they are different because they are made up of different combinations of atoms, although the electrons in these atoms are always the same, except that some electrons carry a positive charge of electrification while others carry a negative charge.

Through the science of chemistry, matter may be broken up into atoms that are within themselves unchangeable. The 80-odd elements are created through combining and changing of the positions of the atoms.



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To illustrate the modus operandi of chemistry, through which this change of atomic position is wrought in terms of modern science, add four electrons, two positive and two negative, to the hydrogen atom and you have the element lithium. Knock out of the lithium atom, composed of three positive and three negative electrons, one positive and one negative electron, and you have one atom of helium, which is composed of two positive and two negative electrons. Thus it may be seen that the 80-odd physical elements of the universe differ from one another only in number of electrons composing their atoms, and the number and arrangement of those atoms in the molecules of these elements.

It is a fact known to every chemist that literally tens of thousands of synthetic substances may be composed out of only four kinds of atoms: hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon. Differences in the number of electrons in atoms confer upon them qualitative chemical differences, though all atoms of any one element are chemically alike. Differences in the number and spatial arrangements of these atoms and groups of molecules constitute both physical and chemical differences in substance. Quite different substances are produced by combinations of precisely the same kind of atom but in different proportions.

Take from a molecule of certain substance one single atom and there may be change from a compound necessary to life and growth into a deadly poison. Phosphorous is an example, and thus contains one kind of atom but some phosphorous is yellow and some is red, varying with the spatial distribution of the atom in the molecules composing the phosphorous.

It may be stated as a literal truth that the atom is the universal particle with which nature builds all material forms, from a grain of sand to the largest star that floats through space. The atom is nature's building block out of which she erects an oak tree or a pine, a rock of sandstone or granite, a mouse or an elephant. Some of the ablest thinkers have reasoned that the earth on which we live and every material particle on it began with two atoms which attached themselves to each other and through hundreds of millions of years of flight through space kept contacting and accumulating other atoms until step by step the earth was formed. This they point out would account for the various and differing strata of the earth's substance, such as the coal beds, the iron deposits, the gold and silver deposits, the copper deposits etc.

They reason that as the earth rolled through space it conducted groups of various kinds of atoms, which it promptly appropriated through the law of magnetic attraction. There is much to be seen in the earth's surface composition to support this theory, although there may be no positive evidence of its soundness.

These facts concerning the smallest analysable particles of matter have been briefly referred to as a starting point from which we shall undertake to ascertain how to develop and apply the law of power. It has been noticed that all matter is in a constant state of vibration and motion, that the molecule is made up of rapidly moving particles called atoms, which in turn are made up of rapidly moving particles called electrons.

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THE VIBRATING FLUID OF MATTER

In every particle of matter that there is an invisible fluid or force which causes the atoms to circle around one another at an inconceivable rate of speed. This fluid is a form of energy that has never been analysed. Thus far it has baffled the entire scientific world, but many scientists believe it will be the same energy as that which we call electricity. Others prefer to call it vibration. It is believed by some investigators that the rate of speed with which this force moves determines the nature of the outward physical appearance of the physical objects of the universe.

One rate of vibration of this fluid energy causes what is known as sound. The human ear can detect only the sound that is produced through from 32,000 to 38,000 vibrations a second. As the rate of vibrations per second increases above that which we call sound, they begin to manifest themselves in the form of heat. Heat begins with about 1,500,000 vibrations per second. Still higher up the scale, vibrations begin to register in the form of light: 3,000,000 vibrations per second create violet light and above this number the vibration sheds ultra violet rays that are invisible to the naked eye and other invisible radiation. Still higher up the scale, and just how high no one at present seems to know, vibrations create the power with which people think.

It is the belief of the author that the fluid of all vibration, out of which flow all known sources of energy, is universal in nature; that the fluid portion of sound is the same as the fluid portion of light; that difference in effect between sound and light is only a difference in the rate of vibration. Also that the fluid portion of thought is exactly the same as that of sound, heat and light, excepting the number of vibrations per second.



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The late Dr Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, and one of the accepted authorities on the subject of vibration, is here introduced in support of this author's theories concerning the subject of vibration. Suppose you have the power to make an iron rod vibrate, with any desired frequency in a dark room. At first, when vibrating slowly, its movement will be indicated by only one sense – that of touch. As soon as the vibrations increase, a low sound will emanate from it and it will appeal to two senses. At about 32,000 vibrations per second, the sound will be loud and shrill, but at 40,000 it will be silent and the movements of the rod will not be perceived by touch. Its movements will be perceived by no ordinary human sense.

From this point, up to about 1,500,000 vibrations per second, we have no sense that can appreciate any effect on the intervening vibrations. After that stage is reached, movement is indicated first by the sense of temperature and then, when the rod becomes red hot, by the sense of sight. At three million vibrations, it sheds violet light. Above that, it sheds ultra violet rays and other invisible radiation, some of which can be perceived by instruments and employed by us.

Now it has occurred to me that there must be a great deal to be learned about the effects of those vibrations in the great gap where the ordinary human senses are unable to hear, see or feel the movement. The power to send wireless messages via ether vibrations lies in that gap, but the gap is so great that it seems that there must be much more. You must make machines that practically supply new senses as the wireless instruments do. Can it be said, when you think of that great gap, that there are not many forms of vibrations that may give us results as wonderful as, or even more wonderful than, the wireless waves.

It seems to me that in this gap lie the vibrations that we have assumed to be given off by our brains and nerve cells when we think. But then again they may be higher up in the scale, beyond the vibrations that produce the ultra violet rays. Do we need a wire to carry these vibrations, will these travel through the ether without a wire just as wireless waves do? How will they be received by the recipient? Will they hear a series of signals or will they find that another man's thoughts have entered into their brains?

We may indulge in some speculations based on what we know of the wireless waves, which are all we can recognise of the vast series of vibrations that theoretically must exist. If the thought waves are similar to the wireless waves, they must pass from the brain and flow endlessly around the world and the universe. The body and the skull and the other solid obstacles will form no obstruction to their passage, as they pass through the ether which surrounds the molecules of every substance no matter how solid or dense. You ask if there would be not be constant interference and confusion, if other people's thoughts were flowing through our brains and setting up thoughts in them that did not originate with ourselves. How do you know that other people's thoughts are not interfering with yours now? I have noticed a good many phenomena of mind disturbances that I have never been able to explain. For instance, there is the inspiration or the discouragement that a speaker feels in addressing an audience. I have experienced this many times in my life and have never been able to explain exactly the physical causes behind it.



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Many recent scientific discoveries point to a day, not far distant perhaps, when people will read one another's thoughts, when thoughts will be conveyed directly from brain to brain without intervention of speech, writing or any of the present known methods of communication. It is not unreasonable to look forward to a time when we will see without eyes, hear without ears, and talk without tongues.

Briefly, the hypothesis that mind can communicate directly with mind rests on the theory that thought is a form of electrical disturbance, that it can be taken up by induction and transmitted through a distance either by a wire or simply through the all-pervading ether, as in the case of wireless telegraph waves. There are many analogies that suggest it is of a nature of an electrical disturbance. A nerve that is on the same substance as the brain is an excellent conductor of the electrical current.

When we first passed an electrical current through the nerves of a dead man we were shocked and amazed to see him sit up and move. The electrified nerves produced contractions of the muscles very much as in life. The nerves appear to act upon the muscles very much as the electric current acts upon an electromagnet. The current magnetises a bar of iron placed at right angles to it, and the nerve produces, through the intangible current a vital force that flows through them, contraction of the muscular fibres that are arranged at right angles to them.

It would be possible to cite many reasons why thought and vital force may be regarded as the same nature as electricity. The electric current is held to be a wave motion of the ether, the hypothetical substance that fills all space and pervades all substances. We believe that there must be ether, because without it the electric current could not pass through a vacuum or through the space. It is reasonable to believe that only a wave motion of a similar character can produce the phenomenon of thought and vital source. We can assume that the brain cells act as a battery and that the current produced flows along the nerves, but does it end there? Does it not pass out of the body in waves that flow around the world, unperceived by our senses, just as the wireless waves passed unperceived before Hertz and others discovered their existence. Every mind both a broadcasting and a receiving station.

This author has proved to his own satisfaction that every human brain is both a broadcasting and a receiving station for vibrations of a thought frequency. If this theory should turn out to be a fact and methods of reasonable control should be established, imagine the part it would play in the gathering, classifying and organising of knowledge. The possibility – much less the probability – of such a reality staggers the mind of man.

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THOMAS PAINE

Thomas Paine was one of the great minds of the American revolutionary period. To him more perhaps than any other we owe both the beginning and the ending of the revolution, for it was his keen mind that both helped in drawing up the Declaration of Independence and in convincing the writers of that document to translate its terms of reality.

In speaking of the source of his great storehouse of knowledge, Paine thus described it: "Any person who has made observations on the state of progress of the human mind by observing his own cannot but have observed that there are two distinct classes of what are called thoughts: those that we produce in ourselves by reflection and the act of thinking, and those that come into the mind of their own accord. I have always made it a rule to treat these voluntary visitors with civility, take care to examine as well as I was able if they were worth entertaining. It is from them that I have acquired almost all the knowledge that I have. As to the learning that any person gains from school education, it serves only like a small capital to put him in the way of beginning to learn from himself afterwards. Every person of learning is finally his own teacher, the reason for which is that principals cannot be impressed upon the memory. Their place of mental residence is the understanding, and they are never so lasting as when they begin as conception."

In the foregoing words, Paine, the great American patriot and philosopher, described an experience that is at one time or another the experience of every person. Who is there so unfortunate as not to have received positive evidence that thoughts or even complete ideas will pop into the mind from outside sources. What means of conveyance is there for such visitors except the ether.





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Ether fills the boundless space of the universe. It is the medium for conveyance of all known forms of vibrations such as sound, light and heat. Why should it not be also the means of conveyance for the vibration of thought. Every mind or brain is directly connected with every other brain by means of the ether. Any thought released by any brain may be instantly picked up and interpreted by any brains that are in rapport with the sending brain. This author is as sure of this fact as he is that the chemical formula H₂O will produce water. Imagine if you can what a part this principle plays in every walk of life. Nor is the probability of ether been a conveyor of thought from mind to mind the most astonishing of its performance. It is the belief of this author that any thought vibration released by any brain is picked up by the ether and kept in motion for a circuitous wavelength corresponding in length to the intensity of the energy used in its release, that these vibrations remain in motion forever, that they are one of the two sources from which thoughts that pop into one's mind emanate – the other source being the direct and immediate contact through the ether with the brain releasing the thought vibration.

Thus it will be seen that if this theory is a fact, the boundless space of the whole universe is now and will continue to become literally a mental library, wherein may be found all the thoughts released by mankind. The author is here laying the foundation for one of the most important hypotheses enumerated in the lesson of self-confidence; a fact a student should keep in mind as he approaches that lesson.

LESSON ON ORGANISED KNOWLEDGE

This is a lesson on organised knowledge. Most of the useful knowledge to which the human race has become heir has become preserved and accurately recorded in nature's bible. By turning back the pages in this unalterable bible, we have read the story of the terrific struggle through and out of which the present civilisation has grown. The pages of this bible are made up of the physical elements of which this earth and other planets exist, and of the ether which fills the space.

By turning back the pages written on stone and covering the surface of this earth on which we live, we have uncovered the bones, skeletons, footprints and other unmistakable evidence of the history of animal life on this earth, planted there for our enlightenment and guidance by the hand of mother nature throughout unbelievable periods of time.

The evidence is plain and unmistakable – the great stone pages of nature's bible found on this earth and the endless pages of that bible represented by the ether wherein all past human thought has been recorded, constitute a constant source of communication between the creator and the human race. This bible has been born before people had reached the thinking stage, indeed before people had reached the amoeba stage of development. This bible is above and beyond the power of the human race to alter, moreover it tells its story not in the ancient dead languages or hieroglyphics of half savage races, but in universal language that all that have eyes may read. Nature's bible, from which we have derived all the knowledge that is worth knowing, is one that no one may alter or in any manner tamper with.

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The most marvellous discovery yet made by humans is that of the recently discovered radio principle, which operates through the aid of ether, an important portion of nature's bible. Imagine the ether picking up the ordinary vibration of sound and transforming that vibration from audio frequency into radio frequency, carrying it to a properly attuned receiving station and then transforming it back into its original form of audio frequency all in the flash of a second. It should surprise no one that such a force could gather up the vibration of thought and keep that vibration in motion forever. The established and known fact of instantaneous transmission of sound, through the agency of the ether, by means of the modern radio apparatus, removes the theory of transmission of thought vibrations from mind to mind from the possible to the probable.

THE MASTERMIND

We come now to the next step in the description of the ways in which the means by which one may gather, classify and organise useful knowledge, through harmonious alliance of two or more minds, out of which grows a mastermind. The term mastermind is abstract and has no counterpart in the field of known facts except to a small number of people who have made a careful study of the effect of one mind upon other minds.

This author has searched in vain through all the text books and essays available on the subject of the human mind, but has nowhere been able to find even reference to the principle here described as the mastermind. The term first came to the attention of the author through an interview with Andrew Carnegie.

It is this author's belief that the mind is made up of the same universal fluid energy as that which constitutes the ether that fills the universe. It is a fact as well known to the layman as to the person of scientific investigation that some minds clash the moment they come in contact with each other, while some minds show a natural affinity for each other. Between the two extremes of natural antagonism and natural affinity growing up out of the meeting or contacting of minds, there is a wide range of possibilities for varying reactions of mind upon mind.

Some minds are so naturally adapted to each other that love at first sight is the inevitable outcome of the contact. Who has not known of such an experience. In other cases, minds are so antagonistic that violent, mutual dislike shows itself at first meeting. These results occur without a word being spoken and without the usual causes for love and hate acting as a stimulus.

It is quite probable that the mind is made up of a fluid or substance of energy similar to, if not in fact the same substance as, the ether. When two minds come close enough to each other to form a contact, the mixing of the units of this mindstuff – let us call it the electrons of the ether – sets up a chemical reaction that starts vibration that affects the two individuals pleasantly or unpleasantly. The effect of the meeting of two minds is obvious to even the most casual observer. Every effect must have a cause. What could be more reasonable than to suspect that the cause of the change in mental attitude between two minds that have just come in contact with each other is none other than the disturbance of electrons in each mind in the process of rearranging themselves in the new field created by that contact.



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For the purpose of establishing this lesson upon a sound foundation, we have gone a long way towards success by admitting that the meeting or coming into close contact of two minds sets up in each of those minds a certain noticeable effect or state of mind quite different from the one existing immediately prior to contact. While it is desirable, it is not essential to know what is the cause of this reaction of every mind upon mind. That the reaction takes place in every instance is a known fact that gives us a starting point from which we may show what is meant by the term mastermind.

CHEMISTRY OF THE MIND

A mastermind may be created through the bringing together or blending, in a spirit of perfect harmony, of two or more minds. Out of this harmonious blending, the chemistry of the mind creates a third mind which may be appropriated or used by one or all of the individual minds. This mastermind may remain available as long as the friendly, harmonious alliance between the individual minds exists. It will disintegrate and all the evidence of its former existence will disappear the moment that the friendly alliance is broken. This principle of mind chemistry is the cause of all the so-called soul mate and eternal triangle cases, so many of which unfortunately find their way into the divorce courts and meet with popular ridicule from ignorant and uneducated people who manufacture vulgarity and scandal out of one of the greatest of nature's laws.

The entire civilised world knows that the first two or three years of association after marriage are less often marked by much disagreement of a more or less petty nature. These are the years of adjustment. If the marriage survives them, it is more likely to become a permanent alliance. These facts no experienced married person will deny. Again we see the effect without understanding the cause. While there are other contributing causes, in the main lack of harmony during these early years of marriage is due to the slowness in the chemistry of the mind in blending harmoniously.

Stated differently, the electrons or units of the energy called the mind are often neither extremely friendly nor antagonistic upon first contact. But through constant association, they gradually adapt themselves in harmony, except in rare cases where association has the opposite effect of leading, eventually, to open hostility between these units.

It is a well-known fact that after a man and a woman have lived together for 15 years, they become practically indistinguishable to each other, even though there may be not the slightest evidence of the state of mind called love. Moreover, this association and relationship not only develops a natural affinity between the two minds, but it actually causes the two people to take on a similar facial expression and to resemble each other closely in many other marked ways. Any confident analysis of human nature can easily go into a crowd of strange people and pick out the wife after having been introduced to the husband. The expression of the eyes, the contour of the faces and the tone of the voice of people who have long been associated in marriage becomes similar to a marked degree.

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So marked is the effect of the chemistry of the human mind that any experienced public speaker may quickly interpret the manner in which his statements are accepted by his audience. Antagonism in the mind of but one person in an audience of one thousand may be detected by the speaker who has learned how to feel and register the effects of antagonism. The public speaker can make these interpretations without observing or in any manner being influenced by the expression on the faces of those in his audience. On account of these facts, an audience may cause a speaker to rise to great heights of oratory or heckle him into failure without making a sound or noting a single expression of satisfaction or dissatisfaction through the features of the face.

All master salesperson know the moment the psychological time for closing has arrived, not by what the prospective buyer says but from the effect of the chemistry of his mind as interpreted or felt by the salesperson. Words often belie the intentions of those speaking them, but a correct interpretation of the chemistry of the mind leaves no loophole for such a possibility. Every able salesperson knows that the majority of buyers have the habit of affecting a negative attitude almost to the very climax of the sale.

Every able lawyer has developed a sixth sense whereby they are able to feel their way through the most artfully selected words of the clever witness who is lying and correctly interpret that which is in the witness's mind through the chemistry of the mind. Many lawyers have developed this ability without knowing the real source of it. They possess the technique without the scientific understanding on which it is based. Many salespeople have done the same thing.





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THE PRINCIPLE OF MINDS CHEMISTRY

One who is gifted in the art of correctly judging the chemistry of the minds of others may, figuratively speaking, walk into the front door of a given mind and leisurely explore the entire building, noting all its details and walking out again with a complete picture of the entire building without the owner of the building so much as knowing that he has entertained a visitor. This principle may be put to a very practical use having reference to the principle of the chemistry of the mind. The principle is referred to merely as an approach to the major principles of this lesson. Enough has already been stated to introduce the principle of mind's chemistry and to prove, with the aid of the student's own everyday experience, and the casual observation, that the moment two minds come within close range of each other a noticeable mental change takes place in both. That sometimes registers in the nature of antagonism and other times registering in the nature of friendliness.

Every mind has what might be termed an electrical field. The nature of this field varies depending upon the mood of individual's mind on the back of it and the nature of the chemistry of the mind creating the field. It is believed by this author that the normal or natural condition of the chemistry of any individual mind is the result of his physical hereditary plus the nature of thoughts that have dominated that mind, that every mind is continuously changing to the extent that the individual's philosophy and general habits of thought change the chemistry of his or her mind. These principles the author believes to be true – that any individual may change the chemistry of his or her own mind so that it will either attract or repel those with whom it comes in contact is a known fact.

Stated in another manner, any person may assume a mental attitude which will attract and please others or repel and antagonise them, and this without the aid of words or facial expression, or other form of bodily movement or demeanour. Go back now to the definition of a mastermind – a mind that grows out of the blending and coordination of two or more minds in a spirit of perfect harmony – and you will catch the full significance of the word harmony as it is used here. Two minds will not blend, nor can they be coordinated, unless the element of perfect harmony is present, wherein lies the secret of success or failure of practically all business and social partnerships.

Every sales manager and every military commander and every leader in any walk of life understands the necessity of an esprit de corps, a spirit of common understanding and cooperation in the attainment of success. This mass spirit of harmony of purpose is obtained through discipline, voluntary or forced, of such a nature that the individual minds become blended into a mastermind, by which is meant that the chemistry of the individual mind is modified in such a manner that these minds blend and function as one. These methods through which this blending process takes place are as numerous as the individuals engaged in the various forms of leadership. Every leader has his or her own method of coordinating the minds of the followers. One will use force, another uses persuasion; one will play upon the fear of penalties, while another plays upon the promise of rewards.

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MIND CHEMISTRY AND ECONOMIC POWER

In order to reduce the individual minds of a given group of people to where they may be blended into a mass mind, the student will not have to search deeply into the history of statesmanship, politics, business or finance, to discover the techniques employed by the leaders in these fields and the process of blending the minds of individuals into a mass mind. The really great leaders of the world, however, have been provided by nature with a combination of mind chemistry, favourable as a nucleus of attraction for other minds.

Napoleon was a notable example of a man possessing a magnetic type of mind which had a very decided tendency to attract all minds with which it came into contact. Soldiers followed Napoleon to certain death without flinching, because of the compelling or attractive nature of his personality, and that personality was nothing more or less than the chemistry of his mind.

No group of minds can be blended into a mastermind if one of the individuals of that group possesses one of those extremely negative, repellent minds. The negative or repellent minds will not blend in the sense here described as a mastermind. Lack of knowledge of this fact has brought many otherwise able leaders to defeat. Any able leader that understands this principle of mind chemistry may temporarily blend minds in practically any group of people, so that it will represent a mass mind, but the composition will disintegrate almost the very moment the leader's presence is removed from that group. The most successful sales force meets once a week or more often, for the purpose of merging the individual minds into a mastermind that will, for a limited number of days, serve as a stimulus to the individual minds.

It may be, and generally is, true that the leaders of these groups do not understand what actually takes place in these meetings. The routine of such meetings is usually given over to talks by the leader and other group members, and occasionally from someone outside the group. Meanwhile, the minds of the individual members are conducting and recharging one another.





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The brain of a human being may be compared to an electric battery, in that it will become exhausted or run down, causing the owner to feel despondent or discouraged. Who would be so fortunate as to have never had such a feeling. The human brain, when in this depleted condition, must be recharged and the manner in which this is done is through contact with a more vital mind or minds. The great leaders understood the necessity of this recharging process and understand how to accomplish this result. This knowledge is the main feature that distinguishes a leader from a follower.

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Fortunate is the person that understands this principle sufficiently well to keep his or her brain vitalised or recharged by periodically contacting it with a more vital mind. Any competent practitioner of psychotherapeutics can recharge a brain within a few minutes.

There is a growing tendency upon the part of the best informed physicians and other healthcare practitioners to accept the theory that all diseases begin when the brain of the individual is in a depleted or devitalised state. Stated in another way, it is a known fact that a person who has a perfectly vitalised brain is immune from all manner of disease.

Every intelligent health practitioner knows that nature of the mind cures disease in every instance where a cure is affected. Medicines, faith, laying on the hands, chiropractic, osteopathy and all other forms of outside stimulant are nothing more than artificial aids to nature or mere methods of setting the chemistry of the mind into motion to the end that it readjusts the cells and tissues of the body, revitalises the brain and otherwise causes the human machine to function normally.

The most orthodox practitioner will admit the truth of this statement. Through the principles of harmonious blending of minds, perfect health may be enjoyed. Through the aid of this same principle, sufficient power may be developed to solve the problem of economic pressures that constantly weighs upon every individual. We may judge the future possibilities of mind chemistry by taking inventory of its past achievements, keeping in mind the fact that these achievements have been largely the result of accidental discovery and of chance groupings of minds.



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We are approaching the time when the professors at universities will teach mind chemistry along with the other subjects being taught, opening vistas of possibility for individual students.

That mind chemistry may be appropriately applied to the working day affairs of the economic and commercial world is a demonstrable fact. Through the blending of two or more minds in the spirit of perfect harmony, the principle of mind chemistry may be made to develop sufficient power to enable the individuals whose minds have been thus blended to perform seemingly superhuman feats.

Power is the force with which people achieve success in any undertaking. Power in unlimited quantities may be enjoyed by any group of men and women who possess the wisdom with which to submerge their own personalities and own immediate individual interests through the blending of their minds in a spirit of perfect harmony.

Observe the frequency with which the word harmony appears throughout this introduction. There can be no development of a mastermind where this element of perfect harmony does not exist. The individual units of the minds will not blend with the individual units of another until the two minds have been aroused and warmed with a spirit of perfect harmony of purpose. The moment two minds begin to take divergent roads of interest, the individual units of each mind separate and the third unit, known as a mastermind, which grew out of the friendly or harmonious alliance will disintegrate.

HENRY FORD, THOMAS EDISON AND HARVEY FIRESTONE

We come now to the study of some well-known people that have accumulated great power and great fortunes through the application of mind chemistry. Let us begin our study with three men who are known to be men of great achievement in their respective fields of economic, business and professional endeavour. Their names are Henry Ford, Thomas Edison and Harvey Firestone.

Of the three, Henry Ford is by far the most powerful, having reference to economic and financial power, and in his time was the most powerful financial person living on earth. Ford gathered millions of dollars with great ease. It was said by those close to him that Ford, if he needed it, could send out the call for money and gather in a billion dollars that he would have available for use within one week. He could get his money if he needed it through the intelligent application of the principles on which this course is based.

Edison was a philosopher, scientist and inventor who was perhaps the keenest bible student on earth, a student of nature's bible however, and not of the myriads of manmade bibles. Edison has such a keen insight into mother nature's bible that he has harvested and combined, for the good of mankind, more of nature's laws than any other person now living or who ever lived. It was Edison who first harnessed the lightning and made it serve as a light for man's use, through the aid of an incandescent fluorescent lightbulb. It was Edison who gave the world the modern moving picture. These are but a few of his outstanding achievements; modern miracles that he has achieved not by trickery but in the very midst of the bright light of science.



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Firestone is the moving spirit in the great Firestone tyre industry in Ohio. All three of these men began their business and professional careers without capital and with but little schooling. All three men are now well-educated, wealthy and powerful. Let us enquire into the source of their wealth and power. Thus far, we have been dealing only with effect. The true philosopher wishes to understand the cause of a given effect.

It is a matter of general knowledge that Ford, Edison and Firestone were close personal friends for many years. In the early years they were in the habit of going away to the woods once a year for a period of rest, meditation and recuperation. But it is not generally known that there existed between the three men a bond of harmony, which has caused their minds to become blended into a mastermind that is the real source of the power of each.

This mastermind, growing out of the coordination of the individual minds of Ford, Edison and Firestone, enabled these men to tune in on forces and sources of knowledge with which most are not familiar. If the student doubts either the principle or the effects described, remember that nearly half the theory here set forth is a known fact. For example, it is known that these three men have great power, that they are wealthy, that they began without capital and with little schooling, that they perform periodic mind contact, that they are harmonious and friendly, that their achievements are so outstanding as to make it impossible to compare these achievements with those of others in their respective fields. All these effects are known to everyone. Therefore there can be no dispute as far as effects are concerned.

Of one fact connected with the causes of Edison, Ford and Firestone we may be sure: namely, that these achievements were in no way based upon trickery, deceit, the supernatural or the so-called revelations of any other form of unnatural law. These men do not possess a stock of legendarium; they work with natural laws that are for the most part known to all economists and leaders in the field of science, with the possible exception of the law upon which chemistry of the mind is based.

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A mastermind may be created by any group of people who will coordinate their minds in a spirit of perfect harmony. The group may consist of any number from two upwards – best results appear available from the blending of six or seven minds. It has been suggested that Jesus Christ discovered how to make use of the principle of mind chemistry and that his seemingly miraculous performance out of the power he developed through the blending of the minds of his 12 disciples. It has been pointed out that when one of the disciples, Judas, broke faith, the mastermind immediately disintegrated and Jesus met with the supreme catastrophe of his life.

When two or more people harmonise their minds and produce the effect known as a mastermind, each person in the group becomes vested with the power to contact with and gather knowledge through the subconscious minds of all the other members of the group. The power becomes immediately noticeable, having the effect of stimulating the mind to a higher rate of vibration and otherwise evidencing itself in the form of a more vivid imagination and the consciousness of what appears to be a sixth sense.

It is through this sixth sense that new ideas will flash into the mind. These ideas will take on the nature and form of the subject dominating the mind of the individual. If the entire group has met for the purpose of discussing a given subject, ideas concerning that subject will come pouring into the minds of all present as if an outside influence were dictating them. The minds of these participating in the mastermind become as magnets, attracting ideas and thought stimuli of the most highly organised and practical nature from no one knows where.

The process of mind blending here described as mastermind may be likened to the act of one who connects many electric batteries to a single transmission wire, thereby stepping up the power flowing over the line. Each battery added increases the power passing over the line by amount of energy that the battery carries, just as in the case of blending individual minds into a mastermind. Each mind, through the principle of mind chemistry, stimulates all the other minds in the group until the mind energy thus becomes so great that it penetrates to and connects to the universal energy known as ether. That in turn touches every atom of the entire universe.

The modern radio substantiates to a certain extent the theory here expressed. Powerful sending or broadcasting stations must be erected through which the broadcasting of sound is stepped up before it can be picked up by the much higher vibrating energy of the ether and carried in all directions.

A mastermind made up of many individual minds so blended that they produce a strong vibrating energy constitutes almost an exact counterpart of the radio broadcasting station. Every public speaker has felt the influence of mind chemistry, for it is a well-known fact that as soon as the individual minds of an audience become in rapport, tuned to the rate of the vibration of the mind of the speaker with the speaker, there is a noticeable increase in enthusiasm in the speaker's mind. He or she often rises to the heights of oratory which surprise all.



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The first five or 10 minutes of the average speech are devoted to what is known as warming up. By this is meant the process through which the minds of the speaker and his audience are becoming blended in a spirit of perfect harmony. Every speaker knows what happens when this state fails to materialise on part of the audience.

The seemingly supernatural phenomena occurring in spiritualistic meetings are the result of the reaction upon one another of the minds in the group. These phenomena seldom begin to manifest themselves until 10 to 20 minutes after the group is formed, for the reason that this is about the time required for the minds in the group to become harmonised or blended. The messages received through members of a spiritualistic group probably come from one or two sources, or from both. First, from the vast storehouse of the conscious mind of some member of the group or, second, from the universal storehouse of the ether in which it is more than probable that all thought vibration is preserved.

Neither any known natural law or human reason supports the theory of communication with individual that has died. It is a fact that any individual may explore the store of knowledge in another's mind through this principle of mind chemistry, and it seems reasonable to assume that this power may be extended to include contact with whatever vibrations are available in the ether if there are any.

The theory that all the higher and more refined vibrations, such as those growing out of thought, are preserved in the ether grows out of the known fact that neither matter nor energy – the two known elements of the universe – may be either created or destroyed. It is reasonable to suppose that all vibrations which have been stepped up sufficiently to be picked up and observed in the ether will go on forever. The lower vibrations that do not blend with or otherwise contact the ether probably live a natural life and die out. All the so-called geniuses probably gained their reputations because, by mere chance or otherwise, they formed alliances with other minds that enabled them to step up their own mind vibrations to where they were able to contact the vast temple of knowledge recorded and filed in the ether of the universe.

Enquiring further into the source of economic power, as manifested by the achievement of men in the pursuit of business, let us study the case of the Chicago group known as the Big Six, consisting of William Wrigley Jnr, who owned the chewing gum business; JR Thompson, who operated a chain of lunch rooms; Albert Lasker, who owned the Lord & Thomas advertising agency; Charles McCulloch, who owned the Parmalee Express Company; and John Ritchie and John Hertz, who own the yellow taxi cab business. The estimated yearly income of these six men was estimated at the time to be upwards of \$25 million, or an average of more than \$4 million per year per men.

Not one man had any special educational advantage, they all began without capital or extensive credit, and their financial achievements were due only to their own individual efforts. Many years ago, these six men formed a friendly alliance, meeting at stated periods for the purpose of assisting one another with ideas and suggestions in their various lines of business. With the exception of Hertz and Ritchie, none of the six men were in any way associated in a legal partnership.

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One, working capital and raw and finished materials. Two, the knowledge gained from the experience of Henry Ford himself and the cooperation of a well-trained organisation that understands how to apply this knowledge to best advantage from the Ford viewpoint. It is impossible to estimate with anything approaching correctness the actual dollars and cents value of either of these two groups of assets, but it is my opinion 75 percent of the value of the organisation is in the knowledge and experience of Henry Ford and his organisation.

This author is of the opinion that this statement was not compiled by the young man whose name was assigned to it without the assistance of some very analytical and experienced mind or minds. Unquestionably, the biggest asset that Henry Ford had was his own brain, and next to this would come the brains of his immediate circle of associates, for it was through coordination of these that the physical assets he came to control were accumulated. Destroy every plant the Ford Motor Company owns, every piece of machinery and every atom of raw and finished material, and Ford would still have been the most powerful man economically on earth at the time.

The brains that built the Ford business could duplicate it again in short order. Capital is always available in unlimited quantities to brains such as Ford. Ford was the most powerful man on earth economically because he had the keenest and most practical conception of the principle of organised knowledge of any person on earth. Despite Ford's great power and financial success, it may be that he blundered on the application of the principles through which he accumulated his power. There is but little doubt that Ford's methods of mind coordination were often crude in the early days. Neither can there be much doubt that Ford's application of the principle of mind chemistry was at least at the start the result of a chance alliance with other minds, particularly the mind of Edison.

It may be mentioned, without anyway depriving Ford of any honour or glory, that in his early days of experience he had to combat the powerful enemies of illiteracy and ignorance to a greater extent than either Edison or Firestone. Both of them were gifted with natural hereditary, with a most fortunate aptitude for acquiring and applying knowledge. Ford had to hue his talent out of the rough, raw timbers of his hereditary estate.

Within an inconceivably short period of time, Ford mastered three of the most stubborn enemies of humanity and transformed them into assets constituting the very foundation of his success. These enemies are ignorance, illiteracy and poverty. Any person who can stay the hand of these three savage forces, much less harness and use them to good account, is well worth close study by the less fortunate individuals.

This is an age of industrial power in which we are living. The source of all this power is organised effort. Not only has the management of industrial enterprise efficiently organised individual workers, but in many instances, mergers of industries have been effected in such a manner and to an end where these combinations, as in the case of the United States Steel Corporation for example, have accumulated practically unlimited power.

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One may hardly glance at the news without hearing some report of a business, industrial or financial merger, bringing enormous resources under one management and thus creating great power. They are all merging for the purpose of developing power through highly organised and coordinated efforts. Knowledge, general in nature and not organised, is not power. It is only potential power, the material of which real power may be developed.

Any modern library contains an unorganised record of all the knowledge of value, to which the present stage of civilisation is ailed. But this knowledge is not power because it is not organised. Every form of energy and every species of animal or plant life, to survive, must be organised. The oversized animals whose bones have filled nature's bone yard through extinction, have left mute but certain evidence that non-organisation means annihilation.

From the electron, the smallest particle of matter, to the largest star of the universe and everywhere in between these two extremes offer proof positive that one of nature's first laws is that of organisation. Fortunate is the individual who recognises the importance of this law and makes it his business to familiarise himself with the various ways in which the law may be applied to advantage.

The astute businessperson has not only recognised the importance of the law of organised effort, but has made this law the work and the worth of their power. Without any knowledge whatsoever of the principle of mind chemistry, or that such a principle even exists, many have accumulated great power by merely organising the knowledge they possessed. The majority of all who have established the principle of mind chemistry and developed that principle into a mastermind have stumbled upon this knowledge by the merest of accident, often failing to recognise the real nature of their discovery or to understand this source of their power.

This author is of the opinion that all living persons who at the present time are consciously making use of the principle of mind chemistry in developing power through the blending of minds may be counted on the fingers of two hands with perhaps several fingers left to spare. If this estimate is even approximately true, the student will readily see that there is but slight danger of the field of mind chemistry practice becoming overcrowded.





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It is a well-known fact that one of the most difficult tasks that any business person must perform is that of inducing those that are associated with them to coordinate their efforts in a spirit of harmony. To induce continuous cooperation between a group of workers and any undertaking is next to impossible. Only the most efficient leaders can accomplish this highly desired object, but once in a great while such a leader will rise above the horizon in the field of industry, business or finance, and then the world hears of a Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, John Rockefeller Snr or James J Hill.

Power and success are practically synonymous terms, one grows out of the other. Therefore, any person who has the knowledge and the ability to develop power through the principle of harmonious coordination of efforts between individual minds may be successful in any reasonable undertaking.

It must not be assumed that a mastermind will immediately spring mushroom-fashion out of any group of minds that makes pretence of coordination and the spirit of harmony. Harmony in the real sense and meaning of the word is as rare among groups of people as is genuine Christianity among those who proclaim themselves Christians. Harmony is the nucleus around which the state of mind known as mastermind must be developed. Without this element of harmony there can be no mastermind.

Woodrow Wilson had in mind the development of a mastermind to be composed of groups of minds representing the civilised nations of the world in his proposal for establishing the League of Nations. Wilson's conception was the most far-reaching humanitarian idea ever created in the mind of man, because it dealt with the principle that embraces sufficient power to establish a real brotherhood of people on earth. The League of Nations or some similar blending of international minds in a spirit of harmony is sure to become a reality. The time when such unity of minds will take place will be measured largely by the time required for the great universities and non-sectarian institutions of learning to supplant ignorance and superstition with understanding and wisdom. This time is rapidly approaching.

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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE REVIVAL

The old religious event known as the revival offers a favourable opportunity to study the principle of mind chemistry known as mastermind. It will be observed that music plays no small part in bringing about the harmony essential to the blending of minds in a revival meeting. Without music, the revival meeting would be a tame affair.

During a revival meeting, the leader of the meeting has no difficulty in creating harmony in the minds of his devotees, but it is a well-known fact that this state of harmony lasts no longer than the presence of the leader, after which the mastermind temporarily created disintegrates. By arousing the emotional nature of the followers, the revivalist has no difficulty, under the proper state setting and with the embellishment of the right sort of music, in creating a mastermind that becomes noticeable to all that come in contact with it.

The very air becomes charged with a positive, pleasing influence that changes the entire chemistry of all minds present. The revivalist calls this energy the spirit of the Lord. This author, through experiments conducted with scientific investigators and layman unaware of the nature of the experiment, has created the same state of mind and the same positive atmosphere without calling it the spirit of the Lord. On many occasions, this author has witnessed the creation of the same positive atmosphere in a group of men and women engaged in the spirit of salesmanship, without calling it the spirit of the Lord.

The author helped conduct a School of Salesmanship for the Cooperative Society of Chicago, and by the use of the same principle of mind chemistry that the revivalist calls the spirit of the Lord so transformed the nature of a group of 3,000 men and women, all of whom were without former sales experience. They sold more than \$10 million worth of securities in less than nine months and earned more than a million dollars for themselves. It was found that the average person who joined this school had reached the zenith of his or her own selling power within one week, after which it was necessary to revitalise the individual's brain through a group sales meeting.





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These sales meetings were conducted on very much the same order as the modern revival meetings of the religionist, with much the same stage equipment, including music and high-powered speakers who exalted the salespeople in very much the same manner as does the modern religious revivalist. Call it religion, psychology, mind chemistry or anything you please, they are all based upon the same principle. But there is nothing more certain than the fact that wherever a group of minds are brought into contact, in a spirit of perfect harmony, each mind in the group becomes immediately supplanted and reinforced with a noticeable energy called a mastermind.

For all this writer professes to know, this uncharted energy may be the spirit of the Lord but it operates just as favourably when called by any other name. The human brain and nervous system constitute a piece of intricate machinery which but few if any understand. When controlled and properly directed this piece of machinery can be made to perform wonders of achievement. If not controlled, it will perform wonders fantastic and phantom-like in nature, as may be seen by examining the inmates of an asylum.

The human brain has different connection with a continuous influx of energy from which a person derives the power to think. The brain receives this energy, mixes it with enough energy from the food taken in, and distributes it to the body with the aid of the blood and the nervous system. From what source this outside energy comes, no one seems to know. All we know about it is that we must have it or die. It seems reasonable to suppose that this energy is none other than that which we call ether, and that it flows into the body along with the oxygen from the air as we breathe.

Every normal human body possesses a first class chemical laboratory and a stock of chemicals sufficient to carry on the business of breaking up, assimilating and properly mixing and compounding the food we take into the body, preparing it to distribute to wherever it is needed. Ample tests have been made, both with humans and beasts, to prove that the energy known as the mind plays an important part in this energy operation of compounding and transforming food into the required substances to build and keep the body in good repair. It is known that worry, excitement or fear will interfere with the digestive process, and in extreme cases stop this process altogether resulting in illness or death. It is obvious then that the mind enters into the chemistry of food digestion and distribution.

It is believed by many eminent authorities, although it may never have been scientifically proved, that the energy known as mind or thought may become contaminated with negative or unsociable units to such an extent that the whole nervous system is thrown out of working order. Digestion is interfered with and various and sundry forms of disease will show themselves. Financial difficulties and unrequited love affairs head the list of causes of such mind disturbance.

A negative environment, such as one existing where some members of the family are constantly nagging, will interfere with the chemistry of the mind to such an extent that individual will lose ambition and gradually sink into oblivion.

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Any high school student knows that certain food combinations will, if taken into the stomach, result in indigestion, violent pain and even death. Good health depends, in part at least, upon a food combination that harmonises. But harmony of food combinations is not sufficient to ensure good health, there must be harmony also between the units of energy known as the mind. Harmony seems to be one of nature's laws, without which there can be no such thing as organised energy, or life in any form whatsoever.

The health of the body as well as the mind is literally built around and upon the principle of harmony. The energy known as life begins to disintegrate and death approaches when the organs of the body stop working in harmony. The moment harmony ceases at the source of any form of energy, the units of that energy are thrown into a chaotic state of disorder and the harmony is rendered neutral or passive. Harmony is also the nucleus around which the principle of mind chemistry known as a mastermind develops power. Destroy this harmony and you destroy the power growing out of the coordinated effort of a group of individual minds.

This truth has been stated, restated and presented in every manner of which the author could conceive, with the unending repetition for the reason that unless the student grasps this principle and learns to apply it, this lesson is useless. Success in life, no matter what one may call success, is very much a matter of adaptation to an environment in such a manner that there is harmony between the individual and his environment. The palace of a king becomes as a hovel of a peasant if harmony does not abound within the walls.

Without the law of harmony, there can be no organisation of knowledge. For what, one may ask, is knowledge except for the organisation of facts and truth and natural law. The moment discord begins to creep in at the front door, harmony edges out the back door, whether the application is made to a business partnership or the orderly movement of the planets in the heavens.

There can be no poetry or music or oratory worthy of notice without the presence of harmony. Good architecture is largely a matter of harmony. Without harmony, a building is just a matter of building material, more or less a monstrosity. Sound business management plants the very sinews of its existence in harmony. Every well-dressed man or woman is a living picture and example of harmony. With all these illustrations of the importance that harmony plays in the affairs of the world and the operation of the everyday universe, how could any intelligent person leave harmony out of their definite aim in life, or have no definite aim as to admit harmony as the chief stone of its foundation.

The human body is a complex organisation of organs, cells and muscles etc. The mind action that stimulates those to action and coordinates the efforts of the component parts of the body is also a plurality of ever varying and changing energies. From birth until death, there is a continuous struggle, often assuming the nature of open combat, between the forces of the mind. For example, the life long struggle between the motivating forces and desires of the human mind which takes place between the impulses is well-known to every human being.

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THE MEANING OF EDUCATION

There has long been a general misconception of the meaning of the word educate. The dictionaries have not aided in the elimination of this misunderstanding, because they have defined the word educate as an act of imparting knowledge. The word educate has its roots in the Latin word educo, which means to develop from within, to grow through the law of use. Nature hates idleness in all its forms and gives continuous life only to those elements that are in use. Cut off an arm or take it out of use and the idle part will soon atrophy and become lifeless. Reverse the order, and give an arm more than usual use and that arm will develop from within and grow strong.

Power grows out of organised knowledge but it grows out of it through application and use. A person may become a walking encyclopaedia of knowledge without possessing any power of value. This knowledge becomes power only to the extent it is organised, classified and put into action. Some of the best educated people the world has known possess much less general knowledge than some who have been known as fools. The difference between the two is that the former put what knowledge they possess into use and the latter make no such application.

An educated person is one who knows how to acquire everything they need in the attainment of their main purpose in life without violating the laws and rights of others. It might a surprise to many people of learning to know that they come nowhere near qualification as people of education. It might also be a surprise to many who believe they suffer from a lack of learning to know that they are well educated.

The successful lawyer is not necessarily the one who memorises the greatest number of principles of law. On the contrary, the successful lawyer is the one who knows where to find a principle of law plus a variety of opinions supporting that principle that fit the immediate needs of a given case. In other words, the successful lawyer is one who knows where to find the law they need when they need it.





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This principle applies with equal force to the affairs of industry and business. Henry Ford had but little elementary schooling and yet he was one of the best educated people in the world because he acquired the ability to combine natural and economic laws with the minds of others to get anything of a material nature that he wants.

During the world war, Ford brought a suit against the Chicago Tribune, charging the newspaper with publication of libellous statements concerning him. One was the statement that Ford was an ignorant pacifist. When the suit came up for trial the attorneys undertook to prove by Ford himself that their statement was true and that he was ignorant. They cross-examined him on all manner of subjects. One question they asked was how many soldiers did the British send over to subdue the rebellion in the colonies in 1776. With a dry grin on his face, Ford nonchalantly replied that he did not know just how many, but he had heard that it was a lot more than ever went back. Loud laughter from court resulted, even from the lawyer that asked the question.

The line of enquiry was continued for an hour or more, with Ford keeping completely calm. Finally he had permitted the smart lawyers to play with him until he was tired of it, and in reply to a question that was particularly obnoxious and frustrating, Ford straightened himself up, pointed a finger at the questioning lawyer, and replied: "If I should really wish to answer the foolish question you have just asked, or any of the others you have been asking, let me remind you that I have a row of electric pushing buttons hanging over my desk and by placing my finger on the right button I can call in people that can give me the correct answer to all the questions you have asked and many that you have not the intelligence either to ask or to answer. Now will you kindly tell me about why I should bother with filling my mind with a lot of useless details in order to answer every fool question that anyone could ask when I have able people all about me who could supply me with all the facts I want when I call for them."

This answer is quoted from memory but substantially relays Ford's answer. There was silence in the courtroom. The judge leaned forward from the bench and gazed in Ford's direction. Many of the jury awoke and looked around as if they had heard an explosion. A prominent clergyman who was present in the courtroom said later that the scene reminded him of that which must have existed when Jesus Christ was on trial before Pontius Pilate just after he had given his famous reply to the question, what is truth.

In the vernacular of the day, Ford's reply knocked the questioner cold. Up to the time of that reply, the lawyer had been enjoying considerable fun at what he believed to be Ford's expense, by adroitly displaying his general knowledge and comparing that with what he conferred to be Ford's ignorance on many subjects. But that answer spoiled the lawyer's fun and proved once more, to all who had the intelligence to accept the proof, that true education means mind development not merely the gathering and classifying of knowledge. Ford could not, in all probability, have named the capitals of all the states of the United States, but he could have and had gained the capital with which to turn many wheels in every state in the union.

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Education, let us not forget, consists of the power with which to get everything one needs when one needs it without violating the rights of others. Ford comes well within that definition. There are many people of learning who could easily have entangled Ford with a maze of questions that he personally could not answer, but Ford could turn right around and wage a battle in industry or finance that would exterminate those same people with all of their knowledge and wisdom.

Ford could not go into his chemical laboratory and separate water into its component atoms of hydrogen and oxygen and then recombine those atoms in their former order, but he knows how to surround himself with chemists that can do that for him if he wants it done. The person who can intelligently use the knowledge possessed by another is as much or more a person of education as the one who merely has the knowledge but does not know what to do it.

The president of a well-known college inherited a large track of very poor land, with no timber or commercial value, no minerals or other valuable resources. Therefore it was nothing but a source of expense to him as he had to pay taxes on it. The state built a highway through the land and an uneducated man driving his automobile over the land observed that this poor land was on top of a mountain that commanded a wonderful view for many miles in all directions. He, the ignorant one, also observed that the land was covered with a growth of small pines and other saplings. He bought 50 acres of the land for \$10 an acre. Near the public highway he built a unique log house to which he attached a large dining room. Near the house, he put in a gas filling station. He built a dozen single room log houses along the road that he rented out to tourists at \$3 a night each. The dining room, gas filling station and log houses brought him a net income of \$15,000 the first year.





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The next year, he extended his plans by adding 50 more log houses of three rooms each, which he rented out as summer country homes for people in nearby cities at a rental of \$150,000 each for the season.

The building materials cost him nothing for it grew on his land in abundance, the same land that the college professor believed to be worthless. The unique and unusual appearance of the log bungalows served as an advertisement of the plan, whereas many would have considered it a real calamity had they been compelled to build out of such crude materials. Less than five miles from the location of the log houses, the same man purchased an old worked-off farm of about 150 acres for \$25 an acre, a price that the seller believed to be extremely high. By building a dam 100 feet in length, the purchaser of this old farm turned a stream of water into a lake that covered 15 acres of that land, stocked the lake with fish and then sold the farm off in building lots to people who wanted summer places around the lake. The total profit realised from this simple transaction was more than \$25,000 and the time required for its consummation was just one summer.

Yet this man of vision and imagination was not educated in the orthodox meaning of that term. Let us keep in mind the fact that through these simple illustrations of the use of organised knowledge that one may become educated and powerful. In speaking of this transaction, the college president who sold 50 acres of worthless land for \$500 said, "Just think of it, that man, who most of us might call ignorant, mixed his ignorance with 50 acres of useless land and made the combination yield more yearly than I earn from five years of application of so-called education."

There is an opportunity, if not scores of them, in every state of America, to make use of the idea here described. From now on, make it your business to study the lay of all land you see that is similar to that described in this lesson and you may find a suitable place for developing a similar money-making enterprise. There are opportunities to make money all around you. This course was designed to help you see these opportunities and to inform you how to make the most of them after you discover them.



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WHO CAN PROFIT MOST BY THE LAW OF SUCCESS

Who can profit from the Law of Success? Railroad officials who want a better spirit of cooperation between their train men and the public they serve; salaried people who wish to increase their earning power and market their services to better advantage; sales people who wish to become masters in their chosen field. The law of success philosophy covers every known law of selling and includes many features not included in any other course.

Industrial plant managers who understand the value of greater harmony among their employees; Railroad employees who wish to establish records of efficiency that will lead to more responsible positions with greater pay; merchants who wish to extend their businesses by adding more customers. The Law of Success philosophy will help any merchant increase their business by teaching them how to make a walking advertisement of every customer who comes into their store.

Automobile agents who wish to increase the selling power of their sales teams – a large part of the Law of Success course was developed from the life work and experience of the greatest automobile salesperson that ever lived, and it is therefore of direct use to the sales manager who is directing the efforts of automobile salesperson. Life insurance agents who wish to add new policyholders and increase the insurance on present policyholders. One life insurance salesman in Ohio sold a \$50,000 policy to one of the officials of the Central Steel Company. As a result of but one reading of the lesson of profiting by failures, this same salesman has become one of the star men of the New York Life Insurance Company staff as a result of his training in the 15 laws of success.

School teachers who wish to advance to the top in their present occupation or who are looking for an opportunity to enter the more profitable field of business as a life work; students, both college and high school, who are undecided as to which field of endeavour they wish to enter as life work. The Law of Success course covers a complete personal analysis service that helps the student of the philosophy to determine the work for which he or she is best fitted.





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Bankers who wish to extend their business through better and more courteous methods of servicing their clients; bank clerks who are ambitious to prepare themselves for executive positions in the field of banking or in some commercial or industrial field; physicians and dentists who wish to extend their practice without violating the ethics of their profession by direct advertising. A prominent physician has said that the Law of Success course is worth thousands of dollars to any professional man or woman whose professional ethics prevent direct advertising.

Promoters who wish to invent new and hitherto unworked combinations in business or industry. The principle described in this lesson is said to have made a small fortune for a person who used it as the basis for a new promotion. Real estate professionals who wish for new methods of promoting sales. This introductory lesson contains a description of an entirely new real estate promotion plan that is sure to make fortunes for many who will put it to use. This plan can be put into action in almost every state, and it may be employed by people who never before promoted an enterprise.

Farmers who wish to explore new methods of marketing their products so as to give them greater net returns, and those who own land suitable for sub-division and promotion under the plan referred to at the end of this introductory lesson. Thousands of farmers have goldmines in the land they own that is not suitable for cultivation, which could be used for recreation and resort purposes on a highly profitable basis.

Stenographers and book keepers who are looking for a practical plan to promote themselves into higher and better paying positions. The Law of Success course is said to be the best course ever written on the subject of marketing personal services.

Printers who want a larger volume of business and more efficient production as a result of better cooperation among their own employees. Day labourers who have the ambition to advance into more responsible positions, in work that has more responsibilities and consequently offers more and better pay.

Lawyers who wish to extend their clientele through dignified ethical methods that will bring them to the attention in a favourable way of a greater number of people who need legal services. Business executives who need to expand their present business or who wish to expand their present volume with less expense as a result of greater cooperation between their employees.

Laundry owners who wish to extend their business by teaching their drivers how to behave more courteously and efficiently. Life insurance general agents who wish for bigger and more efficient sales organisations. Chain store managers who want a greater volume of business as a result of more efficient individual sales efforts. Married people who are unhappy and therefore unsuccessful because of a lack of harmony and cooperation in the home.

To all described, the law of success philosophy offers both speedy and definite aid.

NOTES

SUMMARY OF INTRODUCTORY LESSON

The purpose of this summary is to aid the student in mastering the central idea around which the lesson has been developed. This idea is represented by the term mastermind, which has been described in great detail throughout the lesson. All new ideas and especially those of an abstract nature find lodgement in the human mind only after much repetition. A well-known truth that accounts for the restatement in this summary of the principle known as the mastermind.

A mastermind may be developed by a friendly alliance in the spirit of harmony of purpose between two or more minds. This is an appropriate place at which to explain that, out of every alliance of minds, whether in a spirit of harmony or not, there is developed another mind that affects all participating in the alliance. No two or more minds ever met without creating, out of the contact, another mind, but not always in this invisible creation a mastermind.

There may be, and all too often there is, developed out of the meeting of two or more minds a negative power that is just the opposite to a mastermind. There are certain minds that cannot be made to blend in the spirit of harmony. This principle has its comparable analogy in chemistry, reference to which may enable the student to grasp the principle more clearly.

For example, the chemical formula H_2O , meaning the combining of two atoms of hydrogen with one atom of oxygen, changes these two elements into water. One atom of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen will not produce water, and they cannot be made to associate themselves in harmony. There are many known elements which when combined are immediately transformed from harmless into deadly poisonous substances. Stated differently, many will know poisonous elements are neutralised and rendered harmless when combined with certain other elements.

Just as the combining of certain elements changes their entire nature, the combining of certain minds changes the nature of those minds, producing either a certain degree of mastermind or its opposite, which is highly destructive.

Some minds will not be harmonised and cannot be blended into a mastermind – a fact which all leaders will do well to remember. It is the leader's responsibility so to group their staff members that those who have been placed at the most strategic points in the organisation are individuals whose minds can and will be blended in a spirit of friendliness and harmony. The ability to do that is the chief outstanding quality of leadership.

Knowing nothing whatsoever of the technical end of the steel business, Andrew Carnegie so combined and grouped the individuals of which his mastermind was composed that he built the most successful steel industry known to the world during his lifetime. Henry Ford's gigantic success may be traced to the successful application of this self-same principle. With all the self-reliance a person could have, Ford nevertheless did not depend on himself for the knowledge necessary in the successful development of his industry. Like Carnegie he surrounded himself with the people that supplied the knowledge that he himself did not and could not possess.



NOTES

A person's chief business in life is to succeed. The road to success may be, and generally is, obstructed by many obstacles that must be removed before the goal can be reached. One of the most detrimental of these obstacles is that of unfortunate alliance with minds that do not harmonise. In such cases the alliance must be broken or the end is sure to be defeat or failure.

The person who has mastered the six basic fears, one of which is the fear of criticism, will have no hesitation in taking what may be seen to be a more unconventional route or drastic action when they find themselves bound down by antagonistic alliances, no matter with whom they may be. It is 100 times better to meet and face criticism than to be dragged down to failure or oblivion on account of alliances that are not harmonious, whether the alliance be of a business or social nature.

While it is true that some minds will not blend in a spirit of harmony, and cannot be forced or induced to do so, because of the very chemical nature of the individual brain, do not be too ready to charge the other party to your alliance with all the responsibility of lack of harmony. Remember, the trouble may be with your own brain.

Remember also that a mind which cannot and will not harmonise with one person or persons may harmonise perfectly with other types of mind.

The student of this course should be sure that the principle described as the mastermind is thoroughly understood before proceeding with the remaining lessons, because practically the entire course is closely aligned with this law of mind operation. If you are not sure that you understand this law, secure further explanation by asking questions about aspects on which you believe you need more information. You cannot spend too much time in serious thought and contemplation in connection with the law of the mastermind, because once you have mastered this law and learned how to apply it, new worlds of opportunity will open for you.

This introductory lesson contains sufficient data to enable the student who has an aptitude for selling to become a master salesperson. Any sales organisation may make effective use of the law of the mastermind, by grouping the salespeople in groups of two or more people who will ally themselves in a spirit of friendly cooperation and apply this law as suggested in this lesson.

An agent for a well-known make of automobiles who employs 12 salespeople has grouped them in six groups of two, with the object of applying the law of the mastermind and with the result that all salespeople have established new higher sales records. This same organisation has created what it calls the One A Week club, meaning each person who is a member of the club has averaged the sale of one car a week since the club was organised.

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The results of this effort have been surprising to all. Each person belonging to the club was provided with a list of 100 prospective purchasers of automobiles. Each salesperson sends one postcard a week to each of his 100 prospective purchasers and makes personal calls on at least 10 of these each day. Each postcard is confined to the description of but one advantage of the car that the salesperson is selling, and asks for a personal interview.

Interviews have increased rapidly, as have sales. The agent who employs these salespeople has offered an additional cash bonus to each salesperson who earns the right to membership in the One A Week club by averaging one car a week. The plan has injected new vitality into the organisation and the results of the plan are showing in the weekly sales records of each salesperson. A similar plan could be introduced by any sales business. Any enterprising agent might double the sales of his business with the same number of salespeople with the use of this plan.

The student of this course who has mastered understands how to apply the principles of A Definite Chief Aim will be able to make much more effective use of the plan here described. This lesson is merely an introductory lesson to students who will need to master at least the next five lessons of the Law of Success course. The main purpose of this introductory lesson is to state some of the principles on which this course is based.

The final acid test of any theory or rule or principle is that it will actually work. The law of the mastermind has been proved sound because it does work.





NOTES

YOUR SIX MOST DANGEROUS ENEMIES

Every person on earth is afraid of something and most fears are inherited. Here, you may study the six basic fears that do the most damage: your fears must be mastered before you can win in any worthwhile undertaking in life. Find out how many of the six fears are bothering you, and more importantly determine how to conquer those fears. The purpose is to help readers throw off these six fears. Every human being on this earth is bound down to some extent by one or more of these unseen fears.

The first step to be taken in killing off these enemies is to find out how and where you acquired them. They got their grip through two forms of heredity: one is known as physical heredity, to which Darwin devoted so much study; the other is known as social heredity, through which the fears, superstitions and beliefs of people who lived during the dark ages have been passed on from one generation to another.

Let us study first the part that physical heredity has played in generating these six basic fears. Starting at the beginning, we find that nature has been a cruel builder, from the lowest form of life to the highest. Nature has permitted the stronger to prey upon the weaker forms of animal life. The fish prey upon the insects, the birds prey upon the fish and higher forms of animal life prey upon the birds and upon one another, all the way up the line to the human. The human preys upon all the lower forms of animal life and upon the fellow huamn.

The whole story of evolution is one unbroken chain of evidence of cruelty and destruction of the weaker by the stronger. No wonder the weaker forms of animal life have learned to fear the stronger. The fear consciousness is borne in every living animal, so much for the fear instinct that came to us through physical hereditary.

Now, let us examine social heredity and find out what part it has played in our make-up. The term social hereditary has reference to everything we are taught: everything we learn or gather through observation and experience with other living beings. Lay aside any prejudices and fixed opinions you may have formed, at least temporarily, and you may know the truth about your six worst enemies, starting with the fear of poverty. It requires courage to tell the truth about the history of this enemy of mankind and still greater courage to hear the truth after it has been told.

The fear of poverty grows out of the human's habit of preying upon his fellow human, economically. The animals that have instinct but no power to think prey upon one another physically – the human with their superior sense of intuition and thought does not eat their fellow human bodily but gets more pleasure from eating them financially. So great an offender is the human in this respect that nearly every state and nation has been obliged to pass laws to protect the weak from the strong.

The second of the six basic fears is the fear of old age. This fear grows out of two major causes: first, the thought that old age may bring with it poverty; secondly, from false and cruel sectarian teachings that have been so well mixed with fear and brimstone that every human being learned to fear old age because it meant the approach of another and perhaps more horrible world than this.

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The third of the six basic fears is the fear of ill health. This fear is borne of both physical and social heredity. From birth until death there is internal warfare within every physical body: warfare between groups of cells, one group being known as the friendly builders of the body and the other as destroyers and disease germs. The seed of fear is borne in the physical body to begin with as a result of nature's cruel plan of permitting the strong forms of cell life to prey upon the weaker. Social heredity has played its part through the lack of cleanliness and knowledge of sanitation, and through the law of suggestion cleverly manipulated by those who profited from ill-health.

The fourth of the six basic fears is the fear of loss of love of someone. This fear fills the asylums with the insanely jealous, for jealousy is nothing but a form of insanity. It also fills the divorce courts and causes murders and other forms of cruel punishment.

The fifth of the six basic fears is the fear of criticism. Just how and where humans got this fear is difficult to determine but it is certain that we have it. The makers of clothing have not been slow to capitalise on this basic fear of mankind, so every season the styles change because the clothes makers know that few people have the courage to wear styles that are season out of step with what others are all wearing.

The sixth and the last of the six basic fears is the most dreaded of all – it is called the fear of death. For tens of thousands of years, the human has been asking the still unanswered questions about where one came from and where one will go after death. Heaven was pictured as a wonderful city whose streets were lined with gold, while hell is a blazing furnace. No wonder mankind fears death.

Determine if you can which of the six basic fears is doing you the most disservice. An enemy discovered is an enemy half-whipped. Thanks to the schools and colleges, people are slowly discovering these six enemies. The most effective tool with which to fight them is organised knowledge. Ignorance and fear are twin sisters, generally found together. Without ignorance and suspicion, the basic fears would disappear from our nature in one generation.

In every public library may be found the remedy for these six enemies of mankind, provided you know which books to read. Begin by reading *The Science of Power* by Benjamin Kidd, and you will have broken the stranglehold of most of your six basic fears. Follow this by reading Emerson's essay on Compensation, then select some good book on self-suggestion and inform yourself on the principle by which your beliefs of today become the realities of tomorrow. *The Mind in the Making* by James Harvey Robinson will give you a good start towards understanding your own mind.

Through the principle of social heredity, the ignorance and superstition of the dark ages have been passed on to you, but you are living in the modern age. In every hand, you may see evidence that every effect has a natural cause. Begin now to study effects by their causes and soon you will emancipate your mind from the burden of the six basic fears.



NOTES

Begin by studying people that have accumulated great wealth, and find out the cause of their achievement. Henry Ford is a good subject to start with: within the short period of 25 years he whipped poverty and made himself the most powerful man on earth, with no luck or chance or accident. His achievement grew out of his observation of certain principles that are as available to you as they were to him.

Henry Ford is not bound down by the six basic fears, make no mistake. If you feel that you are too far away from Ford to study him accurately, then begin by selecting two people that you know close at hand – one representing the idea of failure and the other corresponding to your idea of success. Find out what made one a failure and the other a success. Get the real facts, and in the process you will teach yourself a great lesson on cause and effect. Nothing ever just happens – everything is the effect of nature’s evolutionary process. Evolution is orderly change and no miracles are connected with this orderly change.

Not only do the physical shapes and colours of animals go through slow, orderly change from one generation to another, but the mind of the human is also undergoing constant change. Herein lies your hope for improvement. You have the power to force your mind through a process of rather quick change. In a single month of properly directed self-suggestion, you may place your foot upon the neck of every one of your six basic fears.

In 12 months of persistent effort, you may drive the entire herd into the corner where it will never again do you any serious injury. You will resemble tomorrow the dominating thoughts that you keep alive in your mind today. Plant in your mind the seed of determination to whip your six basic fears, and the battle will have been half won then and there.

Keep this intention in your mind and it will slowly push your six worst enemies out of sight, as they exist no more except in your own mind. The person who is powerful fears nothing, not even God. The powerful person loves God but fears him never. Enduring power never grows out of fear. Any power that is built upon fear is bound to crumble and disintegrate. Understand this great truth and you will never be so unfortunate as to try to raise yourself to power through the fears of other people who may owe you temporary allegiance.

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NOTES

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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

MOTIVATION
BY SADHGURU

Motivation by Sadhguru



*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes



CAN YOU SEE ME?

Where do you see me right now? Within yourself. Where do you hear me right now? Within yourself. Where do you see the whole world? Within yourself. You have never experienced anything outside of yourself.

Anything that has ever happened to you – darkness and light, pain and pleasure, joy and misery – that all happened within you. So who can determine what happens within you? Who can determine how it happens? You should determine what happens within you, and then your whole experience of life will be determined by you.

The events around you may not be determined by you, but how your experience of life is on this planet is 100% determined by you if you take charge of it. If you leave it loose, everyone else will determine it.

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NOTES

GRACE IS AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE

Grace is available to everybody. It is like sunlight. But only those who open their eyes will see.

Nothing is there only for me and not for you. It is available for everybody. It's just that you need to be receptive. When we talk about receptivity, it's the whole meaning of yoga. The word yoga means union, and union means work.

Right now in most people's experience it is me versus the universe. That is how most people are experiencing life, which leads to continuous anxiety and fear because they think they are fighting for their lives all the time. They are fighting the whole universe.

Being in competition with the universe is a stupid thing to do. Not a single day passes for me without witnessing tears of joy and love around me, every day. Every day somebody will be shedding tears of love and joy. There is no better way to live in this world, and all of us should strive to create our own circles of joyfulness and pleasantness around us, because if you are not joyful by your own nature, if you are always going around with the fear of suffering, you will never walk your life with full stride.

Most human beings have crippled themselves simply because of fear of suffering. What will happen to me? But whatever happens, this is how you will be. If this assurance comes to you, only then will you want to scale the peaks of life. If it happens, it makes no difference to you, and that's when you can explore every dimension of life.

Your way of being is not determined by what is around you. If you bring this one aspect to you there is no fear of suffering. Once there is no fear of suffering, you will travel the breadth and length of this life without hesitation.





NOTES

NO RIGHT THINGS TO DO

There are no right things to do in life. You should choose something and put everything you have into it, it will become a great thing. Is it the best thing? When you say is it right, you're asking if it is the best thing to do.

There is no best thing to do in life. Anything that you take up, if you put your heart and soul into it it becomes a great thing. Not the best thing. There is no such thing as the best thing.

Don't look at yourself as an idiot. You're just a piece of life and today you are here but one day you are gone. You are a brief life. Suppose you are a flying ant. You just come alive one day and then you are gone. Compared to the span of your life, the insect's life looks meaningless and short-lived. But that is what the rivers are thinking about you.

I am not someone who ever debated the right thing to do in life. I jumped into it, because if you have a constipated life you will always be thinking about what to do and what not to do, what is your passion. Why are you not passionate about everything? If you are only passionate about one thing, you are constipated.

Idiots do things they don't like to do and suffer their whole lives because they think it's their duty. Intelligent people do what they love to do. A genius learns to do what they want to do joyfully, and that is when your genius flowers, because there is a limitless way of looking at life.

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NOTES

CREATE FEAR

To create fear, you have to use excessive imagination. To not be in fear you do not have to do anything. Fear is happening because of the excessive imagination of things that have not happened. You are creating what may happen in your mind. That happens in thousands of different formats, and most of it never happens. The things that you feared probably never happened.

Your fear is always about that which does not exist. You cannot fight or alter that which does not exist. We can overcome something that exists but we cannot overcome that which does not exist. We just have to give up that effort.

Enjoy the fear – after all it is of your making. You are producing horror movies in your mind that nobody else is willing to watch. Produce something else. Maybe a comedy, a love story, suspense, thriller. Try to see today if you can produce a love story or a comedy instead in your mind.

Start using your mind differently, because it has gotten into a pattern of creating horror movies all the time. You have watched enough of those and they are boring.

It is not that if you create fear those things will happen in your life. If you create comedies, still those thing may not happen, but at least you will enjoy what's happening in your mind. If you cannot enjoy what is happening in the world, at least enjoy what is happening in your mind. That at least is what every human being deserves.





NOTES

BILLION DOLLARS

Just a couple of weeks ago I was in conversation with someone considered an expert on internet and social media, so he has been looking at our materials online and I said to him that I could easily give him 50 times more than what is already there. In a year's time I can multiply it by 50, because that much material is there. He said, 'Sadhguru, what is there already is worth a billion dollars.' I said 'What would I do with a billion dollars?'

My interest is seven billion people, I have no interest in a billion dollars. What would I do with it. My interest is people.

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NOTES

PEOPLE AROUND US

Around us, so many people will do so many things that we don't like. There are things happening every day that we don't like. But within you, only what you like should happen.

I cannot decide that only what I want should happen with you. But I can definitely that only what I want must happen within me. If you could decide only what you want to happen within you, would you choose anger or joy? You want the highest level of pleasantness for yourself.

Then why is that not happening? You never get a user's manual. How this person functions has not been looked at. Do not use the example of people that came here a few years earlier than you. It is not inherited; your ancestors should not be the leading lights of your life. I want you to look at it as your thought, your emotion and your body, and that must happen the way you want.

If somebody else can decide what should happen within you, that is ultimate slavery. If you decide, you will stay in the highest state of pleasantness for sure. If you are angry, sad, unpleasant, then essentially your mind is not taking instructions from you. Because we gave you a super computer and you don't know where the keyboard is.





NOTES

DESTINY

What people generally describe as destiny is essentially what they end up creating unconsciously. When I say unconsciously, as you sit here right now, there is physical activity going on, there is mental process, there is emotional activity and of course the life energies are active. Every moment, they are taking in hundreds of inputs whether you are conscious or not.

Since this morning, of these four dimensions of activity, how much have you conducted consciously? It is well below one percent. If you walk across a room, there will be 25 different smells that you are not conscious of that the body registers. There are hundreds of different sounds that the body registers and you are not conscious of – day and night, in wakefulness and sleep.

When you are only conscious of less than one percent of your activity, then life will look like an accident. Being accidentally fortunate is not the way to exist. Whenever a pleasant accident happens, we say it is destiny. Some people thank God.

A story for you. Sherlock Holmes and Watson went out camping and early morning Sherlock Holmes nudged Watson and asked what he saw. Watson said, 'I see a clear sky and stars.' Sherlock Holmes asked what it meant to him. 'Well, that means tomorrow is going to be a wonderful sunny day,' said Watson. 'What does it mean to you?'

Sherlock Holmes said: 'It means someone has stolen our tent!'

We don't know what went missing, and something may fall here and there by chance, but that is not the way life works. If a human being doesn't take it upon themselves to make their own destiny they are still having an evolutionary problem – they are not yet fully there, because being human means we can conduct our lives consciously, we can craft our lives the way we want.

But this destiny business is a good insurance to handle your failure. Whenever you fail, you can blame destiny.

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NOTES

PERSPECTIVE

Nature has imposed a substantial amount of restrictions on life. You can't just zoom off into space. There are enough restrictions so you do not have to invent your own restrictions on top of that.

If you invent your own restrictions, slowly over a period of time you will have a constipated life. Life won't happen easy and will happen in small happenings. Being in a state of abandonment, not out of control, means all the stops that you have put on yourself you have pulled off. Nature's stops are still there, for your safety and wellbeing. But why are you imposing stops.

There is enough – gravity is holding you down, so why do you want to hold yourself down? Because of fear. What is the fear about? The fear is always about if you do something you may suffer.

The fundamental of my work is to bring you to a place where there is no fear of suffering.





NOTES

FRICTION

You must understand that if everything that you try to do is encountering friction, then obviously you are the sandpaper. Every day, whenever you have friction with somebody, just scrape your skin with sandpaper. And then if you don't cure yourself quickly, you won't have any skin left. Then you won't look for any friction.

If you want that kind of treatment, we can do that. Otherwise, come to your senses. If friction is happening wherever you go, obviously it is you.

One simple thing you can do to reduce friction is whatever you are saying in a day or in an hour or in a minute, bring down the number of words you are saying by 50 percent. You will see the level of friction will go down simply because you are not blabbering.

There are two kinds of friction, one within ourselves and the other outside, which is just a consequence. Inner engineering means if you can sit here without any friction, outside friction will also go down. But when you meet sandpaper there must be some friction. So generally we avoid sandpaper but sometimes we have to work with it, and then we need tact.

Tact is something you need to learn. Sometimes tact doesn't work in society, but it is a question of skill. Some people who are not tactful in any way are very tactful when they meet sandpaper. They are so smooth it doesn't matter how rough the other person is, they will just get the job done and leave.

Working with sandpaper takes a little bit of skill and experience. It is a social skill, but generally in the ashram there are very few sandpapers. Sometimes people are like that, but not all the time, and when they are like that you must just keep away. The porcupine doesn't have the strength to keep its spikes up all the time, so your friction is just you.

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THINKING CLEARLY

When it comes to what you want to do, you must think clearly. Thinking clearly means the question is not about what will get me this or that, it is about whether your life is precious to you. Before you invest this life into something, you must look whether after 25 years that will still mean a lot to you. After 50 years, will it still mean a lot to you.

At the end of my life, if I turn back and look, will I be proud of this or will I be ashamed of what I am doing right now? It doesn't matter what other people say, but you should not do anything that you will feel ashamed of. Everyone has opinions, and that is their business. But if you do something that you will feel ashamed of, that is you turning against yourself.

If someone turns against you, you can leave and go somewhere else. But if you turn against yourself, you will have to live with it forever.

Something will get you money, something will get you comfort, but that is not the point. Will something give you a life? When I say give you a life, are you just trying to make a living or are you going to make a life. Making a living is not an issue – a worm, an insect, an animal can make a living. So earning your food and making a living with such a big brain is not an issue. The only problem is if you want to live like someone else.

It is important that if you consider your life as a precious life, make sure you make a wonderful life out of it.

If you go outside in the garden, and try to catch an ant, he will do everything to protect himself. He values his life. A tiny little creature that we may not even notice, but he values his life immensely. He's got spark.



NOTES

INTELLIGENCE

We are completely committed to one dimension of intelligence that we call intellect. That is just the thought process. Thought can only happen with the data that you have gathered through five senses, which is very limited. Plus the nature of the data that the senses gather is only useful for the survival process.

The very nature of how you see things, how you hear, smell, taste and touch life, is only relevant for survival. If you want to know about life itself, then these instruments of perception are no good. Even what is light and darkness is a debate between you and another creature, which sees darkness differently. Nature has opened up our sense perception as it is necessary for our survival. Accordingly, it has opened up sense perceptions for different creatures as it is necessary for their survival.

If survival is all you are seeking, this is good enough. But once you have come as a human being, somehow survival is not good enough. If survival is just about food, that is one thing, but once you have a full tummy you have 100 issues going on.

The nature of the human being is such that no matter what you do, you want to be something more than you are right now. And if that something more happens, it is an endless pursuit. Somewhere a human being is seeking a limitless expansion but trying to do it with physical means. The very nature of physicality is a defined boundary – if there is no defined boundary, there is no possibility of physical happening in the universe. But the human being is longing for the boundless through physical means.

The desire is fantastic, the method is hopeless. Because the moment you identify yourself with something, your intellect's work is just to protect that identity. If the identities are with nature, race, gender, whatever, the moment you identify yourself with something your intellect will only function around that to protect that. So it is a certain amount of prejudice.





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The only thing I did with my life is I never identified myself with anything and life just exploded within me in ways that thought seems so puny that I don't indulge in thought most of the time.

The Japanese people eat much less fat than the Americans and the British. Because of this people believe they have much less incidence of cardiac arrest. Fewer people in Japan die of heart failures and heart attacks than they do in the US and the UK. But the French eat a lot more fat but still have much lower incidence of cardio problems. The Japanese people don't drink much less wine, but the Italians drink only wine and they also have fewer cardio problems than the English and the Americans. So the deduction is it is the English language that is the problem!

This has been a problem that we try to transplant what is happening in one place into another place. Not just geographically and culturally, even from individual to individual. What worked for one person, we try to make work for another person and we destroy them completely. This is labelled as education.

We are a mass of people on this planet but still you were produced individually, not mass produced. Most adults want to teach something when they see children – all the things that have not worked in their life. From this moment onwards, in your life, do not pass on anything that has not worked for you to anybody else.

Does anger work for you? Does misery, depression work for you? So don't give it to anybody.

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NOTES

BEING PLAYFUL

Being playful has always been understood as irresponsibility. Right from childhood, if you are just playful you think it's irresponsible. But the most responsible way to live is if you are playful with life. It is absolutely irresponsible to carry a long face and walk around on this planet. It is irresponsible to walk around with misery.

Being playful is being responsive to life – only when you're playful can you do that. When you're serious, the world doesn't exist for you. When you are serious it is just about you and your nonsense. Only when you're playful can you pay attention to everything and respond to everything in the world.





NOTES

LARGER ISSUES

How do I address the larger issues of my life? There are no large issues in your life. What is the large issue you're talking about – which job to take, which girl to marry, where to go for vacation, whether to get married or not. These are not large issues, these are the little things in your life. I'm not saying they are small things, but as issues they are small issues.

As a consequence to your life, yes it has many things. But this is something that human beings have done for millions of years. We have experience on these things and we know that whatever job we take, whoever we marry, it is just what we make of it. Every experience of life we can make into an enriching experience or we can make a curse out of it.

There is nothing wrong in your job, whatever job you are doing. There is nothing wrong in getting married and nothing wrong in getting divorced. There is nothing wrong in not getting married. There is nothing wrong in anything, in this or that. It is only if you make misery out of it that it is wrong. It is just that you make misery out of everything.





NOTES

INSTRUMENTS OF EXPERIENCE

Right now, what are the instruments of your experience? You know you're here only because you can see, hear, smell, touch and taste. Suppose you dose off, then you don't know that you're here, even though you are. Nor will you know that I'm here or anyone else. Life is full on even within you but these five sensory organs have shut down. Your entire experience of life relies on those senses.

Just look at the nature of the sensory organs. By their very nature they are outward bound. You cannot roll your eyes inward and scan yourself. Our nose is located right above our mouth. If we don't brush our teeth for three days, your nose will not tell you. The whole room will know you have not brushed your teeth, but you will not know. This is the human predicament.

It is very easy to see what is wrong with that guy or with her, but it takes a lot of observation to see what is wrong with ourselves. That level of keenness of observation is missing in most people. They need to cultivate that.

Dotted lines for writing notes.





NOTES

SELF-DEFEATING MODE

If your friend does not do well, you will feel sad about that. If he does very well, you will feel very sad about it. So you have fixed yourself in such a way that whichever way you cannot be happy. You are in a self-defeating mode – no matter what happens, you will not be happy.

If you want to understand what I'm saying, go and stand on one of the main streets of Bangalore. Leave the poor people who are selling on the street. Only look at the people driving the dream cars driving around – do you think they are in a profusion of joy driving those cars? No, only when it is a stolen car do you see the joy!

So success has not brought joy to them. If they've failed of course they're frustrated, because the very mode of approach is like this. If this mode of approach comes, whichever way it is not going to work, because it is not about you but about somebody else.

The simple thing is this – if your joy, your happiness, your misery is decided by somebody around you, then the chances of you being joyful in your life is remote. The human experience is created from within. Joy or misery, agony or ecstasy, everything is created from inside.

If you are a manager, at least what is happening from within you is happening your way, because management means doing things the way we want to. If the world is not happening your way at least management is happening your way. But there is only one person you need to manage. At least here, what you want must happen. If what you want will happen, will you keep yourself blissed out or miserable?

If such a thing is not happening, then problems come. If things work, it's a problem, if they don't, it's a problem. The problem is it is never about you, it is always about someone else. Outside is a variable situation. If your way of being is determined by others then you are bound to be a mess.





NOTES

YOU ARE A PRODUCT OF THIS PLANET

You are a product of this planet. Whatever nonsense individuals might think about themselves, we are all just a pop-up from this planet. You pop up and then you will be gone. All the very smart people that walked this planet before you and me are gone. They all became topsoil.

You may think you have a great life but as far as the earth is concerned it is just recycling its soil. It just throws you up and draws you back. So in this little pop-up, the most important thing is that you create sensitivity within you. Such sensitivity that every dimension of life comes into your experience. Before you fall dead, is it not important that you experience this life in its fullest possible scale?

Experience means people think they must party every day. There is much more for the human life to explore. You must become sensitive. The word sensitive is often used in the wrong way. When people say she is sensitive, we are supposed to understand that she will get hurt by just about anything. But being sensitive to life and being ego-sensitive are two different things. Being sensitive to life means if you walk into this hall, you experience everything that is here and you don't miss a thing. You walk outside and you don't miss a thing. Every dimension of life comes into your experience.

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MY BODY AND YOUR BODY

As we sit here, this is my body and that is your body. Do as you want and these two things will not become one. This is my mind and that is your mind, and these things will not become one. They may overlap on some issues and we may feel that we are at one with each other, but my mind is my mind and your mind is your mind.

But there is no such thing as my life and your life. This is a living cosmos and you captured a little bit and I captured a little bit. Now we think this is my life and that is yours, but there is no such thing. This is a living cosmos and you've blown a small bubble and somebody else might have blown a bigger bubble. Once it goes pop, you do not say this is my air and that is your air. Similarly, if there is no such thing as my life and your life, there is just a living cosmos.

If you capture more life, then you will see you have more grace. The depth, dimension and scope of your life is determined by how much life you capture within you. It doesn't matter what kind of body you have or what kind of intelligence you have, if you have not captured substantial life within you, you live a small life.

How do you do this? There are systematic ways of approaching this, or simply by involvement, exuberance and commitment people might capture a larger life. By absolutely being committed and focused on something, somebody may capture a certain amount of life that is more than is considered normal.



NOTES

THOUGHT AND EMOTION

There is thought, and there is emotion. People think these two things are saying different things, but the way you think is the way you emote. If I think she's the most wonderful person on the planet, I just have to think and my emotions become sweet towards her. Or I can see the most horrible creature on the planet and then my emotions become nasty.

I cannot think she is horrible and have sweet emotions. I cannot think she is wonderful and have nasty emotions. But today I thought she is the most wonderful person and my sweetness is flowing. Then if tomorrow she did something horrible and my emotions struggle. Thought is agile; it changes direction just like that. Emotion is a little sappy; it takes time to turn around. So that period is when you struggle, as if there are two dimensions of things happening. Because thought is saying one thing and emotion is still going sweet because it takes time to become nasty.

Everybody struggles but it catches up or not after some time. After a week or a few months, depending on how deeply you are engaged, emotion catches up with thought and emotion also says someone is horrible.

They are not speaking different languages but one is agile and one is a little slow in its turning.





NOTES

VISION IS ALL-INCLUSIVE

Everybody has desires and those are an incremental way of enhancing our lives. Today you desire a home and tomorrow you desire money and then the next day you desire something else. They are incremental ways of rearranging our lives. When you say you are a visionary, you are saying you have a larger desire, which is not about just incremental improvement of my life. Desire is about me always, but vision is an all-inclusive process.

So this itself is a phenomenal thing, if people instead of having desires have a vision. Vision is always all-inclusive. Desire is personal. Desire leads to incremental changes and improvements, but vision can transform a whole situation.

It is very important that there is nothing to miss out in life. Life is happening to all of us. The question is only if I miss this party, this job or this event, am I missing out on something. This is simply because right now who you are is not internally managed, it is externally stimulated. When you step out into the world, if you leave it to the people to decide what happens within you, they are going to drive you crazy in no time. Here it is all managed for you, what should happen to you is managed by someone else. If you step out into the street and leave it to other people's hands, they can decide whether you are happy or unhappy, you are going to be miserable for sure.

What happens within you must be determined by you.





NOTES

TECHNOLOGY

No technology is harmful, it is just that when human mind is in a certain level of destructive mode every technology is harmful. You can take your laptop and slit somebody's head. Does that mean to say computers are dangerous. Suppose in 10 different offices, people took their laptops and hit people over the head. Does it mean laptops are dangerous? No, human beings are stupid. Whatever comes their way, they know how to turn it against themselves.

Now there are technology de-addiction centres, like there are alcohol de-addiction centres, drug de-addiction centres. Simply because we are in a compulsive mode. If we start eating we don't know when to stop. If we start drinking we don't know when to stop, the same with shopping, using our phones. The problem is not of technology but of compulsiveness. Compulsiveness is just absence of consciousness. If we were conscious human beings we would use everything for our wellbeing. We created it and we are meant to use it for our wellbeing. If human beings lived consciously, the question of using technology against human wellbeing wouldn't arise. Technology means enhancement of our capability.

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NOTES

MANAGE YOUR MIND

Fear is always about what may happen or may not happen. Fear is not about what you are experiencing right now. Your fear is about something that is not yet, and does not exist. We are suffering something that doesn't even exist, so it is not about life, or education, or career, it is just about your mind being out of control. Is it not important that the first thing you learn to manage is your mind?

If you do not know how to manage your mind, what else can you manage in the world? If you are a CEO it is normal to have an ulcer these days, because people are managing by accident. The fear comes because there is an accidental possibility. If you don't know how to ride a bike, rolling faster and faster creates more and more fear. If you know how to ride, it is great to go fast.

Right now, the problem is not with the world, not with education, but the education system hasn't taught you how to manage yourself.





RESTFULNESS

People are having disturbed sleep because of the way they're keeping their minds. If you are in a comfortable state of mind, when you go to sleep the body knows when to wake up. One day it may sleep for more hours than another, and that's perfectly fine. The body needs rest, it does not need sleep. Restfulness is not in the hours, but in the drop in metabolic activity that you have. Generally, in deep sleep your metabolism drops by 8 percent. You sit for somebody, your metabolic rate can drop up to 24 percent. The restfulness you are gaining in meditation is three times more profound than sleep. One thing that will happen is your sleep quota will come down suddenly.

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CHEMICAL SOUP

Everybody is looking for titbits of life. Give me three points with which I will make my life, or one mantra with which everything will be solved. That is not how life is – it is a comprehensive process. The simple way to look at it is like this. Today you know because of medical science that your entire body is in a way a chemical soup. The question is only whether it is a great soup or a lousy soup.

If it's a great soup, then that is wonderful for you and for everybody around you. If it is lousy, then you have to manage with presentation. Never ever will outside situations happen 100 percent your way, but what happens within you, if it is happening 100 percent your way, you will be in the best possible state. You will keep yourself in the best possible way. Are you as good as someone else? That is not the point. Are you fully-fledged? That is the point.

Effort has to be incisive in a sense. It should be focused, calibrated. Simply to make effort is foolish – just labour is not going to get you somewhere. The right kind of labour, the right kind of action, with the right timing, that is all important. So, for all these things to happen, you need perception and intelligence. You must go through life constantly looking for ways to enhance your perception and your intelligence. The rest will happen.

This is one thing that unfortunately humanity is not doing. They are trying to become capable of something. Do not try to become capable of anything, just enhance your perception and intelligence.





POSTPONING

If you're postponing something, you are obviously doing something that you don't want to do. If there is something you really want to do, will you postpone it. Do you see someone waiting for someone they really want to see? In the 10 minutes they wait, they will look at their watch 25 times.

If you are postponing something, then why the hell are you doing something you don't want to do? Because you want to get something? There is really nothing to get in this life. Either you lived this life in a profound and intense manner, or you did not. What will you get in the end? In the end what will happen to you and me is they will either bury us or burn us. The only thing is the process of life. How wonderful if it is lived. That's all there is.

So if you are doing something really wonderful, do you want to postpone it? No. you must find what it is that you really want to do and then you will never postpone it.

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NOTES

A BRIEF LIFE

Every moment, if you remind yourself this is a brief life. As a motto, say it to yourself. Do it for two days and you will see, you will become something truly fantastic within yourself. This is all that's needed.

If you want to know the value of life, just know that it is a brief happening.

Just loosen up your life a little bit, laugh a little more, involve yourself with people around you, do things that you think are not so important. Do simple things, because if you only do serious things in your life, you will become dead serious. Bertrand Russell said, 'If you're beginning to think that what you're doing is very important, you need to take a holiday.' You must take a holiday from your seriousness, from your self-importance.

You need to see that you are like a speck of dust in this existence. Tomorrow morning if you disappear, for sure only a handful of people will miss you. Nature goes whoof, and you're gone. Everything will happen wonderfully well in this world even if you're not there. Every human being should be aware of this every moment of their life. It does not matter what the whole world says about you or how significant the work you're doing. You must understand that tomorrow morning the world will go on fine without you, whoever you may be.

If you constantly remind yourself of this, you will have no reason to be serious. Don't be dead now, because the time will come. It is time to be alive.





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THE INNER DIMENSION

So much unpleasantness is happening in the human experience because we never took charge of the inner dimension. We believe that by fixing outside, everything will be ok. In the last 150 years, with the advent of science and modern technology, we have fixed too many things on the outside. If we fix any more there won't be a planet left.

Definitely this has brought much convenience and comfort to our lives. We are the most comfortable generation ever on this planet. But we cannot say we are the most joyful generation, or the most loving, or the most blissed out. We are complaining like never before. This is because we fixed outside, comfort and convenience has happened, but wellbeing has not happened.

If your interiority was handled by you consciously, you would definitely keep this in a blissful state. So is bliss the goal of life? No. Bliss is a necessary condition for life to flower to its full potential. Otherwise it will remain constrained.



NOTES

PEACE IS NOT THE GOAL

You are paying too much attention to everything around you and not enough attention to yourself. But the quality of your life is determined by how you carry yourself. This moment what kind of clothes you're wearing, what kind of car is parked outside, what kind of home you live in does not determine the quality of life. How joyful you are feeling in this moment determines the quality of your life.

But nothing has been done about that – you think it will happen in consequence, and you set impossible goals for your happiness. If I were to be happy, my house would be like this, my children would be like this, the world would be like this. But these are impossible conditions you are setting. And now that you have compromised yourself to peace, given up aspirations to be ecstatic or joyful, that is not enough.

Peace is not the highest goal in life. If you want to enjoy your lunch today, you must be peaceful. If you're not even peaceful, there is nothing in your life that you can do in a worthwhile way. To be peaceful means that your system is at ease, you know how to conduct your mind, your emotions, your body and your energies. It is the most basic thing. Feed your dog at home and he sits peacefully. He may not be ecstatic, but he is peaceful.

It has nothing to do with the external activity you are doing, but it is to do with the internal systems and how they are functioning. Essentially, neither your body, your mind, your chemistry or your energies are taking instructions from you, they are doing their own thing. Once your machine is not in your control, being peaceful is impossible.

Your mind is a super computer and most people have not even bothered to find the keyboard. They think it will somehow work. When you are given such a highly sophisticated machine, if you do not treat it well, it will not work properly. Small changes will make a big difference to how it functions. It is more than a touch screen – if you just wish it, it will happen. When you have such a sensitive sophisticated machine and you are operating it like a blacksmith, then being peaceful seems to be difficult. Peace is not the highest goal in your life, it is the most fundamental requirement.

Do not ever set peace as the highest goal. If you do that, you will only rest in peace. To be peaceful is the first thing in your life. If you want to conduct any situation sensibly, to be peaceful and happy is fundamental. You can live life with ease, not with struggle.



NOTES

WORK JOYFULLY

When we say work, many young people are getting recognised for wonderful things they have done, but generally people have been taught they must work hard. Nobody told them that they must work joyfully. Nobody told them their work should be an expression of their joy or their love. They have to work hard. If you work hard, life will be tedious. You will do something hard only because you don't know how to do it. If you know how to do it, you will do it with ease.

Without learning how to do something, if you try to do it without investing enough time, then life becomes a big struggle.

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NOTES

BLISSED OUT

When the result of an event has not impact on you, and both ways you are blissed out, then you are a success. When the fruit of action does not determine how you are, it is just that you do things because of the exuberance of what you do, then you are a success. The result may depend on a variety of things, and results are not always yours as there are various factors involved not all in our control. But what is in our control is either we did our best or we did not do our best.

As long as we are doing that, and whatever the result may be, if you are still blissed out that means you are a success because life can not defeat you anymore.





NOTES

CONQUERING FEAR

How can one conquer fear and apathy on the way to success? Do not even think of success, just strive to enhance your capabilities and who you are. What you can do you will then do. Right now you have an idea of success but you don't have the competence. You want to go somewhere but you don't have the legs to get there. Naturally there will be fear and all kinds of unnecessary struggles and emotions, but just focus on seeing how to enhance this human being to the highest possible level that you can.

Then success will be a downhill run and not an uphill task. When it is a downhill run, there is no fear of whether you can get there or not. You are working towards somebody else's idea of success. That is not success. Your success is you as a human being has found your full potential – that is success and that is all you can do. If this human being finds his fullest potential, that is all you can do. Certain circumstances will go our way and certain circumstances will not, but if you have blossomed to your fullest level you will do well. Don't think of success and be fearful about it, just see how to make yourself more capable.

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GENERATING FROM WITHIN

All of human experience is generated from within. So at any time if you feel happy or unhappy, miserable or joyful, it doesn't matter what happens just know that it can only happen from within. You can either take external stimuli or you can create your own stimuli, but essentially it happens from within. This one thing if it is not grasped, when you feel miserable, if you think it is external you are gone. It is not going to work. This one basic fundamental thing is something that 90 percent of humanity is getting wrong.

All human experience is generated from within. If something is feeling unpleasant, the first thing is to look at yourself. Are you eating wrong, sleeping wrong, sitting wrong, breathing wrong. Something in your body chemistry is wrong. The moment you think that by kicking the wall you can fix yourself, then you have made a fundamental mistake. The harder you try, the further away from it you go.

The first thing is to bring balance. Once there is balance then you can build a tower on top. If there is no balance, whatever you build will only lead to more trouble. The more basic you are, the better it is. This is what a whole lot of humanity is seeking, to be basic, because if you build something it feels terrible if there is no fundamental balance.

Anything standing up without balance is a big problem.





NOTES

MORTALITY

You can come to the idea of mortality in a way that will make you depressed. But if you live with it every moment it will make you exuberant and alive. But it is just the fact that this is not forever, it is just for a short period of time, and the more joyful you are, the briefer it becomes. If you're ecstatic it will just vanish in no time. So if you want to stretch it you need to make yourself truly miserable, otherwise it will be gone in a flash.

If you come to terms with this and live this way, every moment you will appreciate one thing and only one thing because the most important thing in your life is that you are alive right now. To be alive, fully alive, is the most important thing. Because only if something is 100 percent alive can you make it truly beautiful.

Dotted lines for taking notes.





NOTES

COMPETENCE

A human being does not become who he is because of his desire. He becomes who he is because of his competence. So instead of enhancing your competence you are just enhancing your desire, and that will just be a horrible burden to carry all the time. You just have to focus on enhancing the competence of who you are.

Everybody wants to be successful but unless you do the right things, success will not happen for you.

Let me tell you a joke. On a certain day, a man fell into a septic tank, right up to his neck. He desperately tried to get out, but he couldn't. Then he started screaming, 'fire, fire!' The neighbours heard and called the fire brigade. They came rushing and looked all over the place but saw no fire. Then they found the man, pulled him out and asked why he was screaming fire. The man retorted, 'If I had said where I was, would you come?'

You have to do the right things, otherwise the right things will not come to you. You have got to have the desire and do the right things.



NOTES

BE OPEN

The only reason a human being will seek to know something is because he realises he doesn't know. If he does not realise he doesn't know, there will be no longing to know and no seeking to know, so there will be no knowing. Whether it is spiritual seeking or any other kind of knowledge, you will seek it only because you realise you don't know.

If you believe you know everything, you will be just too full of yourself and that is a huge problem. We have a culturally cultivated humility that we see all over the place, but we don't make any space in our heads. My head is open.

If you try to control the variety of situations that may pop up in your face tomorrow morning, all that will happen is you will have a very limited life. You will step out into the world and do whatever needs to be done only if you have an assurance that no matter what you walk into, you will not lose yourself. You will walk full stride, otherwise you will only be a half a step.

Most human beings are half steps because of the fear of suffering. If this happens, what will happen to me. If that happens, what will happen to me. If you're well managed within yourself, you know how to manage your thought, your emotion, your body, your chemistry and your energy. If you know how to manage all this, what does it matter if you walk into hell?

If you are well managed and you have heaven within you, what does it matter where you go. If you are ill-managed, then you want to be in a nice place all the time and you will not step out into anything.

I'm not saying this is wrong, but this is against nature because in nature every life is aspiring to be as much as it can be. This is not a philosophy or an ideology, it is natural and intrinsic for every life to do as much as you can. From a worm to an insect to a bird to an animal to a tree, everyone of them is trying to be a fully-fledged life. If you go against this, simply because of the fear of suffering, then all possibilities of exploring the nature of being human and the tremendous immensity of being human, is just lost.

Today you will see this everywhere. When people say they are only human they are talking about the limitations of being human, not the possibilities. If we are the most intelligent species on the planet, and the most capable, should we be talking about our possibilities or our limitations. We are always referring to our limitations, because the most fundamental things have not been taught in our education systems – how to handle your thoughts and your emotions. Your psychological drama has gone out of control. If it is well directed you will take charge of it as you want.

NOTES

ON AND OFF

Let's say you have to cook something, you turn on the stove, turn it off, turn it on, turn it off – then of course dinner won't happen. This is the story of the majority of the spiritual seekers, they are on and off and on and off. The priority should not change. The priority is set, then slowly everything within you will organise itself in that direction. Because the priority is shifting this life does not know which way to go, it is just confused.

This is what is happening in most people, which is why the spiritual path seems long and unattainable, simply because people are shifting priorities all the time.





NOTES

ENDLESS POSSIBILITY

As a generation, if you create a huge amount of positives, negatives will become small. If you create a huge amount of negatives, they will become big and positives will become small. That's the way life is. There has never been a point any time, and there never will be, where everything is perfect. Because life is a possibility, so it cannot be perfect. It doesn't matter what we do, there is always something more to do.

There is always endless possibility. Striving does not mean I want to be a good man. Being morally good is only good for the society, not for the human being. If you are morally correct, it is good for people around you, but it is not good for this life. This life needs a different kind of nurture, in that context. How many people are going to strive before you and may fall dead? How many people will be striving to be a better life than they are right now. This is all your focus should be.





NOTES

TREMENDOUS THINGS

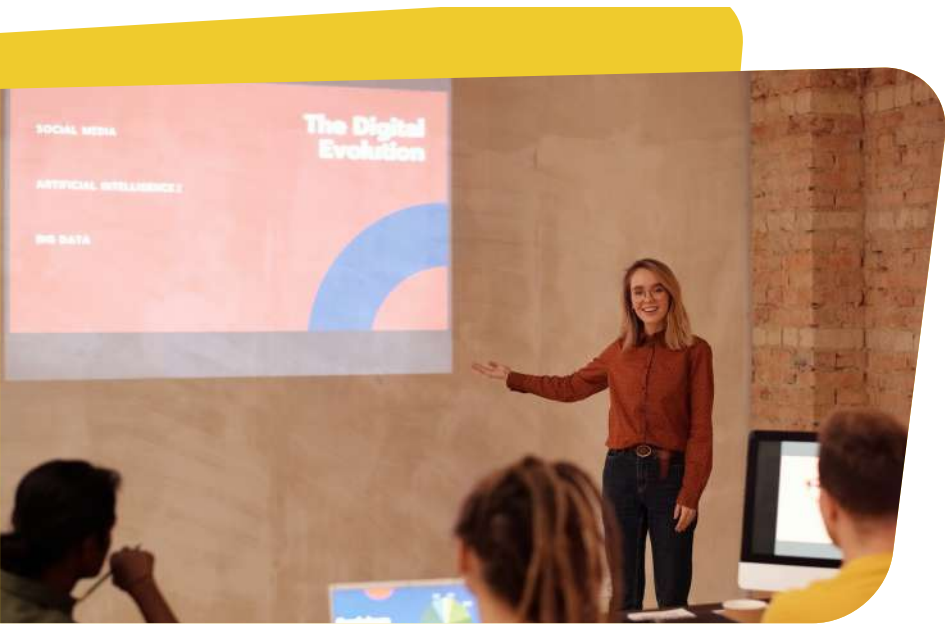
If you can find a place where there is no sound of machines and your cell phone will not ring. If you can quietly listen to the sound of the breeze, the wind, the water, just the natural sounds. If you pay enough attention, tremendous things will happen to you.

Many times I've been in the South Indian tropical rainforest. The longest I've been in the jungle was for about 23 days alone without any kind of support, no cell phone, not even a torch light. On the fourth day I ran out of the food I was carrying so I lived off the forest. By about the eighth day I lost my jacket and one half of my shirt because I was chased by some animals. I had half a shirt, and trousers. I walked through elephant country and tiger country so I saw them and many other kinds of animals at very close quarters. At the end of it, when you look back, what is the biggest impact on you? It is the insects, it is the night time orchestra that goes on in the rainforest. That is unbelievable. And the timing – every day, at 2.15am, one group will stop and the other group will start. Really, their sense of time, every day at exactly the same time by the second, every group will start on time.

But their timing – they are not just making dumb noises, they know the timing. So if you just sit there and listen and listen, you will start noticing a pattern and an organisation to this that is far bigger and more complex and more intense than any human being can achieve.

It is very important for every human being, particularly if you have children, to take a vacation into nature. Take your children and walk in a jungle, live on a mountain, expose them to nature. You will bring them up mentally healthy and physically healthy, and far more accepting human beings, if they know how to be in nature. Once you go into nature, what you are in the city doesn't matter. It is very important everyone experiences that because otherwise you start creating your own illusions of who you are and you start believing it.

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NOTES

PROBLEMS FROM WITHIN

It is time to understand that all the problems of individual nature are generated from within and we don't have to solve problems that we create, we just have to dissolve. Problems that you create within you do not need a solution. Otherwise you are creating an illusory solution, something that you make up. You just have to turn off the problems and improve your direction.

You are trying to find a solution for people in a drama. It is like going to the cinema and then coming home and arguing about what happened in the film. The thoughts and emotions that you create, you don't have to find any solution for it – just turn it off. If you find solutions, you are moving towards insanity, because you create a ghost and you create a ghostbuster. The ghost that you create, you must learn to play with. If you don't like them, turn them off.

Thoughts come and go. Never did it happen that one thought remained for more than a moment. It comes and goes, comes and goes. Let it come and go. If you try and find a solution for that, you will head towards insanity.





NOTES

BE TRUE TO YOURSELF

One thing that you must do to yourself is be absolutely truthful to yourself. If you are also truthful to everyone around you, you will get other kinds of benefits with people. But with yourself, you have to be 100 percent truthful, otherwise all kinds of things will start happening.

To be truthful to yourself is not an easy thing, because there is lifetimes of habit, of simply tricking yourself.

Let me tell you a story. A guest came to a man's house, and being a south Indian man, the man was carrying an umbrella, which is very common. Then it started raining and he did not open the umbrella. The guest said why are you not opening the umbrella. The man said it is full of holes. So the guest asked why he brought it, and the man said he didn't expect it to rain today.

A whole lot of people are like this. They think somebody else has to catch their lies, but this will take a long time because someone else catching your lies will take a lifetime. You must catch them. Be 100 percent straight with yourself – it will take a certain amount of application but it is one thing you should do.

Then, figuring out a few things is very simple, if you just fix this one thing – be 100 percent straight with yourself. Then you will know there is a hole in the umbrella and you will never forget that. If you are like this, the rest of the work becomes very simple.



NOTES

THE NEED FOR STABILITY

The spiritual process means to become like a mountain – stable, still – because it is only when somebody has a very stable base that many things can begin. Exuberance of life is possible only if there is absolute stability. Otherwise exuberance will lead to madness. That is why a lot of people who are a little active, a little creative, a little exuberant always end up being freaky and nearly insane. Without stability you cannot have a dance. This is why shiva means stillness and shiva means dance, at the same time. Either you see him sitting absolutely still or you see him in an explosion of dance, because an explosion is possible only when there is a stable base.

An explosion which is not destructive is possible only when there is stability. People try to become stable by controlling and trimming their lives. This is the way your grandmother would tell you to be stable, control yourself. Yes, if you are dead you will be stable! So normally people who talk about stability are all in constipated existence. That means it happens little by little. Their joy, their love, their ecstasy happens little by little.

Stability is not because you have trimmed your life down, that is of no consequence. Stability is because you see everything utterly clearly. That is why when we say adi yogi we are talking about stability at the same time as exuberant dance. This is possible because he has more than two eyes, not necessarily three. That means he sees much more than most people ever see, because he sees much more.

Stability is what it takes to allow exuberance to happen, otherwise you keep curtailing your exuberance because it hurts when it is out of balance. If you are out of balance and you move at a certain speed you are going to hurt yourself, whether you are riding a bike or riding the cosmos. So balance is very important, and balance that comes out of curtailment is not balance.





NOTES

GETTING TO THE TOP

On a certain day, a bull and a pheasant were grazing. The bull was chomping the grass and the pheasant was picking ticks off the bull in partnership. The pheasant very nostalgically looked at the huge tree at the edge of the field and said there was a time I could fly to the top of that. Now I do not have enough strength in my wing to get to the first branch.

The bull very nonchalantly said that's no issue. Just eat a little of my dung every day and within a fortnight you will get there. The pheasant said what kind of rubbish is that. But very hesitantly the pheasant started pecking at the dung and on the first day it reached the first branch of the tree. Within a fortnight it reached the top of the tree and it was just beginning to enjoy the scenery.

An old farmer was rocking in his rocking chair and saw a fat old pheasant sitting on top of the tree. Pulled out his shotgun and shot the bird out of the tree. The moral of the story is, many times even bullshit can get you to the top but it never lets you stay there.

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LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

In 1941, just when the Nazi movement was building up in Germany, somewhere in Austria a bunch of German soldiers came and broke into the homes of a rich Jewish family. They broke the home, took away the adults, stole everything, and two children – a 12-year-old girl and an 8-year-old boy were taken away. They were taken to a railway station, in the middle of the winter, and they were kept in the railway station in the dreadful cold because the train didn't come.

The little boys started playing football and then suddenly the train came. The train is not a passenger train but a goods train, so when the train came the soldiers came and rushed everyone onto the wagons. Everyone got in, but the little boy left his shoes outside and they pushed him into the wagon without shoes. His sister saw her kid brother coming without shoes and she got mad with him, scolded him because in Germany in winter no shoes means you will lose your feet. She was angry.

In the next station the boys and girls were separated and after four years, when the war was over, she came out of the concentration camp to find 17 members of her family, including her little brother, had all vanished with no records. At that time, the only thing that bothered was the last few things she had said to her little brother. She loved him, but the last few things she said to him were such terrible things that they troubled her mind. She took a vow that if she spoke to anybody in her life she would speak to them in such a way that if it were her last word she would not regret it.

This one thing transformed her life in such a way that she went to the United States, died in 2006 and she did some phenomenal work, built a hospital, and lived a fruitful life. So even if you are put through the most horrible situation, you can come out using that experience as a better human being or you can use it to become a horrible mess.

When something hurts you, there are two options. You can become wounded or you can become wise. The more things hurt you early on in life, the wiser you can become. Unfortunately, most people become wounded because they just need an excuse to turn their own intelligence against themselves. If the world around you turns against you, is it not important that your intelligence stands up for you?



NOTES

THE FEAR OF SUFFERING

The fear of suffering is not just about pain, the fear of suffering is self-inflicted. Nobody can cause mental pain to you – it is you, in reaction to something that happens around you that you cause pain to yourself. If you have half your brain removed, then you would see that you would be quite peaceful. Right now, people are going through stress, anxiety, misery and all kinds of things. You can give it any number of names but essentially their intelligence has turned against them. Once your intelligence has turned against you there is no force on the planet or anywhere that can save you.

So the fundamental thing is to bring all the faculties that we have to work for our wellbeing. Right now our own bodies, minds and emotions are working against us, and this one thing has to be fixed.

Series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.



NOTES

DECIDE YOUR INTENT

You don't have to be on the go all the time. Generally, my schedule is anything from 18 to 20 hours per day, seven days a week, 365 days a year for many years, and people ask me how I am so active all the time. I'm essentially lazy, it is just that the situation in the world demands action. Left to myself, I would close my eyes and simply sit until I fall dead. I really have no need for action. I'm not trying to keep myself busy. There is a lot to be done so I'm doing it.

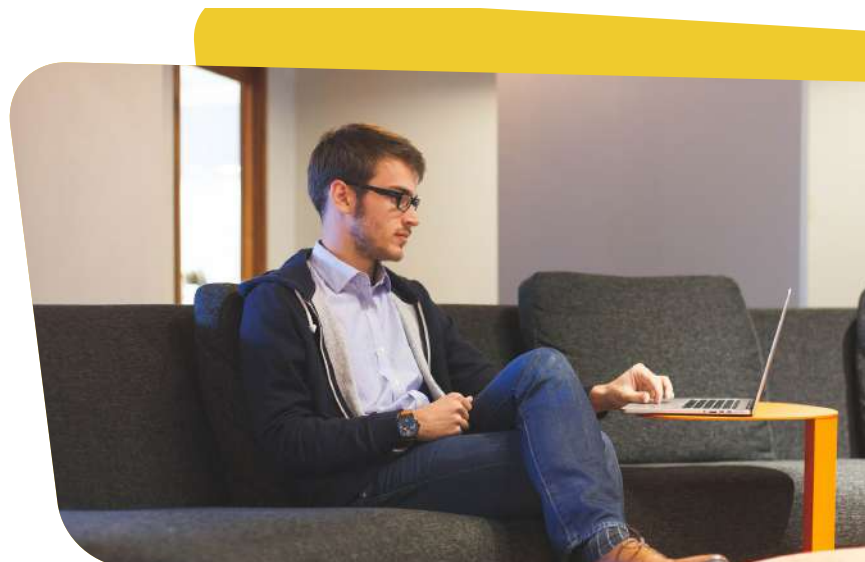
People ask me about my dream, and I say that my dream is the day I am unemployed. That is a great day, because if I am unemployed it simply means everybody is doing fantastic.

Action is not something you decide, you just decide your intent. Action, the world will decide.

Two men were working on the streets, one man digging pits and behind him another man is coming and closing the pits. Somebody else was driving by and they saw this ridiculous activity – one man digs a pit and another man fills it. Why are you guys working like this, he says. They said the in-between guy has gone on leave, and he is the tree planter!

A lot of people are doing their work – if the world needs work or the planet needs work, we will do it. Otherwise, why should you do it. But what is your mission? You have no business to have your own mission – life has its own mission. If you can assist and serve that, that is enough. Otherwise you are some kind of tyrant. All missionaries are some kinds of tyrant unknowingly, because there is no mission. What is needed, you do, especially if you have studied at a business school and got certain competence to manage things or create things. You must create what is needed, not some rubbish and push it onto people. You must see how to make lives better and how to solve situations that are problematic to a whole lot of people. You must look for solutions to existing situations.

Of course there are experts creating new problems, so you will never be short of problems. You just have to create solutions.



NOTES

THE USER'S MANUAL OF LIFE

Of all the pieces of engineering on this planet, from the trees to the mountains, the most sophisticated piece of engineering is the human mechanism. Now, because it is a sophisticated piece of engineering it needs a certain level of attention, otherwise you don't figure it.

Now you have such high-tech engineering at your disposal, did you read the user's manual? Maybe it doesn't come with a booklet attached, but indications how to use it must be there. Somebody who is an athlete or a gymnast learns to use their body better than a whole lot of other people.

Some people are able to use their minds better than others. Maybe they read a different part of the user's manual. With the heart manual and the brain manual, most people are prejudiced against the brain. They complain that it still functions when they meditate, and yet they want their heart, lung, liver to keep functioning. This is simply because the brain is a new piece of equipment in the evolutionary process. This level of cerebral development happened more recently than the other systems. If you cut open any mammal, they all have all these parts. Even a frog. The big difference is only the cerebral development which is a more recent happening, and because it is a more recent happening, most people have not figured out how to handle it.

A user's manual is very important. You don't read a user's manual just before you discard the machine, you read it in the first few days. So knowing how your brain functions is very important – never did the heart generate any thought or intention.





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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

THE MINDSET YOU NEED TO WIN
– NOVAK DJOKOVIC



The Mindset You Need To Win – Novak Djokovic

*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes

I have been going through this centring process of understanding what I need to do in order to organise my life better, in order to focus on the most important aspects of my existence here – the inner piece, the spiritual growth, the understanding of self – and, of course, the close family. For most of my career it was about tennis all the time, and my ego plays with me so much.

I have always thought that ego is the enemy but now I am leaning more towards the theory that ego should be befriended and should be part of your process of thinking, of feeling, and in this way you are disarming your ego rather than trying to reject it.

I respect everyone and I respect also this moment in time that we as people are in, and our society is where it is for a reason. We have to go through this stage of development and evolution. It took me time to really come to that understanding, because for many years – through my character-building process and spiritual journey – I was opening my mind to different horizons of self-awareness and self-care. I was feeling lonely, and I felt that what I was doing was not understood and accepted, but I still wanted to play tennis and stay in the sport.

I'm so blessed to do what I love. I started playing tennis when I was four years old and my family did not have any kind of tennis tradition, so it was literally a sign of a destiny, embracing the tennis courts in front of my parents' restaurant in a small mountain place in Serbia.

My father was a professional skier and ski instructor, which is how he met my mum on the ski slope. Six months later they were married and a year later they had me and opened a restaurant in the very mountain where they met. The restaurant was the business that generated the budget for our family, so we spent a lot of time there, but we lived three hours away by car in the capital Belgrade where I went to school.

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I have two younger brothers, one is four years younger and one is eight years younger. We talk about children and the new wave of energy and consciousness and awareness that we are receiving from above through children that already have what we don't have. That is what I see in my brother – he has born with this capacity to multitask, deal with things and still be happy, which is quite amazing.

When you are a professional athlete it is all about winning or losing. But I don't see losing as failure as such, I see it as another great lesson that waits for me to learn from. I didn't always have that – I went through my evolution. I was fortunate than when I started playing tennis I came across some people that were really knowledgeable people tennis and about life, in particular one woman, Jelena Gencic. She passed away in 2013, and she was my tennis mother.

My parents invested a lot of energies when I was growing up. We had two wars, we had the war that broke down the old Yugoslavia into six countries that are now independent, one of which is Serbia that I am from. Then throughout the nineties, right up until 2000, we had embargo, so people were waiting in line for bread and milk, the most necessary things.

Then in 1999 in Serbia we had bombings every single day and night for two months. I was there, my family was there – we woke up every night for two and a half months because the sirens were going off and bombs were being dropped. It was terrifying, it was the worst thing we ever experienced, seeing planes overhead dropping bombs on hospitals, and many innocent people died. Fortunately I didn't personally lose anyone very close to me, but I know people that lost their loved ones and that is a scar that stays with you forever.

This memory stays with me forever. At the beginning I felt, like probably most people in my country, that I wanted revenge. I was 12 years old and I felt who are these guys to bomb innocent people. For two weeks we didn't go to school and just hid in shelters, until we just decided to go back about our lives: if we are hit, we are hit, we thought. I remember on my 12th birthday at the tennis club, my friends were singing to me and I can still picture the image in my head of the plane overhead dropping bombs.

It was terrible, but at the same time I felt like I was growing inside out. My parents helped me a lot with coming to that realisation that we can't judge a whole nation for the actions of certain individuals, groups or institutions that decided to bomb our country. That is when I shifted and at this moment I have absolutely forgiven everyone that did that, but you cannot forget.

It stays as a scar but it has, on the bright side, bought a lot of value to my life and a lot of appreciation for the value. I feel so grateful for that experience, truly, because it helped shape me into the person I am today, the tennis player I am. It made me hungrier for the success in tennis and made me hungrier to work, train and build myself, so I can show the world that a kid from a war-torn country can actually be the best in a sport that is very global.



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All these experiences have been there for a reason and I don't regret anything or pity anything. It is just something I had to live through and if we managed to get through that as a family and a nation. There is not much that can break me down.

Historically, people in Serbia and in the region have been through a lot and it was actually nice to see the unity of people. I was reflecting on that period the other day with my brother and my wife, and one of the images that stays with me from those two months in 1999 is thousands of people gathering on the bridge in our city with shirts with targets on, and everyone painted their heads with a target, and we were singing songs and having fun. We were showing the world, and whoever was dropping bombs, we are protecting this bridge and this city, so if you want to crush it you have to go through us. It was that power, that energy, that strength of unity and resilience that was beautiful.

I often think of the great story about a snake and a saw. The snake was coming into the cottonfields and it got caught by a saw, and the saw cut it. The snake didn't realise what was happening so it went to bite the saw and hurt itself more. Then it started winding itself around the saw to try and suffocate it, thinking that saw is attacking it, but it hurt itself more and more. Finally, the snake died.

This really translates into life – so often we get angry or upset with people and we want to hurt them because we are hurt, but we are just hurting ourselves. That was a deep message that really resonated with me. It kind of sums up my evolution and my growth mentally in how I should deal with particular circumstances and events that have been significant in my life.

The war and those hardships were definitely some of the most difficult times of my life and my career, where I experienced what it feels like to literally have \$10 at home in the apartment for my father and my mother with three children to feed, and having to wait in line for hours for a piece of bread, and not being able to travel around the world to play tennis. Tennis is an expensive sport – you need money to pay for the racquet, the balls, the coach, the court... all of these things.

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I think, at the end of the day, it brings light and value to my life because going through all that has made me stronger but at the same time made me more grateful. I understand both extremes. Today I enjoy so much success in society and sport, I can afford many things and I'm really grateful for that and blessed. But I have been on the opposite side, so that storyline really enriches me.

The message I can share from my experience, and I don't want anyone to ever feel like I'm preaching, is that it has helped me to reach success in both professional and private ways. There is always time for everything. I'm learning myself, even today, how to be patient and coordinate certain things in my life. How to create space for the quality time I can have with my priorities, which are my family and my growth. It is a constant juggle. I truly believe in balance but I don't believe we ever reach a point where we can say we are in balance. You can be in balance but the next moment you're not in balance because that's life and everything is moving.

Through tennis, I have learned my biggest and hardest lessons in life and experienced those emotions. For me, the tennis court is still a field where I have a chance to grow. When I'm not on the tennis court I find it much easier to accomplish things that I want to on a daily basis. But then I use the tennis court as exactly that platform that challenges me and challenges my ego. I still have outbursts on the court – I scream, I curse, I break a racquet – and when that happens instantly I feel angry that I did that.

I have two children and many children around the world are watching and seeing what I'm doing, and imitating me. I always try to have that in the back of my mind, in my subconscious, to do what you do best but do it with dignity, with style.





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But I still go through these outbursts, and I have felt disappointed with myself for a while because of that. I felt like I was betraying myself, not managing to do what I intended to do. Then I learned about surrender, and that there is a time for everything in life and a reason why we have to take every step of the way in order to reach the top.

I understood that I have to accept, embrace and channel it, and understand that I still have to work and I have to work all the way until the last day that I breathe, and I am happy about that. I really feel like I have managed to make a positive leap in that direction.

My greatest achievement is my open mind. I feel that with an open-minded perspective and approach to life, you help all the natural processes in yourself to flourish and to excel and you are embracing the natural flow of life where you have to evolve, develop and learn.

I feel that ignorance and closed mindedness are so strong that you can go through your whole life without allowing yourself to open up to the world and learn about all these different cultures and things that can enrich your life. Those things can help you live a more fulfilled life, be more joyful, and have that inner peace and emotional balance that we all strive for. With an open mind you are helping yourself, you are able to receive and give at the same time, because the forcefield has to flow. If you don't have an open mind, everything closes up.

I was there – I felt resentment, a need for revenge, I felt hatred, I felt all of that. We are all human beings and we all experience those emotions. But I feel that with training, repetition and discipline, which obviously sport has taught me so well, you can really reach anything that you truly want and desire in your life.

Ever since I wished to play tennis, when I was four or five years old, I feel I have helped my parents too to expand out of their comfort zone. I went into a sport and field of life that was completely unknown to them. I started playing tennis when I was four or five and before that I was skiing a lot, and I remember even before I started to run I was always with my dad going down the slopes.

The first sport for me was skiing, and until I was nine years old I didn't really know whether I wanted to do skiing or tennis, maybe football. Fortunately, my father asked me. I remember that day when he sat me down with my mum and said: 'I am ready to support anything that you desire to do in your life and I'm here for you, but you have to tell me. If it's sport, then which sport?' I took a little time to think but after maybe half an hour I went to him and told him it was tennis, so tennis it was.

Us getting into that uncomfortable, unknown field of life has allowed us to expand, all of us, with the benefit of having certain mentors that have greatly, positively influenced me on many levels. I mentioned my tennis mother: I met her when I was about six years old and I started training with her at her summer tennis camp up in the mountains. Then when I was about seven I started having some private lessons with her in Belgrade where I was going to school.

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She was happy to play with me because she felt I was very talented. She said to my parents that they should really try their best to support me to play tennis, because she had never seen a bigger talent since Monica Seles, who was obviously one of the best female players of all time.

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She was her coach as well, because Monica was born in Serbia and then she went to live in the States, where she is today. Of course, my parents thought that if someone so experienced in tennis said that, then they should try to support their child.

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I remember I was really in love with the sport, watching tennis practice all the time, and she told me back then when I was seven or eight about the holistic approach. She taught me how to think about grades in school, the music I listened to, the mindfulness that I have, the observation, the focus, the kindness, the relationship with people. She was working in a team with my parents, and I'm grateful to them because they recognised the role of the mentor early on.

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That helped me a lot. Obviously I went through my phases and through the process of learning and dealing with emotions. I was travelling with my father until I was 16 and then when I was 16 or 17 I started to travel on my own with my coach. I didn't get too deep into these conversations with my dad or my mum, and I felt there were some subjects that I wanted to talk about – especially in puberty and as a teenager. I was so much into tennis that I didn't really have time for other school activities, for example, that my friends were going through.

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Then I started sharing so much with my coach that my dad asked why I didn't share so much with him. The answer was that I had never shared those subjects and I didn't feel we could resonate on that level. We tried and it never worked out. He was understanding that I also need to have people that are close to me and influence me on different levels, and that helped me a lot to develop.





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People have talked about my impossible comeback, and the fact that I was able to be at the top, have a slump and then get back to the top. But to reflect first on the word impossible, in that word you have I-M-POSSIBLE; I truly don't believe in anything being impossible.

My wife has been my girlfriend for a long time, since I was 18, and she used to play tennis, which is how we met. We had known each other four or five years before that, through tennis, and then she went to study in Italy and I came to Monaco around the same time, to follow my coach. I started to use Monaco as a base and she came over from Milan, which is how it all started.

When she finished studies, she had a lot of opportunities in her own career but she sacrificed that in order to live my career and my dream and save the relationship, so I'm very grateful to her from everything she has done for me and for our relationship. I continue to learn so much from her. She used to do yoga back in the days when she was studying, and she is a huge reader – she likes to read anything and everything. She likes to write as well and she was big on journaling.

I remember when I was quite young, from my tennis mother and other friends, I learned how to write specific things that I wanted to share down on paper. I used to write what I was grateful for and so on, but I lost that and didn't do it for many years. My wife reminded me and I started doing it again, which felt great because I felt like I could release a lot of things that were tensing me up, through journaling, and also through yoga.

My wife learned about yoga because she was so stressed during her studies and was looking for ways to relax and get more energy. She shared that with me and I started doing it with her, and ever since we have been doing some form of yoga on a daily basis.

She has been a significant, integral part of my life and my evolution. What I'm grateful for is not only that we truly love each other and we are transparent and honest, but also that we have help from the universe to be in a similar state of consciousness through certain phases of our lives, so we can help each other learn better and grow faster in certain areas that we choose in particular periods.

I think she would agree that when we came parents four years ago, that completely shifted our world upside down. Up to that moment, we were spiritual but still quite basic compared to what has happened after that. We truly believe that our kids are our masters and our teachers and that they come to this life to bring lessons for us and help for us to understand a lot of things about ourselves on a deeper level, and what we have to work on.

That is quite contrary to what society thinks, which is that we are teaching them, which we are also doing of course. We now have a baby girl who is a one-year-old and she is a healer, she really is, she brings that kind of energy to this world. And she has skyrocketed our attention for the moment, for consciousness, for awareness about everything.

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We help each other grow and I'm really grateful that I can share with her literally anything and everything that I am interested in or going through. She has always been a shoulder to lean on and she has always been there in tough moments in my career. When I was going through an injury recently and had to take a six-month break from tennis, and then when I came back, I was questioning whether I should keep on playing at that level or not. She was there and she helped me overcome all of that, of course alongside help from life and spiritual teachers that I have.

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There are two guys in particular, José Pepe Imaz from Spain and Zarko Ilic from Serbia, who I consider as my spiritual life teachers and masters that I have learned a lot from. Back in 2010 I met Zarko through my wife, who had a friend that knew him, and he is a Reiki healer and much more. He helped both my wife and I to open our minds even more to understand how we can have internal conversations with ourselves – I didn't know how to verbalise my emotions. My wife was ahead of me and we struggled in our relationship because she was trying to fix things out for me and make me share more but I wasn't able to do that because I didn't know how. She'd ask me to speak to her and I just couldn't articulate it. Zarko was very helpful in that.

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There is this great saying that when the spirit is ready, the teacher will come, so I felt that the first initial step I needed to take was to decide in my mind what I needed for my heart and my soul and my growth. Then I had to prioritise how to manage myself and my emotions, not just to be a better tennis player but to be a better human being. And then the teacher appeared and after that I started to expand my awareness and observation of the world. Then I ran into Pepe who is a close friend and spiritual life teacher to my brother. My brother actually went to live in Spain with him.

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Pepe's whole philosophy in life is 'love and peace' and he brought that energy into our lives: the perception of love and peace and what it actually means. In the beginning, I was not really supportive of my brother because he started going through this process of learning with Pepe, and he moved to Spain to be closer to him because he felt deep inside that it was something very important that he had to address. I didn't get it at that time – I felt I was a professional tennis player, I had to get back and train, love and peace on the court would get me beaten.

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My brother felt he had to go through it and I didn't understand, but I was attracted to it because I felt that his energy was amazing. You can never get upset with him. He always smiles and prays inside, sending you love, and for that he had to work immensely and he continues to do that. He kept talking to me about inner work, inner growth, universal love, and I didn't get that for a long time. Then this whole energy attracted my wife and I and we connected with Pepe and my brother on different levels, and today we understand what he truly means because we embraced that work and continue to do so daily.





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For me, I try to think what am I doing right on the tennis court and how can I translate that off the tennis court. On the tennis court, what I'm doing right is complete 100 percent focus and presence of mind and body; discipline; working towards an objective; being organised; preparing myself.

Preparation is a huge thing: if you fail to prepare, you prepare to fail. At least in my world for tennis, preparation has helped me a lot. Let's say 80 percent or 90 percent of any success I have is achieved before I even step on the court. You have to do your homework, obviously working on all my strengths and weaknesses, preparing myself physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually for the match that is coming up. I have the whole short term and long term plan – how can I get from here to there in the shortest time.

Then obviously you have to do your homework on the opponent, the stadium, the crowd, the weather. It is really homework that you have to do before you get in, and then you win a tennis match. That is why I believe preparation is a big thing.

The science says you need 22 or 23 days to shift from a bad habit to a healthy habit, so we need persistency, we need discipline, repetition. Bruce Lipton, who I like to listen to a lot, talks about our consciousness and how subconscious is controlling 80 or 90 percent of our everyday life. So if we can feed our subconscious with information that is going to allow us to excel and live the life that we want to, then that is what is going to happen, because your subconscious doesn't know what is good for you or bad for you, it just knows what you tell it and the seeds that you plant.

Lipton talks about there being two ways to hack your subconscious, which are hypnosis, which happens until you are seven years old, and then repetition. That is why my wife and I are passionate about pre-school education and early childhood development until you are six or seven years old. That is where there is most vast brain growth and where the fundamentals and the foundation of life is set.

After you are seven, it is repetition and discipline: switching off your phone after a certain hour, doing your praying work every day because you believe in an invisible world. You just need to really believe it in order to achieve it. Where you attention goes, the energy flows.

It all starts with an open mind and you have to go with a question. It is always great to ask yourself questions: who am I, why am I here, what do I want to do, what do I want to become. All these questions – write them on a piece of paper, then go through them in your mind and address them. If you don't address them, you are just going to carry on in the same way and get the same outcome that you don't desire. Awareness about that helps you learn.



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I feel this is the time when we can expand our consciousness and get closer to who we are. The two most important questions on this planet ever, since the existence of humans, are about who we are and why we are here. The truth-seeking element is quite important. I consider myself a truth seeker, I like to dig deeper to understand who we are, why are we here, is this a planet, is this a realm, is it a matrix. I think it is important to ask these questions and do our research.

It all comes down to whether you are your own master or not. If you are your own master, that allows you to take actions the way you want them. Jim Kwik talks about the thermostat and the thermometer. He says don't be the thermometer, be the thermostat. The thermometer has only one function, to react to the environment, whereas the thermostat gauges the environment and reacts, makes the change.

Coming back to ego, I do have a big ego but I have to embrace and learn how to confront it and deal with it. I'm going to team up with it rather than be an enemy of it. Otherwise, I'm reacting and ego can persuade you to do different things. Instead, let's team up – I'm you, you're me – how can we work together. You have to please it and control it. Even though I don't really like the word control, I feel like if you create your controlled environment, it is going to be better for you and your life.

The first thing I do every morning is pray. I express my gratitude for my body, for my self, for the opportunity to continue my evolution as a multi-dimensional being in this realm. I am grateful for my family, I am grateful for being able to have my senses and to have a big bed and the most beautiful sunrise every morning.

To make sure my energy is where I want it to be, spiritually and internally, I continue to work – aside from my physical work on tennis and my duties as a father and a husband – I need to get in self-care work daily, even if that is just a three-minute meditation.

The best advice I have ever received is to be open-minded. When you are open-minded, you are ready to receive everything that we are surrounded with in this beautiful world. We are so blessed that we live in this world and that we go through the process of evolution.

When you come close to the realisation of who you are, and you continue to seek that truth, it brings you closer to the source and just makes you so present, so calm and so joyful and grateful for yourself and people around you and for everything you have, everything you do, everything that surrounds you. That is the essence of life.

I would like everyone to understand that our consciousness expands infinitely, which means in my own perception that we are more than we think or feel with our five senses. When I came to this realisation, it just opened the door to a whole different universe and dimension for me, and I feel that my evolution and my growth in every aspect of who I am has just quadrupled for light years ahead. I feel calm and at the same time so excited for everything that life has to offer.

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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

LET LOVE IN – LOVE AS THE HEALER AND
MOTIVATION FOR EVERYTHING WE DO
- DEEPAK CHOPRA,
INTERVIEWED BY JAY SHETTY



*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes



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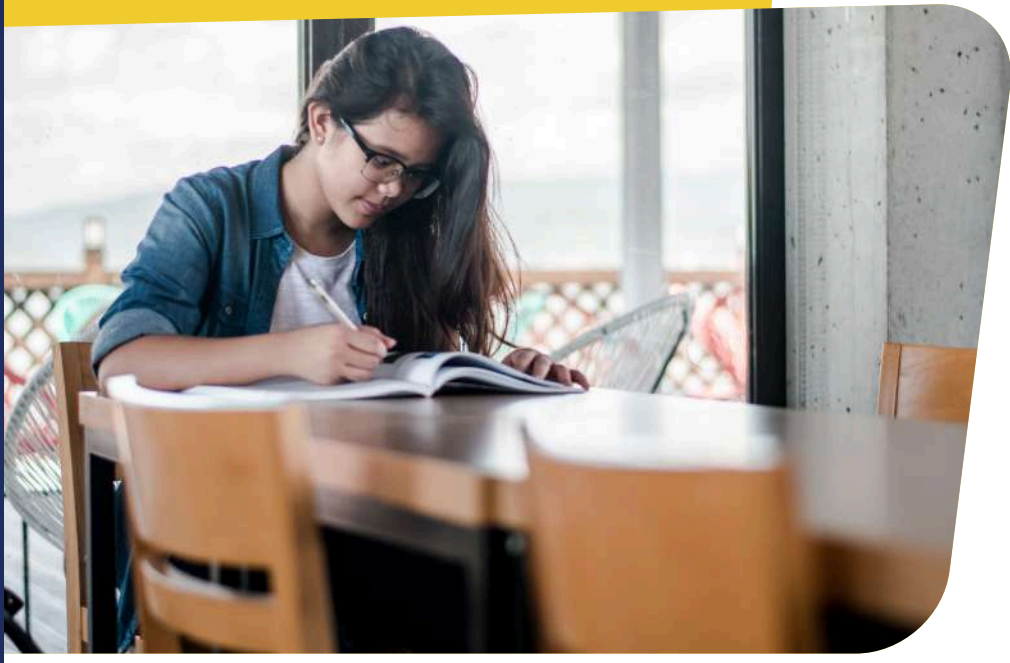
BORN IN NEW DELHI

I was born immediately before India's independence from British colonialism, so I am frequently referred to as one of Midnight's Children, that phrase coined by Salman Rushdie that refers to all of us at the cusp of the old era of colonialism and independent India.

My father was an army doctor. He was actually in the war when I was born, not in New Delhi. He was a prisoner in what is now Myanmar under siege by the Japanese, so he didn't see me until months after I was born.

I grew up and awareness came very gradually. My first significant memory is when I was six years of age, and my father was at that time in England training to be a medical doctor and then a cardiologist. I was living with my grandparents as was my younger brother, who later became the Dean of Medical Education at Harvard Medical School. We are all a family of doctors.

I remember at the age of six years getting a telegram from England, and in those days the postman knocked on the door and it took 48 hours to get a telegram from England – two weeks to get there by boat and two days by plane. The telegram was that my father had passed all his exams, he was a member of the Royal College of Physicians. My grandfather used to be an old army sergeant in the British Army, so he had a gun and he went to the roof of the apartment building and shot a few rounds into the air to celebrate. He took us to the movies, and then he took us to a carnival, and then in the middle of the night he died.



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So I remember waking up to the wailing of women. He was taken for cremation and the next day he was brought back in a little bottle of ashes. One of my uncles said, ‘What is life? Here he was yesterday celebrating with the kids and now he is a bunch of ashes.’

I remember not only being scared but also, even at the age of six years, having my first existential crisis. What is going on? Where is he now? And that continued throughout my childhood and into medical school. That one episode essentially shaped my life.

FINDING ANSWERS TO EXISTENTIAL QUESTIONS

It was not until much later that I started coming to some answers. When I was in high school all I wanted to do was be a writer – my secret wish was always to write fiction more than anything else. I have since written a lot of historical fiction.

At the age of 14 I was reading a book called Lost Horizon, about this mythical place called Shangri La where people don't age and they don't die, and it was very interesting. I was inspired by that to write fiction of my own. But my father wanted his kids to either go to medical school or engineering school, so he wanted me to follow in his footsteps. He knew that was not my interest and when I was about 15 he gave me some books by Somerset Maugham, who was a physician writer and wrote amazing books about human bondage, existential issues. I was so inspired by these books that I told my dad I wanted to be a doctor and I had to do biology all over again to enter medical school.

When you go to medical school you are supposed to understand health and wellbeing, but day one of medical school is anatomy so you are introduced to a corpse. You are meant to understand life by looking at a dead body: that's the model and it has been the model ever since Michelangelo's times. That stuck in my mind, a vision of the body as a physical machine and consciousness as a byproduct. We are molecules that manufacture thoughts.

I lived with that model throughout my medical school years. We were introduced to the dissection table and there is a certain smell that comes from the corpse, especially if it has been preserved. I couldn't get that smell out of my hands and so I started smoking cigarettes to get rid of it. I was experimenting with all kinds of things then. Our medical school was founded by, amongst other foundations, the Rockefeller Foundation, so we had lots of visiting professors and students. These students that came from Harvard Medical School introduced me to LSD, before even the Beatles got involved, so I had some interesting experiences during my medical school years with smoking, alcohol and the whole works.

That didn't stop until much later when I came to the United States.



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THE EXPERIMENTAL PHASE

We are talking about the mid-1960s when a lot was going on. The Vietnam War was coming to an end and there was a lot of protest against the Vietnam War. There were riots in America against the war, there was a shooting at Kent State University and there was huge global uprising for peace. The feminist movement was just starting and women were burning their bras, Greenpeace was coming.

So as young late-teenagers and people just embarking on our life journey, we were very idealistic. We thought the world was going to change. LSD, rock 'n' roll and music were in the air. The Beatles had just published their album Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds, so it was a time of idealism but also a time of experimentation, and also the feeling that the world was changing. But it didn't; we actually regressed.

I thought we were going to see a global transformation, and that we were seeing social justice and economic justice, conflict resolution and a sustainable environment with a critical mass of consciousness leading in the direction of a more peaceful, just, sustainable, healthier and joyful world. But it did not happen. Twenty years later in the 1980s you had my own peers on Wall Street in these corruption scandals and the idealism was totally shattered.

Then we started to regress until recently now when the conversation is picking up again. But it is not enough to pick up this conversation. We have to actually see where we failed in the past, and that is because idealism without action is useless. They say that love without action is irrelevant and action without love is meaningless. But when you have love in action and love for the greater good, then things can happen. I'm hoping they happen now, or we will wait another 30 years until after I'm gone. We may not even survive with all the climate change that is happening right now.



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THE MISSING LINK

The real missing link is acting on our idealistic views, and without being an angry social activist or an angry peace activist. That is a contradiction in itself: you can't be an angry peace activist, you have to be a peaceful being in order to create peace. You have to have experienced love in order to create love.

And then you bring it into action. That starts with empathy, which is feeling what others are feeling, and compassion, which is the desire to alleviate suffering. If you have that then that is the basis of all love. But then love has to move into action as well.

Let love creep in and let it become the healer and motivation for everything you do. To really change something requires activation. At the moment, we are polishing our selfies instead of getting in touch with ourselves.

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The year 1970 I got a letter from a foundation in the United States that if I pass certain exams from the American Medical Association I could get a scholarship. I had not even applied or thought about a scholarship but I did the exams and I passed, so I showed up in New Jersey in a little community hospital. I realised when I was there that actually this whole scholarship thing was an excuse to bring foreign doctors into the United States because all the American doctors were in Vietnam so there was a big shortage of physicians.

The prestigious posts went to university hospitals for American graduates and the foreign graduates were then relegated to community hospitals that offered no education but lots of work. I ended up being in this small hospital and all my colleagues were also foreign doctors, from Egypt, Korea, Italy and elsewhere, and basically we were cheap labour. But I got to experience what it was to be in a very traumatic environment – we had gunshot wounds, the hospital had a reputation for being connected to the Mafia, and all of that. I worked hard for that one year.

Then I got a position in an academic institute in Boston associated with Harvard Medical School. I was still smoking, partying and drinking as an internal resident, but then as I was finishing my residency I took a specialty training in endocrinology, which is the study of hormones. Then in neuroendocrinology, which is looking at brain chemistry.

I had some very interesting colleagues but also my mentor at that time was a person called Dr Seymour Reichlin, who was world famous and if he found a snake in his garden he would dissect the brain of the snake looking for neurochemicals. At that time, well into the mid-1970s, we were discovering chemicals in the brain that now everybody knows about, called neuropeptides: neuro because they are in the brain and peptides because they are protein-like molecules.



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One of my colleagues at that time, Candace Pert, who was later the Chief of Brain Chemistry at the National Institutes of Health, used the phrase 'molecules of emotion' and I had never heard that word. Now everyone knows about things like serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin, opiates, but we were just discovering those molecules of emotion.

That got me hooked to the so-called mind-body connection and at the same time I was also seeing patients and I was perplexed as to why two patients with the same illness could see the same doctor, get the same treatment and have completely different outcomes: one could die while the other could recover. So I started writing down stories of my patients, just to see if I could learn something from them. I then started submitting those stories to medical journals, but nobody would accept them because they were too anecdotal. Then I thought maybe I will publish them for the general public and the publishers wouldn't accept that either, because it was too new age.

So one day I saw an ad in the New York Times that said if you want to get your book published, we can do it for \$5,000, and it was a vanity press. I didn't know what that was about, but I paid \$5,000 which was a lot of money for me, I got 100 books very shabbily produced and didn't know what to do with them. But now at this time I had given up alcohol and given up everything experimental, I was meditating. One day I was giving a lecture to the students at Harvard Divinity School in Cambridge and there was a young female student there who asked for a bunch of books. She took 12 out of the 100 and put them in the window of the Harvard Book Shop. The book was picked up by some kid who gave it to his mother on Mother's Day; she happened to be a literary agent and she called me and asked why I didn't have a regular publisher. I told her I tried, and she then got me a \$5,000 advance and the next thing I knew the book was a national bestseller and I was getting calls from major publishers all over the country and my life transformed.

Then I actually got very deeply involved in mind-body medicine. I knew my colleagues in Boston were a little embarrassed about me because they didn't believe in what I was doing. I then went to California, having in the meantime met Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who was popular in those days as the guru of the Beatles. He was actually misunderstood by the world because he was so popular, but he was a very profound being and he asked me to get involved with consciousness, so that was how it happened. I told him about the molecules of emotion and he said they are not real. So that was when I really understood that mind-body medicine was a good start for the integrative health and wellbeing. As we said, you're not your body, you're not your mind, you're not even of this world but somehow you are creating the experience of the mind, the body and the world.

I was 36 when I started to shift into the world of consciousness and trying to figure out ultimate reality. Before that I was a mind-body integrative doctor and I still am: I keep my license in California and in Massachusetts.

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FUNDAMENTAL REALITY

I spent a lot of time with people that Maharishi introduced me to. There were seers, there were healers, there were philosophers, there were other depths in the perennial wisdom traditions. So I immersed myself into that environment and got very familiar with the terminology they were using. It made intellectual sense but it still didn't make experiential sense, so that is when I really got deeply involved in not only mantra meditation but also in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and various other disciplines: self-inquiry, self-reflection, transcendence, and got into that habit of being a witness to my mental space, my body and what is happening inside my body.

Once you get so deeply experientially involved there is no going back, it is like a new child has been born. It was 10 to 15 years of that.

Being with Maharishi was like being in a monk environment. But then a few years ago I thought to myself that I needed a break from being so much in the public eye. I wanted to experience anonymity. So instead of going to ashram in India I went to the north of the forest in South Korea, at the border of North and South Korea, and I went into a Buddhist monastery and spent some time as a monk. We shaved our heads, shaved our eyebrows, put on robes and went with a begging bowl every morning through the streets of the village near the monastery.

I had a couple of apprentice monks with me and there was of course the senior monk too, and we kept silence throughout the day and had one meal. In these Buddhist countries there is a tradition that if a monk goes by in the street you offer food, that is considered auspicious, so we used to end up returning to the monastery with so much food. There was one meal and then at night they would chant all night and we would listen. It was a good experience of anonymity, and also the freedom that comes with not being beholden to the world.

Anonymity is so important because when you go past your ego identity there is a bigger identity that is so huge it is incomprehensible. It can't even be described, and there is a freedom and a joy that comes from that. I had had glimpses of that through the spirit of intense stillness. Since then I have kept a week of silence every year, and that week of silence usually in September allows me to go back to the taste of timeless being, instead of our ego identity that we keep polishing every day, especially these days with social media, books and promotions.



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ACCESSING YOUR TRUE IDENTITY

The best thing that people can do daily is to still the mind as much as possible and just become a silent witness to that which is happening on the screen of your consciousness. So close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and then I usually start with a little reflection: Who am I? Who or what is it that wants to know the answer to that question? What is my purpose? What do I want for me and the world? What am I grateful for?

That is how I start, then I go into a little bit of breathing and mantra meditation and then I witness what is happening on the screen of my consciousness, just becoming aware. Sooner or later you realise that what is happening on the screen of your consciousness is not who you are. You are the one that is watching that. Then what is happening on that screen of consciousness ultimately leads to deeper insights about mind and body and the physical world. If people just ask these four questions every day before they start their day, even without a prolonged meditation process: Who am I? What do I want? What is my purpose? What am I grateful for? Suddenly the windows to the bigger reality start to open.

LIVE THE QUESTIONS

It is such a simple way to transcend the noise and the clutter. You don't need to know the answers to these questions, because there are no fixed answers and the answers keep changing. All you have to do is live the questions and then life keeps moving into answers that you need at that moment in your life, and it all happens synchronously. These answers are revealed, they are not found, and they are pertinent for that moment in your life.

Live the questions and life will move you to the answers when you need them, because if you got them right now you might not be prepared for them. Just ask the questions and let them go, and the answers will come in the form of insight, intuition, inspiration, creativity, but most importantly they come in the form of meaningful coincidences or what religious people call grace.

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MEDICAL INDUSTRY SHIFTS

We are seeing shifts in the medical industry. When I started, I was like a loner, but now integrated medicine is part of every institution, including academia, and in the last 15 to 20 years our foundation has done a lot of research and made it pretty mainstream. To summarise what has taken us 40 years to learn, only five percent of disease-related gene mutations are fully penetrant.

A genetic mutation is a mistake, an error, in the gene. Genes are stretches of DNA that are code for proteins. There are four DNAs – ATCG – so those are the four letters of life. These spell out words that we call genes and the body is a story spelt out by those genes. When people say first there was a word and the word was made into flesh, in a way that is very literal actually when you start to look at the biological mechanism.

Once in a while there are genetic mistakes, that you might think of like spelling mistakes, so maybe one of the letters is missing, or in the wrong place, or upside down. That genetic mistake is called a mutation. Only five percent of these genetic mutations that are associated with disease – cancer, heart disease, arthritis, strokes, you name it – only five percent actually guarantee the disease, which means if you have one of those mutations you are going to get the disease, like Angelina Jolie had the gene that predicts breast cancer 100 percent, so she had a mastectomy to prevent the cancer, and rightly so.

For those five percent there are new technologies that are being developed right now, allowing you to cut and paste genes the way you would an email, to take the defective gene, read the barcode, take a pair of scissors and delete the defective gene. That is not happening right now but it will happen in the near future.

What people don't understand is that is five percent of illness. The rest, even the genetic mistakes associated with disease, depend on how you live your life. Very simple things like sleep, meditation and stress management, movement, yoga and pranayama make a difference.





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YOGA PRANAYAMA

Yoga and pranayama go way beyond exercise because with them there is a particular nerve in the body called the Vagus nerve, it is the tenth nerve, and the word Vagus is a Latin word related to the English word vagabond. So this word comes from the mid-brain, it influences your facial expressions so you can now do micro expressions; it increases the eye movements; it influences the tone of your voice; it influences your heartrate; and then it pierces the diaphragm and influences the activity of every other branch of the Vagus nerve that goes to all the organs in the body.

When I discovered this through yoga teachers and masters, I realised that the yoga asana, which people usually translate as postures, actually means seat, so seat of awareness or consciousness. Each yoga asana is a seat of awareness that stimulates a particular nerve that is going to an organ in your body and the only reason for that nerve is self-regulation or healing or homeostasis.

When I discovered that I became fanatic about yoga and I haven't missed one day of yoga now for as long as I can remember.

REINVENTING YOUR BODY

When you put together yoga, sleep, movement, stress management, healthy relationships and emotions like love, compassion, joy and equanimity, plus food that doesn't kill your microbiome, that is powerful. You only have 25,000 human genes but you have two million bacterial genes in your body. This is called the microbiome and it is as important as the human genome.

You can change the activity of your microbial genes just by changing your diet. So if you go for maximum diversity on plant-based foods and foods that are not contaminated with antibiotics or hormones or insecticides, you can change your genetic activity and the population of your genes in less than six weeks. That means that you are reinventing your body because your body is spelt out by your genes.

Dotted lines for taking notes.



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..... This got me going strongly into how do we reinvent our bodies by resurrecting our souls and going past our minds. The fact that we are so responsible for our own wellbeing is huge. You can rewrite the genetic structure of your body – you can't change the human genes, because you got them from your parents, but you can change their activity.

..... Here is one of our research processes. We put people through a one-week retreat where they not only learnt mantra meditation but they also practised the yoga sutra, particularly transcending the senses. In one week, literally – and this is published in peer-reviewed journals and can be found on the Chopra Foundation website – we found that all the genes that are responsible for healing and self-regulation went up, some 17-fold over baseline. These are human genes, and the genes that cause disease and inflammation went down drastically.

..... The enzyme in our bodies called telomerase also went up, which influences the length of telomeres, which are like little buttons at the end of your chromosomes. The level of the enzyme went up 40 percent in one week, which means people are reversing their biology at a genetic level.

..... Now how far does this go? We don't know. That was just in one week. There is a technique where you go into a retreat where it is totally dark, where you have no communication with the world, where you transcend, where you eat maximum diversity of plant-based foods, and within six months you come back a younger person biologically and physiologically.

..... There is biological age, which is the exact bio markers, like blood pressure, bone density, body temperature regulation, fat content, cholesterol, hearing skin thickness, wrinkles, hormones etc. Then there is chronological age, which is when you were born and what your birth certificate says. Then there is psychological age, how you feel, and spiritual age, which has no age whatsoever. We have to make these distinctions and see which of these we are talking about.

..... I am not thinking about ageing any more. What we call body, mind and world and ageing and birth and death are actually human constructs, they are not real.





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BODY MIND WORLD

In my book, *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*, I start by prompting two questions. First, when you feel happy do you watch yourself being happy, and when you're angry is some part of you free of anger.

In all the spiritual traditions, not necessarily just the Eastern traditions, they speak of two worlds, the imminent and the transcendent. The imminent is this world that we are in right now, based on causality. The transcendent world is the world of infinite being or consciousness. At all times we are in both these worlds without knowing. But once you become aware, even slightly, that the awareness of a thought is not a thought. If you are able to observe a thought, then you the observer is not the thought. Similarly, the observer of the emotion, with the awareness of the emotion, is not the emotion. Or the perception of a colour.

Right now we are perceiving through our five senses and what we are perceiving is colours, forms, shapes, sounds, sensations in our body, maybe emotions, and thoughts, maybe images. That's the raw materials of experience – that is all there is. The words body, mind and world are human constructs based on the interpretation of these raw sensations, so once you start to become a witness of experience you realise that you are intrinsically free of the experience, unless you identify with it. It is not you, it is an experience you are having.

Once you bind yourself to the experience, which we call the karmic web of existence, then you are in that circle of karma, memory, desire and you are constantly seeking validation, you are afraid of people who criticise you, you are flattered by people who flatter you, you feel beneath some people and superior to others. It is the melodrama of our daily existence.

When you can observe what is happening in the realm of experience and instead of reacting to it, you observe the reaction to react, even for a second, you suddenly realise that your range of options or choices is actually infinite. You don't have to be a bundle of conditions, reflexes and nerves that is constantly being triggered by people and circumstances to predictable outcomes. You are at the mercy of every stranger on the street.

It is very important to know that yes, I am having this experience, but I am intrinsically free of this experience.

PHYSICAL WORLD IS AN ILLUSION

If you asked a regular person on the street, what is this on my wrist, they would say it is a watch. What is this? My hand. What is this? My body.

If you really start to look at this very carefully, before you call anything by its name – watch, hand, body – it is an experience. And the experience is actually not a physical experience. Colour, form and shape are not physical experiences. If I asked you, where in the world is the colour red located, you would say nowhere. There is no physical colour red. What is coming to your eyes is electrophysical vibrations that have no colour.

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What is happening in your eyes is no colour. If I asked you to imagine a beautiful red sunset, you have a picture in your consciousness but there is no picture in your eyes. Actually the sunset if you are imagining it is not in the physical world.

What you don't realise is that when you are looking at a real sunset, all you are experiencing is colour. The rest is a story.

SHIFTING EXPERIENCE IN CONSCIOUSNESS

Colours, shapes, textures, sensations, smells, images, emotions and thoughts have no location in the physical world, and yet out of this raw material we create the idea of a physical world. Your body is part of that world appearance because people say 'where are you?', you say 'I'm here'. But there is no one here, because this is also an experience in consciousness, the mind is also an experience in consciousness. More it is a shifting experience in consciousness; a thought is ungraspable, it's ephemeral, it's evanescent, you can't catch it. You can't catch a perception.

If you look at your body and look at it again, it is a different body because it is recycling so fast at the level of atoms and molecules, information and energy. The fact that we call this a body, it is actually a changing experience of sensations, images, feelings and thoughts that is a modified form of your own self. And it's ungraspable. Same thing with the mind, and with the world. It is a changing experience of shifting qualia. In the spiritual literature now, and the consciousness literature, we use this word qualia, instead of quantum. Quantum is a unit of measurement but qualia is a unit of experience, so if I tell you to think of your wife and you see an image, that is a qualia. Now feel the emotion connected with that image, that is a qualia. Now think of what you want to do with her this evening, like cook dinner or go for a movie, that is a qualia.

So qualia are units of experience and when we string them together we create the construct of mind, body and world. Once we create that construct, then we are stuck with constructs like karma, memory and desire and all the things that make a very fascinating human experience but are not reality.





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We are already in a virtual reality, so today with VR and immersive augmented experiences and dreamscapes, it is becoming clear that the world that you and I are inhabiting right now is a collective human dreamscape and as body-minds we are fictional characters in that dreamscape. It is an illusion we can upgrade or downgrade; we can create heaven out of it or hell, but it is still not fundamental reality. Now with the new technologies this is becoming very clear.

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Once you realise that the world is a construct and that construct has been evolving through mythology, through religion, through economics, through history, society and culture, it is still a construct. And what these great see-ers were able to do was deconstruct it. Once you deconstruct it, what are you left with? Once you deconstruct everything, what you are left with is a formless, infinite, dynamic field of infinite possibilities, infinite creativity, infinite love, and the source of intention. That is what yoga originally was and should be. Yoga means union, union with the self, which is also the self of the universe.

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This is where I got totally seduced. That human suffering comes from not knowing true reality, from confusing perceptive reality with fundamental reality, grasping and clinging to that which you cannot grasp or cling, the fear of impermanence, the construct of the ego and the fear of death. These are all the same thing. Not knowing what is real and what is a projection. And even the projection can be changed.

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THE ILLUSION OF REALITY

We go to the movies but actually what we call everyday reality is a more interesting movie than most movies. We don't have the imagination to capture everything in what we call everyday reality. So, we are in it, we might as well enjoy it and upgrade it. That is what the expression is, 'To be in this world and not of this world'. We are spiritual beings having a human experience – timeless but in time.

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Once you understand that and also get into the habit of self-reflection and self-improvement, observing perceptual experiences without necessarily judging them. So I am right now having the experience of colours and tastes and smells and sounds, I don't necessarily have to qualify this experience. And transcendence, where you go to that place where there is no mantra and no thought and just deep stillness. Then this shift starts to occur where you are not identifying with your body, mind or experiences of the world, and yet you are enjoying them or not enjoying them. Now you want to do something to shift.

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Since you are in the world, about 25 years ago I wrote a book about how to make that practical. I don't know how, but I came up with idea of the seven spiritual laws of success – the law of pure potentiality, the law of giving and receiving, karma, intention and desire, least effort, detachment and dharma. Those seven principles give an idea of what success is: the progressive realisation of worthy goals, the ability to love, have compassion, but most importantly to identify with your creative centre instead of the projection that is coming from that centre.

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Most of the time our experience is coming from identifying with a projection that has been created by the condition in our ego mind. The ego mind is not going to disappear as long as you are in this body, or actually you are not in the body, the body is in you. It is not going to disappear, but if you keep it in the background and are aware of it, and you ask yourself what you are motivated by, then have these little tricks in your mind – pursue excellence, ignore success – then everything happens: synchronicity, meaningful coincidences, a state of grace, effortless being, spontaneous improvement and desire. These are little things over the years that have become little catchphrases to remind myself of reality.

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I must live a life that is based on love at the highest level. The vedanta saying is that love should radiate from you like light from a bonfire, not focused on anyone and not denied to anyone, just the light of the sun. But it takes time.

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Awareness is never as free and creative as when it is not tethered to an experience, whether the experience is that which we call the body, that which we call the world, or that which we call the mind. When awareness is untethered, which we call pure awareness, it is infinite... formless but infinite. The formless is the real you and it is infinite. The form is a phenomenon and as the phenomenon it is you as that phenomenon. So when you see yourself in an object, you call that beauty. When you see yourself in another person, we call that love, because ultimately there is only the self as both the subject and the object of experience.





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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

THE SCIENCE OF CONSCIOUSNESS –
HOW WE CREATE THE HUMAN UNIVERSE
DEEPAK CHOPRA



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ENLIGHTENMENT

In the West, when the word enlightenment is used it refers many times to the European enlightenment, which was a great period in European history going back almost 300 years. That saw the emergence of Newtonian science, great philosophers, great artists that led to the age of industry and science as we understand it today, and the Renaissance movement in art, architecture and so on. That ultimately led to what we have today in terms of technology, science and industry.

That is not what we are going to cover here. Here, we are going to talk about enlightenment as it is understood in the Eastern wisdom traditions. The closest that anyone came to that understanding of enlightenment was the people that delved into those Eastern wisdom traditions. There is a tradition of understanding of Eastern traditions through the eyes of Western thinkers.

The Eastern wisdom traditions that talk about enlightenment go back thousands of years to the great Rishis of India – rishi means one who sees. There is a difference between seeing and perception: perception is the experience we are all having, whereas the see-er goes beyond the individual experience of perception to understand fundamental reality. And not only to understand fundamental reality but to experience it.

That process has many names: self-realisation, enlightenment, understanding the universe as complementarity to the fundamental consciousness in which the universe is experienced. It is also called, in Sanskrit, moksha, which means freedom from human incarnation, freedom from all conditioning. Because our mind is conditioned and that comes from our parents, frequently from religion, from culture, from history and economics. In many ways, every thought that you have is centuries of conditioning. In other words, your thoughts don't actually belong to you and they are just recycled through you, unless it is an amazingly creative thought.





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TRUE CREATIVITY

True creativity is a breakthrough, which means something emerges that never existed before. Creativity of course is an expression of our consciousness, so in many ways you could say that enlightenment involves some fundamental creativity. It breaks all kind of conditioning. That is a tough call, because every thought that you have is a conditioned mind. There is no original thought that you and I have. Creativity is breakthroughs in science, in art, in understanding of the universe, and breakthroughs in politics and relationships.

Therefore, to create something means using the same information that you had before but what emerges is something that never existed before. The closest to understanding is the breaking of karma. You have heard this word karma, which is so popular now as part of our lexicon. Karma is the conditioned mind, the fragmented mind. Karma is past experience that we have had through the choices we have made, but not all choices have been made consciously. Lots of choices we make unconsciously as a result of our conditioned mind, which is our thought. The thought is a result of thousands of years of human conditioning: culture, religion, history, economics, geographical location etc.

Every thought is that, which is why many times people talk about what is beyond the conditioned mind as where the truth is. So in ordinary terms you use the same information you had before, you break out of the karmic conditioning and you explore creativity until you understand yourself as the source of infinite creativity. Yourself and not your conditioned mind, which we can also call the ego mind.

That is enlightenment – to break out of all conditioning and understand yourself as the source of all experience but also who you are beyond experience. The word for that is pure consciousness. Enlightenment is that journey that we take.

NEUROSCIENCE

Neuroscience is part of the other sciences: biology, cognitive science, mathematics, physics and matter. Neuroscience is linked to the biological sciences but also to physics and quantum mechanics.

Science by itself is a system of thought that humans have created. There is a methodology to science: observation, experimentation, validation, thoughts about viability etc. The loop is always theory, experiment, observation and validation, then viability. If we stick to those principles we can say we are doing science.

We should also recognise that science is a system of thought using particular methodology. So science attempts to model reality – it doesn't give you the experience of reality or access to the whole of reality. We have to understand that science is a system of thought in consciousness. Which came first, science or consciousness. It is obvious that consciousness is needed in order to do science. To say the science of consciousness, in a sense, is actually in a way to mystify something and make it even more complicated.

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Science is a system of thought. Reality is that which gives rise to thought, because without thought there would be no system of thought. The reality is that science cannot give you access to reality. Only consciousness can understand consciousness, only consciousness can experience consciousness, and ultimately only consciousness can explain consciousness, because only awareness can be aware.

No science can ultimately explain consciousness, only consciousness can explain science and the methodologies of science. This is true of theology, which is another discipline. There have been great theologians throughout the centuries and they have created models of reality, but they have a different methodology that they called philosophy. In fact, if you look at the root of the word philosophy, philo means love, and so it is actually love for knowledge. Science used to be called natural philosophy before we started calling it science.

Again, theology is a system of thought, with different methodology: introspection, understanding, theories about reality and so on. What about religion? Traditionally that is also a system of thought, of course based on an experience that whoever founded the religion had. When you look at those common experiences of religion, they include transcendence, which means going beyond subject object split. The subject object split means you are the subject and I am the object, but in fundamental reality there is no subject or object, it is all one activity. You are an activity of the universe looking at itself through a human nervous system. So the subject object split is artificial, and all of our science is based on the subject object split. Observer and observed.

And yet science works, we all use computers, fly in jet planes, because of science. All our technology today – both divine and diabolical – is because of the modelling we create through science.

Religion is also for the most part a system of thought, based on experience and the experience was transcendence. The other religious experience is the emergence from that of what in the West are usually referred to as platonic values. Platonic after Plato – truth, goodness, harmony, a deeper understanding of inseparability – and then the moral values that emerge out of that, such as love, compassion, empathy, joy and peace of mind. That is the second component of the religious experience.

The third component of the religious experience is loss of the fear of death, because the transcendent, which is beyond space and time, is not subject to birth or death. Birth and death happen to an experience but not to the consciousness in which that experience happens, because the consciousness is timeless. Only the experience is in time.

Those three are the fundamental components of a religious experience. But founders of religion found it hard to explain their experience to people that had not had the experience so the religious experience gets replaced by religious ideology – rules, regulations, imposed morality and so on – which then becomes another system of thought.



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So when we talk about neuroscience, it is a system of thought. It is a model, like a map, and maps are useful. They can help a pilot take you from Tokyo to New York, but Tokyo and New York, the plane and the numbers are human constructs.

So neuroscience cannot explain consciousness, and nor can mathematics, physics, biology, because these are all created in human consciousness. But they are very useful maps and without these constructs we would not have what we call human civilisation.

Civilisation is a very complex word: we have created computers and planes but we have also created atom bombs and hacking and foods that we ingest that are poisonous and unrelated to the natural world. Would another species looking at us think of us as civilised – the only species that kills its own kind in the name of God? The only species that is causing the extinction of all other species? The only species that is risking our own extinction, that has created an infinite junkyard in our own solar system. So it is a complicated thing, civilisation.

To be clear, neuroscience cannot make us enlightened, but it can give us a good map.

HOW WE CREATE THE HUMAN UNIVERSE

My grandson once asked me about dark energy, when he was five years old. He said he knew it flows through the night sky and comprises 70 percent of the universe. He asked me how the ocean and the earth got made: I told him a giant star exploded and that was the solar system. I said the Earth is thought to have been formed 4.6 billion years ago by collisions in the giant disc-shaped cloud of material that also formed the sun. We are a planet amongst many and the ocean is part of the elements on this planet.

Then I asked him how many planets there are in the solar system, and he said if you count Pluto there are nine. He said the solar system came from the galaxy, the galaxy from the universe, and the universe from another dimension. I asked him how he knew all this – he said it was on his Pokemon!

But those are interesting questions that we shall address.

This is a short history of how human beings have thought about the universe: the divine universe, the classic universe, the relativistic universe, the quantum universe and the human universe.

Now, we have gone beyond that to ‘you are the universe’, ‘the universe is a human construct’, ‘there is no universe’. We experience something called the universe and it is our creation. And then finally enlightenment, where we understand that the self of the individual is the self of that which we call the universe.

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So the first beginning of human beings thinking about reality was the divine universe, where God created the universe and is the source and origin of life and mind. But God is usually thought of, not always, in anthropocentric terms depending on the era of when the origin was founded. Usually these are patriarchal eras so God is male, old and wise and he is the source and origin of life and mind.

Then the European enlightenment with Sir Isaac Newton – who was a biblical scholar – and others led to the classic universe, created and ruled by fixed laws of nature knowable through human reason and logic. He came up with the beginnings of science, but never mind what is the source of human reason and logic, which none of these guys addressed.

Descartes is credited with the philosophy of dualism, so mind and spirit is one domain and matter is the other domain, and the two somehow interact but we don't know how. This was the beginning of dualism and the famous expression: 'I think, therefore I am.' It turns out that is misleading, because 'I am, therefore I think,' should be the right sequence. How can you think before you are?

Still, this created great waves including the animosities between the church and people like Copernicus and Galileo, but part of that was political. The scientists could take care of the physical world and the Catholic priests could take care of the physical world, and therefore there was some peace. Although you know Galileo was only forgiven recently, so the animosity persisted but there was a kind of peace between the guardians of religion and those that took care of the material understanding of the world through science.

The classic universe described the laws of motion, universal gravitation, Kepler's laws of planetary motion, then Newton explained Kepler's laws of planetary motion, the motion of objects on Earth and of celestial bodies, and the laws of thermodynamics. The industrial revolution was just based on these laws, and everything we know. You can send men to the moon based on these laws.





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Then we had a new version explaining reality which we called the relativistic universe. There are records of when Albert Einstein met with the great Indian poet and sage Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore came from a very illustrious Bengali family and his father was also a great philosopher, but Tagore became the most famous of them because he published a collection of poems called Gitanjali, for which he received the Nobel prize. Tagore did a European tour and was invited by Einstein to meet in a small place outside Berlin, and the meeting was very interesting. Einstein was also a great philosopher but he was wedded to what in Western philosophy is called realism.

Today, what we call realism is also called naïve realism, which you can look up. It says that the world is as we experience it right now, this is the real world. That of course leads to all kinds of conundrums, including the hard problem of consciousness. Einstein was a naïve realist while Tagore was what we could call an idealist. It was a very turbulent time in 1930, war was about to break out, Nazi Germany was emerging, and these guys were talking about ultimate reality.

There was a very interesting and polite argument between the two, and it is about this: Is the world that we experience real or is there something more fundamental? Of course you can see that Tagore was hinting at consciousness because he said the world you experience is a human world. But Einstein said no, there is a human understanding of the world but then there is a scientific view. Tagore responded by saying the scientific view is the view of the scientific human being, to which Einstein had no answer. He said his religion was science. He had faith in the scientific method to give us a true understanding of reality.

You can find that conversation on the internet, and it ends in very polite disagreement.

Einstein came forward with two theories. In 1905 there was his Special Theory of Relativity, $E=mc^2$. Mass and energy are equivalent and the speed of light is a constant for all frames of reference. Then in 1915 he came up with the General Theory of Relativity, which basically replaced Newton's theories of gravity. He gave a description of gravity as a geometric property of space time, which means gravity is the curvature of space time.

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GRAVITATIONAL TIME DELAY

It is hard to imagine that, but if you go on the internet there are many visuals of a big mass in a net, where the net is space time and in the middle of the net is resting a big mass which is Earth. So that is a distortion of space time, and with that came the understanding much later of black holes, the gravitational red shift of light and gravitational time delay. So when you are at the event horizon of a black hole, time starts to slow down for an observer outside the black hole, and time stops at the black hole. The distance between the black hole and the event horizon is about 12km and this is where time starts to slow down enormously and then stop.

A few years ago I was invited by Leonard Mlodinow to a birthday celebration in New York for Stephen Hawking, who was there. In honour of his birthday they had a performance of ballet with a symphony orchestra, about people on planet Earth on a giant spaceship as big as a city. They are going to a distant galaxy that is many light years away and there are thousands of people on this spaceship. By the time they get to that galaxy, many thousands of generations will have passed. They live on this spaceship going through intergalactic space.

There was a boy on the spaceship who was about 12 years old, his name is Icarus, after the Greek Icarus. This is the modern story of Icarus, where his dad says we are going to be skirting some black holes as we go through these galaxies and you must not go near one. The ship is a giant ship with little shuttle ships on it that can take off, but he says you mustn't mess with the black holes, I don't want to lose you.

Icarus is 12 years old and floating through interstellar space and he goes to his computer and he sees there is a black hole in the neighbourhood. Of course he decides not to follow his father's instructions, he gets to the dark, he gets into a little space shuttle and he messes with the computers, leaves the ship and heads in the direction of the black hole. He gets to the event horizon, where time starts to slow down and the black hole has no time, according to this theory.

So he is skirting the black hole and he is very skilful, he wobbles on the event horizon. Think of a circle and then a funnel and the funnel of the circle is close to where the black hole is. The black hole is a point of infinite density and zero volume, and therefore no space time. The event horizon is about 12km around the black hole, which is the rim of the funnel.

Icarus is very skilful, he navigates around the rim of the black hole and he wobbles – he might go in, he might fall out, but he skirts around it twice and then he pulls himself out of the gravitational field by manipulating the computers and he is exhilarated. He radios his dad and says he explored the black hole and he came out. There is no answer. Remember this is all a ballet, with music and symphony.



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He keeps trying to find his dad and there is no answer. He starts to cry, and his little spaceship drifts off into interstellar space and is lost. The next day he opens his eyes and he sees a galaxy with lots of stars and lots of planets. So again he uses his computer and lands on a planet. There are people there and they look at this boy and welcome him. Then they ask where he got the ship from, he says it is his father's spaceship, and they say that model went out about 10 million years ago.

So what happened in the few seconds around the black hole. That was 10 million years, and that was the future, future, future generations of the people left by Icarus's dad.

This is a great story because it actually explains what people have discovered, and Einstein's theory holds true.

I am reminded of a story I made up to explain this to my kids. I said an American teenager ends up at the edge of the black hole, just like Icarus did. He looks into it and stares at the black hole: infinite density, zero volume, and he shouts 'Are you God? Are you Brahman?'. A voice echoes back and says 'Yes, I am'. The teenager says that he has heard that on the other side of the event horizon, even a penny is worth a billion dollars. Brahman says that's true, so the teenager asks for a penny. Brahman says sure, wait a second.

It is the same story of Icarus – what is even less than a fraction of a second on this side could be eternity on the other side.

The relativistic universe is much more dynamic: space, time and matter are interdependent and nobody argues about that. Around the same time as Albert Einstein there were other luminaries, including some of the greatest of all time, and together they formulated quantum mechanics. This was a joint effort and Einstein was a reluctant participant in the quantum revolution, but nevertheless a great contributor.

Quantum mechanics basically deals with the behaviour of electrons, photons and other elementary particles. It describes fundamental processes that are ambiguous in that there is both wave and particle duality, so before measurement you have a wave of probabilities and after measurement you have a particle. The two are totally different: a particle is a thing, with units of mass and energy, and a wave is just the probability of finding something at the moment of measurement.

This gave rise to other understandings, the movement of atoms is random, the uncertainty principle which means you cannot know the momentum or position of a particle with equal certainty. There is something called super position, which means that before measurement there are super position of possibilities. If you measure a particle in one location in space time you instantly determine the behaviour of another correlated particle in a different location in space time. There is no communication between the two particles, it is just that their states are correlated.

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SPOOKY ACTION AT A DISTANCE

This is what Einstein calls spooky action at a distance. There is no spooky action at a distance, it is just that the determination of a quantum state in one location in space time instantly correlates or determines the state of that system without any communication. That is very puzzling but it gave rise to this whole idea of non-locality that we will talk about.

Here, wave function provides information about the probability amplitude of the position, momentum and other physical properties of a particle upon measurement, but all possibilities exist before measurement. Quantum mechanics is the basis of everything we do today and 70 percent of our economy is based on the calculations of quantum mechanics, including your computers, transistors, new ideas about quantum computing etc. Quantum mechanics works even though it maintains that the universe is random and the movement of atoms is random; it can still predict probabilities with such uncanny precision that we rely on it for all our technologies.

What does that mean? What are the interpretations of quantum mechanics? And what do we mean by interpretations? Interpretations are sets of statements which attempt to explain quantum mechanics beyond the recipes it gives for performing calculations. So yes, the calculations work, but what does this tell us about reality?

There are more than 20 interpretations of quantum mechanics and everyday new ones are investigated, which should tell you that nobody knows what is going on!

Until recently the most popular interpretation was the Copenhagen Interpretation, which says that the wave function collapses when a measurement is performed. So of course a measurement has to be made by some observer, which brings the role of the observer into the equation. They may be observing instruments, but still observing instruments is an extension of the observer.



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So, that is the number one theory right now. We hit the lottery, we hit the jackpot. There are infinite number of universes and if they have living beings or species they are not like us, but we cannot say anything about them except they are mathematically possible. If we read this book, The Mathematical Universe by Max Tegmark, he says if it is there mathematically then it is there. And there may be validity to that but there is no way for us to understand that.

So here we are. We are at a point where the fabric of nature has basically reached a dead end. Dark matter, which is invisible, and the hypothetical particles that make dark matter are called WIMP – weakly interacting massive particle. That's a hypothetical particle that creates dark matter but we call it dark matter because we cannot see it, and the reason we cannot see it is because it doesn't interact with light. It doesn't reflect light, emit light or absorb light – it has nothing to do with light. The dark matter is also supposedly not made up of atoms at all, so we cannot interact with it because we are made up of atoms and our interactions are too light.

Why call it matter then? The reason we call it matter is because it pulls the galaxy together – it is the scaffolding of the entire galaxy. We live in the Milky Way galaxy and next door is Andromeda and then Virgo, and on and on. At the moment, scientists compute that there are two trillion galaxies, which is mind boggling. They also compute that there are seven hundred sextillion stars, and there are trillions and trillions and trillions of planets.

Therefore, the likelihood is of billions and billions of habitable planets. Just recently, there was a system similar to a solar system discovered next door, with possible habitable planets.

This is also part of the yoga Vasistha, which has a phrase in it, infinite universes come and go in the vast expanse of consciousness. In the vast expanse of consciousness they are like moats of dust dancing in a beam of light, which is a beautiful metaphor.





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DARK MATTER

Dark matter holds galaxies together and it is invisible, it is not atomic, and it is almost 26 percent of the universe. What about dark energy? Dark energy is the new word physicists and mathematicians now give to what Einstein called the cosmological constant, which is the same as dark energy, which means there is energy permeating the universe which is anti-gravity, which is causing the universe to expand. This is based on the idea that the universe is expanding, and what is expanding is the space between galaxies.

So space is being ripped apart. As the cosmological constant is a constant, as the space between galaxies expands, the speed of expansion accelerates. So right now we are where we are, the cosmic horizon is 47 billion light years away from where we are, and galaxies are moving across that right now faster than the speed of light. So in a few billion years the sky will be dark, you will not be able to see stars and anything else because they will have moved across the cosmic horizon and light comes from the cosmic horizon to where we are. Our solar system will have exhausted its thermonuclear energy and burnt itself up to the heat death of absolute zero. That is 70 percent of the universe. What is it? No one knows, it's a mathematical construct. Based on what? The fact that the universe is expanding and the space between galaxies is expanding.

That leaves only 4 percent of the universe that is atomic. Of that, 99.9 percent is invisible interstellar dust, so we cannot see that either. The visible universe, which is supposedly two trillion galaxies, is 0.01 percent. The rest is either unknown or unknowable.

Here is the problem with the 0.01 percent, with all its trillions of planets and galaxies, which is made up of atoms. Remember according to quantum physics that atoms are also made up of waves of possibility, prior to measurement. These waves are in Hilbert space, which is a mathematical space that is multidimensional and infinite. Some will say it is zero dimensional infinite space, which means the same. Where is it? The best answer is shut up and calculate it. It has no location, it is a mathematical construct which houses the wave function, which then shows up as this universe.

You realise that we are now entering the era of scientific mythology. It's a great story, and the map works, but it's a story. So 0.01 percent of the universe is visible in the form of stars and galaxies and therefore many scientists have come up with the idea of a conscious universe, where random events may not be enough to explain the exquisite fine tuning of the laws of nature: the rise of life on earth.

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FREEMAN DYSON

I wrote to Freeman Dyson, the great theoretical physicist and mathematician, and he told me there were three riddles that occupied him his entire life. The first riddle is a universe that is fine-tuned for life and mind; if the mathematics was off by a fraction of a decimal, you and I would not be having this conversation. So mathematically the universe is fine-tuned for life and mind.

Number two, the unpredictable movement of atoms – notice he didn't use the word random. There is a distinction between inherently random and unpredictable, which means I cannot predict. Quantum physics is based on probabilities, so you can predict the probabilities but you cannot predict what will actually happen in the movement of this atom. It is like going to Grand Central Station and looking at the crowd there and it looks so chaotic and random, but actually everyone is going somewhere and if I went every day I could plot a distribution curve. So many people go to Philadelphia, so many to Chicago, so many to Detroit. A good businessman would plan the future of the Amtrak based on those statistical probabilities, which are unpredictable as far as the individual is concerned but probabilistic given a distribution.

So Freeman Dyson said number one, a universe fine-tuned for mind and life; number two, the unpredictable movement of atoms; and number three, our own consciousness. These are three riddles he struggled with all his life, and he did not have the answer to all three but he thought they were connected.

I have preserved his email for future generations, because it is a very accurate description of where we are right now, in the uncertain universe.





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THE HUMAN UNIVERSE

The human universe is where I am going next, beyond the conscious universe. The conscious universe is panpsychism, which is summarised by Tegmark as saying that consciousness is organised matter. Why isn't matter organised consciousness? Panpsychism is still a physicalist theory because it presumes the existence of matter first, and says wherever there is matter there is consciousness. It is what Freeman Dyson called atoms are conscious, when he made the statement that every quantum experiment forces the atom to make a choice.

I will tell you why that may not be right. What I am going to propose is that what we call the universe is actually consciousness. The universe is an experience in consciousness. And I'm going to go further to say it is a human construct based on modes of knowing and experience in consciousness. So it is what consciousness looks like when consciousness experiences itself.

So how do we know we are having experiences? Because we are conscious. How do we define consciousness? There are many definitions so I will give you two. One comes from Rupert Spira who is a teacher of nonduality. He says consciousness is that in which experience occurs. You are having an experience right now, and it is a perceptual experience, and it is happening in your consciousness. Also you are having thoughts, so that is a mental experience. So Spira says consciousness is that in which all experience occurs, in which all experience is known, and out of which all experience is made.

We know that consciousness is where we experience this, we also know we are having this experience, but the third part of the definition – it is that out of which all experience is made. Is this room made out of consciousness? Is the plane I took from New York to San Diego made out of consciousness? Is the stars and the galaxies made out of consciousness? This is what the nondualist thinkers said. There is only consciousness. Consciousness is that in which experience occurs, is known, and out of which it is made.

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A baby doesn't even know that it has a body or it has a mind. What does it know? Experience. There is the knowing of experience, the wonderment and the curiosity and the joy coming from a mind not yet conditioned. So we can say comfortably as grown-ups that there is experience, there is the knowing of experience and there is the joy. What is the experience? Colours, shapes, sounds, textures, tastes, smell and then something that is probably mental, curiosity, wonder, joy. There are no constructs at the moment. There is no name given to the perceived form which we see later is an illusion, a phenomenon happening in consciousness. There is only consciousness experiencing itself as colours, tastes, sensations, images, feelings, and not yet articulated thoughts. Those thoughts are interpretations of experience.

All there is is consciousness experiencing itself as this. The rest is construct. It is the human interpretation of experience, the human interpretation of perceptual and mental experience. Then the baby is told you are a boy, you are Indian, that is a toy, this is your body, that is the world.

The universe that you and I know, understand and experience is a human construct. At the moment, a scientific human construct. That universe is unavailable to a lion or a bat or dolphin or an insect – ours is a human universe interpreted today as the scientific universe. But if we can name something and give something a description, it is a human construct based on modes of knowing and experience in human consciousness. That includes everything that we can name, everything we can name is something we created based on modes of knowing and experience in human consciousness.

Therefore, I have a body is a human construct. I have a mind is a human construct. The universe is a human construct. All experiences are modifications of core consciousness or pure awareness.

THE HARD PROBLEM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Across the realm of consciousness studies, we have something called the hard problem of consciousness, which means that through a physicalist ontology we cannot explain experience. Ontology is that branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of being, or what we call existence. Then there is another branch of philosophy, which is called epistemology, that deals with the nature of knowing. How do we know what we know. And it also deals with the limits of knowing. What is the nature of being or existence and how do we know what we know and what are the limits of knowing.

The hard problem arises because of a physicalist ontology, which means that branch of philosophy and science that says that the essential nature of the physical world is physical, it is matter. If you assume that the essential nature of the physical world is matter, then there is a very difficult problem called the hard problem and that is how does matter become conscious, how does the brain explain conscious experience, or even experience that maybe subconscious or mental.

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the eyes, the experience of seeing the book is not happening in your eyes.

So at this point, people will say the experience is happening in the brain. So let's see what's happening in the brain. First of all, your brain is 7cm by 10cm by 14cm. If the experience of seeing the book is happening in the brain, then how does it fit inside your brain? How does your room fit inside your brain? If you look outside and see the Milky Way galaxy, how does that fit inside your brain? You go to see the ocean, how does that experience happen in the brain?

Definitely something is happening in the brain, but what? Electrochemical activity and electrochemical activity that we call neural correlates of consciousness. And the hard problem is how does that create this experience. No one can explain that. Furthermore, if I look inside your brain there is no picture of the book there, there is no picture of the room. There is a neural correlate in the form of electrochemical activity, which changes by the way every time you have a different experience. You can close your eyes and imagine the experience that you are actually having, but as a mental experience. You can imagine a beautiful sunset, or a beautiful red rose, or the look on the face of your mother when she smiled at you. That's an experience.

What is happening in the brain is the same thing – electrochemistry.

So is the essence of the hard problem when it comes to seeing. We cannot explain seeing and yet that is what we are experiencing.

The same applies to hearing. When someone speaks, what is coming to your ears is the vibration of air molecules. They are causing what we call a vibration of your eardrums and if you go inside the ear there are these little things called cochlear that have little hair follicles that vibrate as a result of the vibration of those membranes and little bones inside the ear. The vibration of these little hairs internal to the ear starts an electrical current that goes to the brain and the brain experiences the same electrochemical activity. What you are experiencing though is a voice, not electrochemistry. You are not experiencing an electrical current. But whatever is happening in your brain, hearing is not happening with the brain.

The same thing with tasting or smelling. The experience of tasting, smelling, hearing, texture – everything that you call experience based on a physical ontology is an electrical current going to your brain. The common denominator is electrical current, and electrochemistry in the brain. But what you are experiencing is experience, perception. We cannot explain what we call the physical world. The experience is the experience of your own body. How do you experience your body? Seeing, touching, smelling, tasting, hearing. How do you know you have a physical body? The experience of what you call a physical body is the same as the experience of the chair you are sitting on, because the human body is a perceptual experience.

So the hard problem is a very hard problem – it is almost unsolvable. Many scientists say humans have not evolved enough to explain the nature of physical reality. What if there is no physical reality? What if that is another construct for what we call a perceptual experience?



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MENTAL EXPERIENCE

What about mental experience – thoughts, feelings, emotions, imagination, instinct, intuition, creativity, vision, choice making. If you try to explain free will through a physicalist ontology you can't because the laws of nature are fixed and everything is mathematically construed so you have no choice. Free will is a delusion. The fact that you say you have no choice is also because you have no choice. It is very troubling.

How do we experience anything, if we can't explain our experience of what we call the physical world and we can't explain the experience of what we call the mental world. If we assume that the world is physical, then we can't explain it. Already our current science, which is based on the physicalist interpretation of the world, is in a place where matter is becoming a mystery. Matter is made of molecules, molecules are atoms, atoms are quarks and subatomic particles, they are probability waves and ultimately matter is nothing.

The nature of matter is mysterious right now. We are still trying to figure out the mystery of matter and whether the world is fundamentally material. But as soon as you make that statement about matter, you are already assuming that there is something called matter.

Let's say instead of saying matter, we replace that with experience. We replace the word. So instead of saying this is a microphone, which is a human construct, we say this is a perceptual experience. How do you know that this is what I am experiencing? So this is a perception process. And now we have a solution. The perceptual process is a modification of consciousness. Consciousness modifies itself as the perceptual process in this case, which we call seeing. Where is seeing happening? In the see-er. What is the see-er? The consciousness in which the seeing is an activity of the see-er. And what is the seeing, everything, all in consciousness.



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..... We can say what about my eyes – if I get a cataract and my eyes are damaged, I cannot see. That is true. So are we saying eyes are not part of seeing? Eyes are the perceptual process of seeing. Seeing itself is a mental activity. I can choose to see this or that or that or this. Consciousness is that which is giving rise to both the mental activity that we call seeing and the perceptual activity that we call brain chemistry and this body.

..... This doesn't eliminate this idea that the brain, body and physical world are a complementary activity to the seeing, which is a mental activity. These are complementarities that we, for lack of a better word, call consciousness, so this experience is happening in consciousness. The seeing and the see-er are happening in consciousness. I cannot be found in the body, the seeing cannot be found in the body, and the experience of the body cannot be found in the brain. Why? Because both mind and matter are complementary activities of consciousness. They are modifications of consciousness. Consciousness modifies as the individual see-er, the individual seeing, and the individual scenery.

..... The scenery is very different to a bat, or an insect with 100 eyes, or a dolphin, or a different species. There are different species of consciousness. We are a species of consciousness that is having this experience where there is an individual see-er, and individual mode of seeing and an individual experience of scenery all happening within the same consciousness.

..... How come we all see the same microphone? Because you were all told as babies that it was a microphone. We told the baby that is your body. That is a word. A very distinguished linguist called Noam Chomsky says that no one knows the origins of language, just like no one knows the origins of life from a physicalist point of view. We have rough estimates, written language from 5,000 or 6,000 years ago; oral language from 20,000 or 30,000 years ago. But how did it become suddenly in the human experience. We don't know. There are theories but nobody knows. How does a baby pick up six languages just by hearing them? We don't know.

..... We don't know how that happens other than consciousness modifies itself into that experience. Actually, anthropologists and historians will tell you that what distinguishes the human being from every other species is that we learned how to tell stories. Up until 30,000 years ago there were about eight different types of human species. A species is part of a family – so cats, tigers, cheetahs, lions, they are different species but the same family. Wolves, dogs, foxes, they are different species but the same family. We were a type of what we call the human family, which is a word also created by humans. We call ourselves homo sapiens, which arrogantly means the wise ones.

..... But then we gave names to other species of the human family: homo erectus, homo neanderthal, and so on, there were eight different types. They were as different as a lion and a cheetah and a house cat. These different humans had different kinds of appearance, and they all had a rudimentary language, that was basically mating and danger calls.



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Then one species, us, developed a language – we are told by historians – first for gossip, and soon that language evolved into stories. Stories are constructs around experiences, so then we created money, nation states, races, the idea of gender, nationality, all of these are human constructs. These things led to empires, kingdoms, colonialism, because we had the ability to translate raw experiences of sensations, images, feelings, thoughts.

We created language, stories, empire and we had pack leaders. But the pack leaders could never get more than 100 people to follow him, and it was usually him as the hunter gatherer. The moment humans started telling stories they could get millions of followers, because they told the best stories. And then all the constructs that we call the human world came along, and that was so powerful for the homo sapiens that they decimated all the other human species. We dominated because we created constructs and we created stories around raw experience.

Raw experience was seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling, feeling and thought, with thought being the interpretation that ultimately led to stories and everything else that we now call everyday reality. This is our evolution, and the brain itself is a human construct for a perceptual experience. When we say the perceptual experience is seeing, it is what seeing looks like to an outside observer. What hearing looks like from the outside is the ears and the ear canal etc. These are names we have given to perceptual processes.

Brain is a human construct, body is a human construct, that which we call the universe is a human construct. These are names given to modes of knowing and experience in consciousness, and furthermore in human consciousness. In many ways this is a good metaphor for the fall from grace, the whole idea of good and evil comes from separation. We separated ourselves as the observer. When the observer is an activity of that which we call the observed, they are the same activity. The activity is in consciousness.

The next question is where is this consciousness where we are having this experience. We are having this experience that I call 'I'. When I say 'I', it is where the experience is happening. But where is it, I can't find it in the brain or in the body or in the universe, because all of those are an experience in consciousness. So the I cannot be found. The body, mind and universe are constructs for experience. So if it can't be found, maybe the reason is that it has no form, and if it has no form then it must not be in space time. Then it must be non-local; we now have a word for it. Non-local simply means no location, so no location in space or in time.

Formlessness, timelessness is also not in space. In fact, space itself is an experience. Right now you are having an experience with me and this emptiness between you and me we call space. There was a quote from Einstein: "Many people think that if all the objects were removed from the universe, all that would be left is space." He says that is not true, even space would disappear, because space is an experience when there are objects. When there are no objects, then there is no experience that we can call space. And if there is no space and no objects, then there is no experience that we can call time. We measure space as time and time as distance in space.

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FUNDAMENTAL REALITY

So what is fundamental reality? Spaceless, timeless, formless. Where is it? Wrong question. It has no location in space and does not exist in time. What is it? Maybe it is 'I', maybe it is consciousness.

Krishna says that which cannot be seen but without which there is no seeing. That which cannot be heard, but without which there is no hearing. That which cannot be touched but without which there is no experience of texture. That which cannot be tasted or smelled, but without which there is no taste or smell. That which cannot be imagined, but without which there is no imagination. Try imagining something that has no form. That which cannot be thought of, but without which there is no thinking. That which cannot be conceptualised but without which there is no conceptualisation. That is who you are.

A formless being having an experience in space time and causality which we call form. That is who you are. You are that, I am that, all this is that, that alone is. The formless that true self interaction becomes all knowers, all modes of knowing and all things known, all within itself. Almost an infinity of knowers. Every species has an 'I', which is why it goes towards pleasure and away from pain. Those are species of consciousness, there are innumerable knowers, innumerable modes of knowing and innumerable objects known. See-er, seeing and scenery all within itself.

In the Bhagavad Gita Hindu scripture, when they do a cremation of a human body, they recite some verses: water cannot wet it, wind cannot dry it, weapons cannot shatter it, fire cannot burn it, unborn, not subject to birth or death. You are that.

You can also call it the imperishable, because you can't destroy that which has no form. Furthermore, when you look at the form you see it is a phenomenon. This body is a form in appearance but it is actually a phenomenon because this body didn't look like this 10 years ago, or as a baby, or as a teenager. Those were experiences, and experiences are constantly arising and subsiding, as sensations, images, feelings, thoughts, perceptions. Therefore, birth and death is an experience now.



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MEASURING SPACE AND TIME

Fundamental reality is formless, which means non-local, not in space time. Experience of that fundamental reality is in time, space time, and causality. At the most fundamental level of existence there is no space time and therefore there is no causality. It is all correlated – there is a dimension of inseparability that is timeless, spaceless and without cause.

If you assume dualism there are a lot of problems. If I tell you to raise your hand, you cannot explain it. It starts with a thought – a thought has no units of mass and energy, you can't see it, and suddenly there is all this electrochemical activity and this activity happens. You can't explain any intention if you assume a physicalist ontology. The intention is a modification of consciousness to lift your hand, or walk, or speak, or have any experience. It is one thing and it is not a thing because it is formless.

So let's try an experiment. Let me ask you a simple question – are you aware? Of course you are if you can answer the question. So I ask the same question but don't answer it until I raise my hand. Are you aware is a thought. The answer yes is a thought. Between those thoughts is you, awareness.

Awareness has no form. Thought has no form but it is an experience. This time, when I ask you if you are aware, don't answer it, just slip into it. This presence, as you slip into it, is fundamental reality. Everything else is an experience in this presence. The experience that you were once a baby, a teenager, that is all experience coming and going, sensations, images, feelings and thoughts, but the awareness is a constant. I is a constant.

It is the presence in which this is happening. And how is it happening? The presence is interacting with its own self, usually as a result of conditioning, into these thoughts, these feelings, these emotions, this body and this experience. 'I am' is the constant in every experience but it is not in time.





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To complete this experiment, I'm going to ask you to just be aware, and then shift into that which is having this experience. Be aware. It is that simple. Awareness modifies itself into all experience. Awareness is not in time, experience is in time. And that includes that which we call the body, mind, universe, which are stories around mental experience.

All experiences are modifications of pure consciousness, humans create constructs around raw experience and assign names to them. Constructs created science, technology, art, religion and civilisation, so constructs are useful. DNA is a construct, genes are constructs. They are useful because by using them we change experience. The most fundamental constructs are mind, brain, body, world and cosmos.

No animal knows that it has a mind or a brain, it just has experience. No animal knows it is an animal. A giraffe doesn't know it is called a giraffe – it is a human construct. Obama's dog had no idea his owner was president of the United States, or he was sitting in the Oval Office. Those are human constructs.

When we experience sensations, including sense perceptions, images, feelings and thoughts, we give them the name mind. When we experience sense perceptions we give them names such as brain, body, world and cosmos. Names and descriptions are language constructs that nail down raw experience, which is all a modification of consciousness within itself.

A baby's raw experience is sensory (sight, sound, taste, touch and smell), along with pleasure and pain. The attraction or aversion to experience is rudimentary emotions. The interpretation of sense perception is thought. Without these human constructs, reality is consciousness in various modes of itself (not yet labelled as sense perceptions, thoughts, emotions etc).

The real reality is being, existence and awareness. It is timeless, formless and without dimension. The rest – mind, body, cosmos – are human constructs derived from modes of knowing and experience in consciousness. Forms and phenomena rise and fall in an eternal now. Devoid of constructs, we are eternal timeless awareness recycling in space time as the experience of form and phenomena.

In conclusion, anything that can be named or described – from particles to galaxies, DNA to genome, from mind to brain, world to cosmos – is a human construct. Constructs are derived from modes of knowing and experience in consciousness (modifications of awareness in awareness).

Therefore, you are the universe. There is only consciousness. Before a thought arises there is consciousness, as it is experienced it is consciousness, as it subsides it is consciousness. There is only consciousness.

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SUMMARY

To repeat:

Everyday reality is a human construct.

Fundamental reality is the awareness, the excitations of which are the experience of observer and observed in the timeless moment of now.

The fundamental experience of both observer and observed is sensations, images, feelings and thoughts.

Systems of thought (human constructs) are many – religious, theoretical, philosophical, scientific, economic, political, mythological. Therefore no construct has a privileged position over another construct.

The construct is real for the person embedded in it.

Excitations of awareness in the form of sensations, images, feelings and thoughts constitute all experience.

Excitations are in time, awareness is not in time.

Birth, death, body, mind, brain, universe, God, stars, galaxies, Big Bang, anything that has been given a name by humans, is a construct.

Someone summarised the teachings of Uppaluri Gopala Krishnamurti in four basic ideas: In every moment of time what you are experiencing as body, mind and universe is a projection of your conditioned mind. The real you was never born. The ultimate reality is we are inseparable and the word for that is love. If you can see it, touch it, taste it, imagine it or conceptualise it, it is not real. Only that which cannot be seen, cannot be imagined or cannot be conceptualised is real, because without that what we call this would not be there.

Those four basic ideas capture the whole nondual teaching.

So freedom lies in the experience of identity beyond constructs – pure awareness, consciousness – prior to subject object split.

All human suffering is the result of attachment to a construct, including the fear of the construct we call death. Death happens to an experience, not to the awareness in which the experience is born and dies in the timeless moment of now.

This is the basis of five very basic aphorisms in the Vedanta that are called the five kleshas. Klesha means human suffering and the five causes of human suffering are not knowing the real self, trying to hold on to that which cannot be held onto, the fear of impermanence, identifying with a fragmented separate self called the ego, and finally the fear of death.



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The solution to that is who are you without those constructs. Once you figure that out as an experience you are done.

Freedom is now, in just being.

In the deeper reality there is no mind, brain, body or universe, there is only you.

QUALIA PRINCIPLES

Qualia principles – qualia simply means quality of experience. A quantum is a human construct described as the smallest indivisible unit in which waves of energy are emitted or absorbed. A quantum of light is called a photon, a quantum of electricity is called an electron, a quantum of gravity is the theoretical graviton, but qualia is quality of experience.

So, think of the colour red. That is a qualia.

Think of the taste of strawberry. That is a qualia.

Think of your favourite song, think of John Lennon's Imagine. That is qualia, a quality of experience. An excitation of consciousness.

Even a glass of water is a qualia. Your body is qualia. The universe is quality. Because they are qualities of consciousness.

Here is an exercise. I can walk in New York for a whole morning, looking at buildings, looking at people, looking at the occasional pigeon. I look at everything and say 'I am that'. Then the next hour I switch and say 'I am not that', because nothing and everything are complementarities. It is an exercise. I am the formless being in which I am that or I am not that.

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THE ENLIGHTENED BRAIN

Remember we have already said that the brain is a human construct, but it helps us map the correlates of experience. The Wheel of Awareness from Dan Siegel's book is originally a Buddhist framework: the hub of the wheel is awareness, while the rim of the wheel is all the things we can be aware of and that is the totality of all experience.

So those things we can be aware of are: first, sensory experience – sound, touch, smell, taste and sight; second, body – musculoskeletal system and viscera; third, mental space – feelings, sensations, thoughts and images; and fourth, relationships and connections to the universe, meaning family, friends, social, community, world and universe.

All awareness is an on-off experience which is a modulation of awareness. Awareness of course can be conscious and subconscious. There is a lot happening in your body that is not part of your awareness – your heart is beating, your immune system is functioning and your body is regulating itself. That is all the subconscious mind projecting as the nervous system.

So our conscious mind is just a ripple in the vast ocean of the unmanifest mind. The biological correlate of that unconscious mind is the whole system of biological activity. That biological activity is happening in awareness even though you are not aware of it. If there was some discomfort over there it would move from homeostasis of self-regulation to make you aware of it. So you are not aware of your heart beating right now because it is not necessary but if there was a coronary attack you would be fully aware. You are not aware of all the activity in your GI system but if there was something going wrong you would be aware.

So most of the activity that we call our biological activity is our subconscious mind. It is the complementarity to the biological activity and it is being orchestrated by consciousness. Consciousness is that which is both the subconscious activity and the autonomic activity, and it comes to conscious awareness only when there is something wrong. It is happening in sleep and it is happening now.





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When we look at the brain we have identified the frontal lobe, parietal lobe, limbic brain, temporal lobe, occipital lobe, cerebellum and brainstem. The prefrontal cortex is where through mindful awareness and meditation and actually being aware of the choices we make we can actually change the synaptic networks of our brain. So that is a counterpart to mental experience which we are changing in consciousness through these practices.

Scientists identify these different areas, give them names. The insula part of the brain can access intuition through integration of messages from deep wisdom of the body. There is a new word that scientists are using now, interoception, which means sensing and regulating activity of internal organs including the heart, lungs and gut. That is what yoga is all about and the vagus nerve is an important participant in that.

Then we have our reptilian brain, which is the experiences of our evolutionary species of consciousness, which houses the startle centre etc. Then we have the limbic brain which is emotional in mammals, only mammals have emotional bonds and bond through touch, facial expression, tone of voice, play. Mammals nurse instead of laying eggs and emotions are actually part of interbeingness that connects us with each other.

The reptilian brain is supposed to be 300 million years old, the limbic brain is only 100 million years old. Now through technology, we can actually quantify what is happening in the limbic emotional brain. The hippocampus is another part of the brain, but remember there are no parts, there are activities and they are activities of the whole. We name them as a perceptual experience as parts.

So there are also the neuro correlates, emotions, the neocortex, which is what we now say distinguishes us from all other species. Actually all mammals have a neocortex, but we have the fastest growth of the neocortex, which started as we learned how to communicate through language, which is the symbolic expression of experience, happening in consciousness.

In the neocortex we can experience through yoga ourselves making a conscious intention, because yoga is a practice of mindfulness really. When you are doing yoga you are putting attention to your body and your breath, that is one of the limbs of yoga. So consciousness of the body, monitoring and regulation of emotions, the ability to respond with flexibility, empathy, interoception – these are modern words for various yoga. Emotional modulation, insight, intuition.

So these are the three brains that have evolved as species of consciousness, reptilian, limbic and neocortex. What we are experiencing right now is great dysfunction in the world because of limbic dysfunction. Our reptilian brain is obviously necessary for autonomic function, our limbic brain is what helps us to bond emotionally, but when there is limbic dysfunction then everything happens from domestic violence to child abuse to broken marriages to a world in peril.

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Now we are in a new area: spiritual exultation, peak experiences and the thrill of scientific discovery are both limbic and neocortical modulations. When you are in love with what you do and you have purpose and passion, at the same time you are curious, that leads into creativity and discovery, ultimately through love, compassion and empathy. We are now realising that those enhance survival and homeostasis through limbic regulation and resonance. When you engage emotionally with each other our limbic brains are modulating each other's limbic brains. So there is no separate self, even biologically.

Intuition, vision, creativity and sense of the sacred are the beginning of what we call metabiological evolution. Future evolution is the evolution of the wisest, which is the evolution of consciousness.

We are a species of consciousness and through emotions we bond with each other. Our emotional bonds affect each other's moods, brain networks, hormone levels, heart rates, biological rhythms, immune functions, blood pressure, sleep cycles, dreams. Everything that we call experience is inextricably woven through the web of relationships and emotions.

Metacognition means observing ourselves and having a sensory experience, which activates the prefrontal cortex.





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ENLIGHTENMENT

So the various techniques for enlightenment are: non-reactivity; you STOP (Stop, Take three deep breaths and smile, Observe the sensations in your body, and Proceed with awareness and compassion): activation of divine attitudes (gratitude, loving kindness, compassion, joy, equanimity); be a silent witness, non-judgmental of the external and internal world; practise interoception; transcendence; metacognition; and that leads to the waking up of consciousness that we call enlightenment.

So the three normal states of consciousness are waking, dreaming and sleeping. So waking is this right now, but you also understand that this is a waking dream because it passes as soon as it occurs. The sleep you had last night is another state of consciousness where only the mental activity is active but there is no perceptual activity, so it is a little bit of decrease in the excitations of consciousness. Then deep sleep is non-local consciousness, no subject object split.

The fourth state is what I have called soul consciousness, which means transcendence, which means being aware of being aware. As we expand this consciousness and enter the fourth state, which is non-local, even deep sleep is non-local. That expands our consciousness into the realm of possibility from what we call actuality: more ambiguity, more possibility, more creativity, more synchronistic.

The fifth state is cosmic consciousness, so it is local and non-local awareness at the same time. But cosmic consciousness is beyond this, where even in deep sleep there is witnessing awareness. Even in dreams there is witnessing awareness of the body. With that comes the realisation I am not the body and the mind, those are modulations of myself, and with that comes the loss of the fear of death. So that is the fifth state. I am the alert witness of the body and mind, the body and mind are transient experiences in time.

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More synchronicity, more love, more compassion, more joy, more inseparability, more non-locality, and in this state the awakening of what the yoga traditions call supra-normal powers. They are basically non-local capabilities, so non-local seeing is seeing somewhere else. First you say it is imagination but then you confirm it is really happening. So clairvoyants and all the so-called psychic powers are non-local dormant qualities of consciousness that wake up with waking up with consciousness. Then you are a non-local being having a local experience, or in the Christian traditions, I am a spiritual being having a human experience. I am in this world but not of.

With even further expansion comes divine consciousness, where now the witnessing awareness is not only fully awake in the subject of experience, it is also fully awake in the object of experience. So I see myself in you, and when I see myself in you I commune with you non-verbally, non-locally. Because me here and you there is the same being, this is the realm of ecstasy or extreme joy and the realm of miracles because only consciousness is communicating with consciousness in both subject and object. That is every object, because whatever we call object is the same consciousness, so communion.

Last in unity consciousness, where you realise that actually there is no separation in space time between subject and object, there is only the self and the whole universe which is a construct in the self that we experience of the self. Brahman is the only reality and the world is illusion, the world is Brahman. Not intellectually, but knowingly.

These are the practices that are put in English for yoga essentially. Yoga means union. So be in this world and perform action but don't lose your connection to your source, which is the infinite being at this moment having a local experience.

Now we can show through some of our research that brain, body, biology, experience and reality shift in different states of consciousness. We are seeing this in people going through retreat programmes and meditation programmes, they are going through a shift in identity from personal self to non-local self; a shift in cognitive mechanisms in the direction of non-local experiences; a shift in emotional wellbeing in the direction of love, compassion, joy and equanimity; a shift in actual perception, what people call celestial experience, divine, everything is full of light; a different way of using memory; and finally, synchronicity, which is non-local correlation, creativity which is a quantum shift in context, meaning, relationship to create a new reality.

Harnessing the organising power of intention – intention orchestrates its own fulfilment. When the mind is in harmony with the cosmic mind then intention organises its own fulfilment, which is manifestation of all kinds. Basically manifestation of the life experiences that you have intended from that level of being. Synchronicity is the same thing as meaningful coincidences, spontaneous fulfilment of desire, effortless spontaneity, effortless creativity, and there are many other ways of describing this ultimate achievement.



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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

STEVE JOBS' 2005 STANFORD COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Steve Jobs – Founder and CEO, Apple and Pixar Animation



Truth be told, I never graduated from college and this is the closest I have ever gotten to a college graduation. Today, I want to tell you three stories from my life, that's it.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

The first story is about connecting the dots. I dropped out of Reed College after six months but then stayed around as a drop-in for another 18 months or so before I really quit. So why did I drop out?

It started before I was born. My biological mother was a young, unwed graduate student and she decided to put me up for adoption. She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates, so everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife. Except that when I popped out they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl.

So my parents, who were on a waiting list, got a call in the middle of the night asking, "We have an unexpected baby boy – do you want him?" They said, "Of course." My biological mother found out later that my mother had never graduated from college and my father had never graduated from high school. She refused to sign the final adoption papers. She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would go to college.

This was the start in my life. And 17 years later, I did go to college, but I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford and all of my working class parents' savings were being spent on my college tuition. After six months, I couldn't see the value. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. Here I was, spending all the money my parents had saved their entire life.

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So I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out okay. It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out, I could stop taking the required classes that didn't interest me and begin dropping in on the ones that looked far more interesting.

It wasn't all romantic. I didn't have a dorm room so I slept on the floor in friends' rooms. I returned Coke bottles for the five cent deposit to buy food and I would walk the seven miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Hare Krishna temple. I loved it, and much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out to be priceless later on.

Let me give you one example. Reed College at the time offered perhaps the best calligraphy instruction in the country. Throughout the campus, every poster and every label on every drawer was beautifully hand calligraphed. Because I had dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class. I learned about serif and sans serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations and about what makes great typography great.

It was beautiful, historical and artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture and I found it fascinating. None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life, but 10 years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer it all came back to me, and we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography and if I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionately spaced fonts. Since Windows just copied the Mac, it is likely no personal computer would have them.

If I had never dropped out, I would never have dropped in on that calligraphy class and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do.

Of course, it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college, but it was very clear looking backwards 10 years later. Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward, you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in the future. You have to trust in something – your gut, destiny, life, karma – whatever, because believing that the dots will connect down the road will give you the confidence to follow your heart, even when it leads you off the well-worn path, and that will make all the difference.



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LOVE AND LOSS

My second story is about love and loss. I was lucky that I found what I loved to do early in life. Woz and I started Apple in my parents' garage when I was 20. We worked hard and in 10 years, Apple had grown from just the two of us into a \$2 billion company with over 4,000 employees. We had just released our finest creation, the Macintosh, a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired.

How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions for the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him. So at 30, I was out, and very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.

I really didn't know what to do for a few months. I felt that I had let the previous generation of entrepreneurs down, that I had dropped the baton as it was being passed to me. I met with David Packard and Bob Noyce and tried to apologise for screwing up so badly. I was a very public failure and I even thought about running away from the Valley.

But something slowly began to dawn on me – I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. So I decided to start over.

I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life. During the next five years I started a company named Next, another company named Pixar, and fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife.

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Pixar went on to create the world's first computer animated feature film, Toy Story, and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought Next, and I returned to Apple and the technology we developed was at the heart of Apple's renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together.

I'm pretty sure that none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life is going to hit you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You have got to find what you love, and that is as true for work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work, and the only way to do great work is to love what you do.

If you haven't found it yet, keep looking, and don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you will know when you find it, and like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking, don't settle.



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THE WHOLE EARTH CATALOGUE

When I was young there was an amazing publication called The Whole Earth Catalogue, which was one of the Bible's of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand in Menlo Park and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in the late Sixties, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with typewriters, scissors and polaroid cameras. It was sort of like Google in paperback around 35 years before Google came along. It was idealistic, overflowing with neat tools and great notions.

Stewart and his team put out several versions of the Whole Earth Catalogue, and then, when it had run its course, they put out a final version. It was the mid Seventies and I was your age. On the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road, the kind you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words, "Stay hungry. Stay foolish."

It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay hungry, stay foolish, and I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you. Stay hungry, stay foolish.





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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

THE 20 LIFE LESSONS OF BYRON WIEN, BLACKSTONE



The 20 life lessons of Byron Wien, Blackstone

*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes

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Byron Wien was a high-profile Wall Street investor and vice chairman of the private wealth solutions group at Blackstone, the giant alternative asset manager. He acted as a senior adviser to both the firm and its clients in analysing economic, social and political trends to assess the direction of financial markets and thus help guide investment and strategic decisions.

Known for his market prognostications and canny reading of markets, he worked until he was 90 years old, never retiring before he died in October 2023. He was born in Chicago and orphaned as a young child, before making his way to Harvard, where he graduated with honours, and then to Harvard Business School, where he graduated with distinction. He made his mark as a world-renowned investment strategist while working at Morgan Stanley for 21 years, before he went on to spend his last 14 years at Blackstone.

One of his most popular essays was his 20 life lessons, published in February 2023 and reproduced here in memoriam:

I was scheduled to speak about the world outlook at an investment conference in 2012, and shortly before my time slot, the conference organiser said the audience was more interested in what I had learned over the course of my career than what I had to say about the market. I jotted a few notes down and later expanded and edited what I said that day. Others have since encouraged me to share my thoughts with a broader audience. In the decade since, I have come back to them time and again to test their resonance and staying power, and find them still broadly applicable.



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Here are some of the lessons I learned in my first 80 years, which I continue to practice as I enter my 90s.

1. Concentrate on finding a big idea that will make an impact on the people you want to influence. The Ten Surprises, which I started writing in 1986 as a prediction of economic, financial market and political surprises for the coming year, has been a defining product. People all over the world are aware of it and identify me with it. What they seem to like about it is that I put myself at risk by going on record with these events, which I believe are probable and hold myself accountable at year-end. If you want to be successful and live a long, stimulating life, keep yourself at risk intellectually all the time.
2. Network intensely. Luck plays a big role in life, and there is no better way to increase your luck than by knowing as many people as possible. Nurture your network by sending articles, books and emails to people to show you're thinking about them. Write op-eds and thought pieces for major publications. Organise discussion groups to bring your thoughtful friends together.
3. When you meet someone new, treat that person as a friend. Assume he or she is a winner and will become a positive force in your life. Most people wait for others to prove their value. Give them the benefit of the doubt from the start. Occasionally you will be disappointed, but your network will broaden rapidly if you follow this path.
4. Read all the time. Don't just do it because you're curious about something, read actively. Have a point of view before you start a book or article and see if what you think is confirmed or refuted by the author. If you do that, you will read faster and comprehend more.
5. Get enough sleep. Seven hours will do until you're sixty, eight from sixty to seventy, nine thereafter, which might include eight hours at night and a one-hour afternoon nap.
6. Evolve. Try to think of your life in phases so you can avoid a burn-out. Do the numbers crunching in the early phase of your career. Try developing concepts later on. Stay at risk throughout the process.
7. Travel extensively. Try to get everywhere before you wear out. Attempt to meet local interesting people where you travel and keep in contact with them throughout your life. See them when you return to a place.
8. When meeting someone new, try to find out what formative experience occurred in their lives before they were 17. It is my belief that some important event in everyone's youth has an influence on everything that occurs afterwards.



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9. On philanthropy, my approach is to try to relieve pain rather than spread joy. Music, theatre and art museums have many affluent supporters, give the best parties and can add to your social lustre in a community. They don't need you. Social service, hospitals and educational institutions can make the world a better place and help the disadvantaged make their way toward the American dream.
10. Younger people are naturally insecure and tend to overplay their accomplishments. Most people don't become comfortable with who they are until they're in their 40s. By that time, they can underplay their achievements and become a nicer, more likeable person. Try to get to that point as soon as you can.
11. Take the time to give those who work for you a pat on the back when they do good work. Most people are so focused on the next challenge that they fail to thank the people who support them. It is important to do this. It motivates and inspires people and encourages them to perform at a higher level.
12. When someone extends a kindness to you write them a handwritten note, not an email. Handwritten notes make an impact and are not quickly forgotten.
13. At the beginning of every year think of ways you can do your job better than you have ever done it before. Write them down and look at what you have set out for yourself when the year is over.
14. The hard way is always the right way. Never take shortcuts, except when driving home from the Hamptons. Shortcuts can be construed as sloppiness, a career killer.
15. Don't try to be better than your competitors, try to be different. There is always going to be someone smarter than you, but there may not be someone who is more imaginative.

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16. When seeking a career as you come out of school or making a job change, always take the job that looks like it will be the most enjoyable. If it pays the most, you're lucky. If it doesn't, take it anyway. I took a severe pay cut to accept each of the two best jobs I've ever had, and they both turned out to be exceptionally rewarding financially.
17. There is a perfect job out there for everyone. Most people never find it. Keep looking. The goal of life is to be a happy person, and the right job is essential to that.
18. When your children are grown or if you have no children, always find someone younger to mentor. It is very satisfying to help someone steer through life's obstacles, and you'll be surprised at how much you will learn in the process.
19. Every year, try doing something you have never done before that is totally out of your comfort zone. It could be running a marathon, attending a conference that interests you on an off-beat subject that will be populated by people very different from your usual circle of associates and friends, or travelling to an obscure destination alone. This will add to the essential process of self-discovery.
20. Never retire. If you work forever, you can live forever. I know there is an abundance of biological evidence against this theory, but I'm going with it anyway.





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INTO CHARACTER

HOW INTUITION, YOUR SIXTH SENSE AND
MANIFESTATION ACTUALLY WORK
– DR TARA SWART



How intuition, your sixth sense and manifestation actually work – Dr Tara Swart

NOTES

- I have always said that science fiction is just science that hasn't been proven yet.
- Every experience that your brain has – literally every memory that you recall, every emotion that you experience, every person that you meet and every scenario that you are in – is constantly moulding and shaping your brain.
- In my research, I found that inability or frustration around manifestation is because you don't believe you deserve that thing. If you're able to dig down to that fundamental belief, that's when you can do really powerful work.
- The gap between being and becoming is the greatest source of unhappiness in your life.

INTEROCEPTION: THE PRACTICE OF UNDERSTANDING OUR BODIES' SIGNALS

Most of us know about the five senses that we have, but fewer people know that we have a lot of other senses, like thermoception for temperature, proprioception for understanding where your joints are in space, and nociception for pain.

Interoception is an understanding of the state of the physiology of the inside of your body, things like how do you know when you're hungry, when you need to use the bathroom. If you have young children you see that from the age of two they go from not being able to recognise those signals at all to being able to control their bowels and their bladder.

You can take that further: I can tell two or days before if I'm starting to get sick with a cold or flu. One reason for that is I went to medical school so I understand the body inside out, and the other is that I have over 20 years' of yoga practice now, where you very much connect your mind and body and become aware of



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biofeedback from the body. If you're going to do a lot of sport, you would say the same thing.

There are some people that are just very good at listening to body language and understanding their own body. Then there are all the people that have the potential to grow that skill.

THE REALITY OF EXTRA SENSORY PERCEPTION

I have become much more interested in extra sensory perception recently, for a variety of reasons. If we have a spectrum from science to spirituality, the reasons go along that spectrum.

On the science side of things, we do know that some of our hormones are released into the atmosphere through our sweat, particularly the steroid hormones like cortisol, oestrogen and progesterone. This is the reason that women who live together or work closely together synchronise their menstrual cycles within two months, because particles of those hormones are released around us and if we are interacting with each other closely they will alter the hormone levels in other people.

Regardless of gender, this also happens with cortisol, the stress hormone. So there is a leader of the tribe and, in this day and age, depending on where you are in the hierarchy of a family or a social group, we feel the stress levels of the most senior person. In a troop of gorillas, the stress level of the silverback gorilla affects the other gorillas more than ones who are equal to each other.

If you think that we are communicating non-consciously through the effect of hormones that may be in the atmosphere around us, that is already the physiology of communicating outside of our bodies.

I have always said that science fiction is just the study of things that haven't been proven yet. A lot of the things that I watched on Star Trek and Star Wars as a child, are now real.

If you have honed your interoception and your intuition, and if you are very close to someone and know them very well, I do believe it is possible to think of someone and then they message you, or to have a sense someone is going through something and you should call them.

It comes down to noticing things that you may not have been conscious of if you were in a rush, or if you were distracted, mentally. There are a lot of things going on around us that we filter out, because we are bombarded with so much information that it is an advantage for us to filter some of that out. The best example is that you are not aware of your clothing on your body all day, because once you have put it on and felt it you don't need to be reminded of it all day. That applies to other things that are naturally filtered by the brain without us directing it. We can direct it, but if we don't, then the brain will filter out things that it doesn't think are important to us surviving that day.

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WATCH OUT FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND REWIRE YOUR BRAIN

Every experience that your brain has, you have. So literally every memory that you recall, every emotion that you experience, every person that you meet, every scenario that you are in is constantly moulding and shaping your brain. Because of a field of research about neuroplasticity, we understand how flexible and impressionable the brain is throughout our lives.

This may start to change around the age of 70 when things like sequential memories can become a bit disordered, but our wisdom and judgement becomes a superpower. So it can change towards the end of life, but throughout most of our working life the brain is very open to being changed by everything it experiences.

The longer an impression has been held in the brain, the more deeply embedded it is into our neural architecture. So particularly things that we experience from the age of zero to seven, and seven to 14, if you had a repeated experience or a highly emotive experience, then those are the two main reasons that things get imprinted onto your brain: repetition and strong emotion.

I am five and a half years older than my brother and I have a strong memory of speaking into my mother's belly button and then listening to see if my brother would answer. In my memory, that happened once and I remember that really strongly, but my psychologist friend said I must have done that many times to still hold that memory.

Other things like parental expectations, societal expectations, how competitive your school was and the people that you hung around with, words that were used about you as a child. Those run deep in your brain and affect your perception of everything else that happens in your life. One of the main areas of work around that is called shadow work and psychology, which is addressing the things you perceived as a child meant you would be loved and looked after by your main caregivers. Usually around the age of mid-life crisis those things can really come up and have to be dealt with and integrated.





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THE SCIENCE OF IDENTITY AND HOW IT'S HOLDING YOU BACK

There is an area of research originally called Ghosts in the Executive Suite, which looked at how the leaders of today are affected by those childhood impressions. My colleague at MIT, Professor Deborah Ancona, wrote a really amazing article in Harvard Business Review about ghosts in the neural architecture from childhood and how they affect you whatever you are doing.

Identity is one of them: the other things are the values that your family held or your social structure held, boundaries that were held, secrets that were kept, roles in the family and identification, which in childhood tends to be comments like 'you're just like your father'. Those things are quite intertwined, so for example if you have a secret in your family, maybe someone that was an alcoholic or someone that was gay and that wasn't talked about, then you start to programme shame around those things. So that affects your identity.

The boundaries that were kept in your family – some families have a really open house, so people can just pop in and stay over or join in a meal unplanned, and some families are much more planned in advance. Those things also affect your identity and your ability to be flexible and spontaneous and function in a world where that may be happening.

Roles obviously also affect your identity. Let's say your role as a child was to be the messenger, maybe your parents had a lot of arguments and didn't speak to each other, then that is also going to play out in your adult identity.

In my research what I have found is the inability, frustration or success around manifestation always boils down to your level of deservingness in relation to the outcome you are looking for.

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So in terms of the way this works with neuroplasticity, you have to perform a certain action in the world to bring what you want into your life. To perform that action with confidence, you need a certain thought process that tells you, if you go dating you will meet someone really nice and settle down, versus if you go dating you might meet a series of guys that will treat you badly and damage your self-esteem. You can see the path those people are going to go down.

It is the same when it comes to asking for a raise, asking for a promotion, setting out to start your own business, any kind of health and fitness goals. Behind that thought process will be a set of beliefs that may be conscious but may be subconscious – so you do not even know that is what you believe about yourself – and those either hold you back or allow you with trust and faith to take a healthy risk.

If you are able to dig down to that underlying belief, that is when you can do really powerful work to affect your manifestation. Inabilities of manifestation usually equate to a lack of belief that you deserve that thing.

HARNESSING THE POWER OF NEUROPLASTICITY TO REINVENT YOURSELF

In the practical process of neuroplasticity, the key things are raising awareness around the thing you wish to change or what you want to attract into your life, focusing attention on opportunities to bring that into your life, deliberate practice – which is the action part – and then the accountability piece.

Raising from non-conscious to conscious is the absolute key. If you can't do that, you might be able to change a few behaviours but you're not changing the underlying beliefs. Raising awareness is 50 percent of the battle for change, but the process for that is bringing from non-conscious to conscious what it is that is holding you back.

The other piece that is really important is magnetic desire, which is a desire that is so strong that you will keep going when it feels like nothing is changing. The biggest reason people don't change is that when it gets tough they think it isn't meant to be and move onto something else.

Magnetic desire is when your head, heart and guts are fully aligned – if any one of your logic, emotion and intuition is unsure, then it won't work. And the desire has to be very strong. People say they want things like a family or a job because that is what their peer group is doing. What you have to work out is what you want for yourself, regardless of what everybody else is doing.

Once you find something that you really want and you have that strong desire aligned in your brain and your body, your ability to be patient – which is part of the process – will be much higher. The reason it is part of the process is that even if it is a psychological thing you're changing, physical work is going on in your brain. New neurons are growing, neurons are connecting up with each other, pathways are being insulated for faster conduction, and that is hard work. You need to eat more, you need to rest a lot. It is literally physical work.



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While that is happening, you are tired, your motivation is being challenged, and then it reaches a tipping point where you have enough neurons and a strong enough pathway that you can do the new behaviour that's required to get what you want and break out of those old patterns. Then suddenly it will feel like everything has fallen into place. But that can be after quite a long period of feeling like nothing is working out.

CULTIVATING MAGNETIC DESIRE: GETTING CLEAR ON WHAT YOU REALLY WANT

I believe that self-actualisation and individualisation are the ultimate goals in life, and what that means is you reaching your potential, becoming the best version of yourself and living your best life.

It's very easy with social media to think living your best life is a set of things that is determined externally. There is an idea of what a best life looks like, but that may not be your best life or my best life.

Having a purpose that transcends yourself is really important in terms of your own mental health, your physical health and your longevity, but it contributes to those things because it is the healthiest state for you to be in. If you're striving for something that is not authentic for you, and is very externally validated, that causes dis-ease in the system. It can literally make you sick or it can just make you unhappy.

What happens in that scenario is that you may achieve the amount of money you want to earn or the place you want to live, but deep down you're not actually happy. So finding out what it is that will truly make you happy is key, and I'm not even saying that being super happy all the time is the goal.

It is the thing that means you are the person you are meant to be, in the place you're meant to be, doing the things you are meant to do, and they are not completely selfish things. You are flourishing in gratitude, which means the bonding hormones and the feelings of trust and joy are going round your blood and impacting your immune system in a positive way, allowing you to be the best version of yourself you can be.

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TOP PRACTICES FOR SELF-TRANSFORMATION

One practice that it is important to do, and journaling is a great help for this, is to be very aware of the repeated thought patterns you have. Start writing them down and noticing how often you think them. There may be a few, so look at whether there are themes, too, and start to dig underneath that: what must I believe about myself to be having that thought on a repeated basis? There is a variety of things you can do here, and one may require some sort of external help, like therapy or a coach.

Doing that work to understand what the underlying belief is, and then using that belief to create a mantra or positive affirmation that is the opposite of that belief, is the way forward. Even if it feels like that is not completely true at the moment, it does need to be quite bold, so that every time you have the negative or the low self-worth thought, you can replace it with the positive affirmation.

That actually comes from a Buddhist teaching, which is replace every negative thought with a positive thought, but it is very much backed up by neuroplasticity. In the brain, you can't undo a pathway that is already there, you can only overwrite it with a new desired pathway, whether that is a thought or an action or a belief.

So as soon as you can, and eventually before you even really start having the negative thought, you think of this positive mantra and say it out loud, write it down, share it with friends. I have affirmations written up on my bathroom mirror so that I see them every morning and evening. You can then start to over-ride that belief in your brain.

REWIRING SURVIVAL MECHANISMS TO HAVE AN ABUNDANT OUTLOOK ON LIFE

It is simply neuro pathways that we are strengthening. I ask people, has your life panned out exactly as you always dreamed that it would. If not, where are the gaps. That can help you start to identify what your purpose and your dreams might be.

When we were kids, before people said don't do this or don't do that, we had a strong idea of who we wanted to be. So go back to your childhood dreams, that's one way of helping you work out your purpose. Maybe your dream was to paint and draw, and maybe for various reasons you can't be an artist full time as your profession, but you could bring back painting and drawing into your life and see how much joy that brings you and what else it opens up for example.

In terms of how deeply embedded all these impressions are that we pick up in life, there are three ways that we embed information in our brain. One is called neurogenesis, and that is the fact that we have little embryonic nerve cells floating around in our brains. From zero to two there are a lot of those and there is a massive amount of growth in the brain, from being completely vulnerable and unable to survive by yourself to walking, talking potentially up to five languages simultaneously in the first years of your life, having opinions, being able to control your bladder, bowels, make choices etc.



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We know that those embryonic cells exist around the hippocampus, which is where we lay down memories. For a large part of our lives, we are able to lay down new memories and I do believe from what we know at the moment that we will find there are embryonic cells in other parts of the brain too, but we don't know that yet.

The second and most common form of neuroplasticity in the adult brain is synaptic connection. Neurons have a long body and at either end they have a synapse, which is like a bud at the end of the neuron, and between two neurons there is a gap. When an electrical signal passes down a neuron, it induces the release of chemicals into that gap that are taken up by other synapses. So there is a pre-synaptic end and a post-synaptic end, and that is how messages pass down long neural pathways from neuron to neuron.

The ability to connect up with other existing neurons is quite strong in our brains. My favourite example is learning a new language. When you learn a new language, you are using neurons that are already in your brain because you know how to speak, but you're just coding them for a new language.

The third part is myelination, which is a fatty sheath that coats some neural pathways and means that pathway is more insulated. So we have faster conduction of electrical and chemical messages along that pathway. There is a reason we have some fast pathways and some slow pathways – we don't want everything to be fast.

If you put your hand into a fire, your reflex to snatch your hand out of the fire is a fast pathway, but your pain reflex is a slow pathway. That is because if you felt the pain of your hand burning immediately, you would be incapacitated. So what tends to happen is you snatch your hand out of the fire and after a few seconds you can feel it really hurts. That is an evolutionary mechanism to help us escape from predators.

I take on a new neuroplasticity learning every year and so in the summer of the pandemic I was learning to play tennis again, which I had played up until the end of high school but not since. It was so interesting to see that muscle memory and mental memory come back. So my progress on that was quicker than if I was taking up a new sport I'd never played before, and I could see that, it was very tangible.

Then there was definitely a period of time during the pandemic when I felt very depressed about the fact that I couldn't travel anywhere. I thought about the fact that I was alive, I was healthy, I was in nice surroundings locked up at home, so this was not okay. So I thought can I do here what I have seen myself do with tennis. So I basically did six months of being able to, with less effort, see all the positives in the day rather than focus on what wasn't happening that I wanted to happen.

Like the tipping point, I was working on it and it was fine, and then there was literally a moment when I stepped outside and saw the sky and the flowers and the weather and thought how beautiful it was and how happy I was to be there. I immediately recognised this was quite different to the way I had been thinking for a few months.

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The strongest gearing of the brain is called loss avoidance or loss aversion, and that is a survival mechanism that makes us two to two-and-a-half times more likely to focus on loss or potential loss than the equivalent amount of reward or potential gain. So it is really easy to focus more on the things that aren't going right than the things that are, that's natural for us. Just flipping ourselves to noticing more of the positive things, because they are there, and even if they are not then taking it to the next stage and bringing more positivity to our lives, is the mechanism of abundance.

That is one of the six things that I mention in terms of manifestation: changing that gearing to being more abundant in your thinking, along with the magnetic desire and the patience.

HOW OUR HORMONES COMPLICATE CASUAL SEX

Some of these things do change. In the times when we lived in the cave in a hunter-gatherer way, we didn't live in unit families. Man's priority was to impregnate as many women as possible to make sure that their genes survived, and they didn't have to stay and look after them, they just had to make sure if they impregnated five women then one baby would survive.

In this day and age, most societies do ask that we live in a unit family and that the father stays with the family after he has impregnated the woman. For a long time, men would be going against their testosterone profile to want to do that, but what we have seen in the last decade is that when a man becomes a father for the first time, his testosterone levels drop and the limbic system, which is the emotional side of the brain that I said was the size of your clenched fist, becomes rewired by oxytocin, the bonding hormone. So the father wants to stay around and protect the baby because he feels bonded to the mother and the baby, rather than feeling competitive with his testosterone.





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That means that something that we have changed as a society has actually created a biological imperative for men and families. But this survival mechanism hasn't changed that much, even though our threats now are primarily psychological for most people in the modern world, and not so much physical. Still, we have that tendency to focus on losses rather than gains, but we are able to override it if we are aware of it.

On sexual interactions between men and women, and the research isn't clear on other genders so that is why I am focusing on heterosexual interaction, but in a sexual interaction between a man and a woman the bonding hormone oxytocin that is involved in childbirth and breastfeeding is released by women during sex. Similar to the fact that women do have testosterone but men have about 17 times as much that they are releasing during the day, men also do have oxytocin but the way that the receptors respond to oxytocin is completely blunted by the testosterone.

What that means is that if a woman sleeps with a man enough times and keeps releasing these bursts of oxytocin, she is going to bond to that man, or fall in love. For a man, if they are not already in love with the woman and they are having casual sex, then the amount of testosterone that is circulating at the time will minimise the effects of the oxytocin meaning that he will not necessarily bond with the woman.

We do tend to hear this story quite a lot – he said we are keeping it casual but I hoped he'd change his mind and he didn't – and we can see it rooted in science and evolution.

Knowledge is power, and I'm saying these things so that if people have experienced that in their personal life and they weren't aware of the science behind it, they can use this information to make it work for them.

Similarly, we have mentioned the way the stress hormone cortisol leaks out of your body in your sweat, so you can get affected by the stress levels of people around you, and that could screw you if you weren't aware of who is draining your energy or making you stressed. You can then either go and sweat that out through aerobic exercise or get it off your mind through journalling or speaking to a friend.

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THE ESSENTIAL TOOL TO HAPPINESS: NATURE AND CREATIVITY

I have been doing research into neuro aesthetics recently, or neuro arts, and I have realised the importance of nature to our health and our mental health.

You and I might have different taste in music or art, but nature is the one pallet that we all agree on because we have all existed in it since the beginning of time. During the pandemic, we all maybe did consciously spend a bit more time with nature. But since I have been able to move back to the city and travel more, I'm not spending as much time with nature and the rush of life has definitely had a negative impact.

When we spend time in nature, we know it has mental health benefits; there is research that shows if you spend enough time in nature on a regular basis it can increase your life span. That is not just that you live longer, but you live healthier for longer.

I love going on safari and I learned a few years ago that if a tree gets nibbled a lot by a giraffe and loses its ability to send seeds out, it sends chemical messages in the air to other trees around who make themselves bitter so the giraffes won't eat them.

Trees and plants, some more than others, release chemicals called phytoncides that actually boost our immune system. They trigger the release of natural killer cells in our immune systems that can fight off more infections and cancers. We are constantly fighting those off and not even realising, but when they proliferate massively and the immune system can't keep up, that's when we become sick.

If you go out and spend time by the ocean, in the mountains or in the forest, even if you have more plants in your house and have a garden, then you are getting the benefits of those chemicals in trees and plants.

When we spend time in nature, what we are essentially doing is beholding beauty. There are two forms of creativity: beholding and making. They are connected and are both good for you for different reasons. When consciously spend more time beholding beauty in nature, then it connects up that pathway in your brain to want to make beauty as well, whether that is painting, drawing, humming, dancing, singing or whatever.

When we were in the caves, even before we could speak we were beating drums, dancing, humming, doing cave paintings etc. We used to think that cave paintings were a way of demonstrating the success of a hunt, but we understand now that it was much more. In those days, it was literally all about survival and we didn't do things for fun, everything had a reason. So why were we dancing and humming and beating drums?

We had to be creative because being creative was contributing to our immunity, our health, our longevity and our connections as a tribe. Being in nature is just another form of creativity that has benefits for our physical and mental health.



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A GROUNDED APPROACH TO THE LAW OF ATTRACTION

The film The Secret and the book by Rhonda Byrne brought into common culture the fact that you can do things to bring what you want into your life. It was left at the level of less agency for people because it was explained by the power of the universe and vibrations that were outside of yourself.

I felt it was important to add to that with cognitive science – the power of your mind and your brain. Using that in a directive way underlines your ability to bring into reality in the material world the things that you think about and desire in your mind.

If it is your mind, what you believe, what you think and what you go out and do, you can feel really empowered by that. Even if you sit at home and think about the house that you want or the job that you want, then you notice more good things happening, that still feels very external. To me, that's not being in the driver's seat of your life. It's great if wonderful coincidences also happen, but you have got to be feeling like there are things you can do to make things happen.

I'm passionate about people understanding how much potential they hold in their brain. If you think at you are part of this, if not absolutely the driver of it, that is the start of a journey where you can minimum co-create with whatever may be going on around you but ultimately absolutely create your best version of yourself and your ideal future.

There is a lot of disagreement about the laws of attraction and how many there are. My question was can any of these claims be backed up by cognitive science. Literally 80 or 90 percent had an immediate connection. Some were harder to prove. In the end I said there are some which I can't explain by neuroscience at the moment but they're not going to harm you so you can either leave them out or do it based on faith.

It is about being able to notice and grasp opportunities that will take you closer to the things that you want in your life, and being able to do those things because you have the thoughts that direct your brain to filter out the wrong things, pay attention to the right things and tag the right things in order of importance, both emotionally and logically.

You need to have the underlying belief that you deserve those things.

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HOW STRESS HINDERS YOUR MANIFESTATIONS

When we are stressed, our adrenal glands in our lower backs are releasing more of the stress hormone cortisol. Stress and cortisol are completely aligned, they always go together. There are receptors in your brain that are constantly monitoring the levels of cortisol in your blood, and we have an amazing adaptive stress response that means that if suddenly there is thunder and lightening we would be aware of potential danger to the house and we might do some actions based on that.

Then, as soon as we know we have secured the house and the storm has passed, our bodies reset to a healthy nervous state.

When we are under chronic stress, those levels of cortisol are higher than they should be more of the time. There is a normal range depending on your age and your gender and the receptors in your brain are aware of what those levels should be. When they see that those levels are higher than that on a sustained basis, they perceive an imminent threat to your survival. In the brain, the blood flow will get rerouted.

To be creative, think flexibly and regulate our emotions, the blood needs to be flowing to all the extremities of the brain. Under stress, those receptors will push the blood flow down to survival mode, which is the parts of your brain that you need to wake up in the morning, provide the basic needs for yourself and your family, get yourself to your desk job and sit there and look like you shouldn't get fired, but not actually be able to perform at your best. But you will be much less able to collaborate, so when you need the highest functions of your brain the most, your blood flow is literally working against you.

That is why presenteeism, which is when you go to work but you're not really productive, costs businesses more than absenteeism. My advice to people is when you realise you are really stressed, take a day or two off and try to reset your nervous system, because you will be so much more productive if you are able to release that blood flow again.

Trying to work against your brain, when your brain isn't working with you, is like trying to push a heavy weight uphill. That is why rest, nature, mindfulness and creativity are so important to manage those stress levels.



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PATIENCE: THE ESSENTIAL KEY TO MANIFESTATION

When we have high levels of cortisol, those are eroding your immunity, which means you're much more likely to get colds and flu in the winter and that when you do get a cold or flu it's likely to last for longer than a few days.

People who are chronically stressed for a long time can end up getting heart attacks. I've personally coached people that have had stress-induced heart attacks even when they are in their 40s without high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

So cortisol is the enemy of your resilience and you can do all the work you need to do to manifest, be clear on what you want, build up your self-worth, grasp the opportunities that you can, but don't get stressed about it. It sometimes does require patience, can be frustrating, so it is easy to go down that path.

Realise that part of manifestation is managing your stress and building up your mental and physical resilience. Make sure you are getting adequate length and quality of sleep, with regular sleep and wake times that really boost the beneficial impact of your sleep, eat nutrient dense foods and do aerobic exercise.

Then stay hydrated, do not be sedentary and manage your stress using mindfulness techniques, whether that is meditation, yoga, time in nature or mindful eating.

What I find personally is that manifestation happens in rhythms and cycles, so there are times where I am feeling like be careful what you wish for because everything happens. Equally, there are weeks and months where it feels like nothing is happening and I have to accept that and get used to that too.

THE GREATEST SOURCE OF UNHAPPINESS: NAVIGATING THE DANCE OF BEING AND BECOMING

The gap between being and becoming is the greatest source of unhappiness in your life. There are two circles: the current self and ideal self, current life and ideal life. If those two things are overlapping, that is 100 percent happiness. The further apart they are, the more unhappy you are.

It is not that you shouldn't have goals or want bigger or better things in your life, but the way to get there is to be ultimately grateful for everything you have in your life right now. You need to look at those two circles and think about them in two ways: one is, you could strive to change your current life to your ideal life, and understand what it is you have to do to achieve that and why you want that. Or, you could say you're going to take my current life and say it is your ideal life; be happy with the life you have now.

I have an action board and it has things on it that I want and I look at it regularly. Believe in the truth of what you want to manifest. Part of my practice is looking at the things on my action board and visualising them being true, feeling it in my body, in every sense, and then giving gratitude for the fact that they are true.

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Of course I work hard but I am not overly striving to get things in my life that are going to put my nervous system out of sync. So be patient, be on that path, but mostly just be very grateful for everything that is happening right now.

If you are lucky enough to have come through the pandemic healthy and not having lost a loved one, that made a lot of us realise you can have a gratitude list that is 100 things long but really if you can wake up every day and say I'm alive and I'm healthy, that's actually enough. It's also a huge privilege, because lots of people have really had to stare that in the face in the last few years.

When we are on this journey of becoming, we are achieving things along the way, but the natural tendency for a lot of people is to say I've ticked that one off so I can put that behind me and move on to the next thing. They are constantly moving onto the next thing without ever really celebrating the successes.

So it's about the gratitude in every day but also celebrating those successes, because all that is going to do is tell your brain that when I focus on what I want and work hard, and live in gratitude and abundance, those things happen. That is going to move you away from the cortisol state of fear and towards the oxytocin state of love and trust, where the law of attraction works more abundantly.

There is a piece of research around this called The Hedonic Treadmill. The most famous research around it is from lottery winners, where obviously they become ecstatic for a short while but it's shocking how quickly their happiness levels revert to what they were before. Another more day-to-day example is that if you have a really delicious meal, when you eat the first bite you release lots of dopamine and other feel good endorphins and hormones, and you feel very joyful. But each successive bite has less impact and it returns to neutral very quickly.

So we are achieving things, feeling happy for a short burst, and then returning to normal, so we are constantly seeking that reward. You can't be happy if you are constantly looking for something better.



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INDIGENOUS WISDOM FOR MODERN TIMES

I have learned a lot from indigenous wisdom, about time for nature, making and beholding creative things and adorning yourself. Interestingly, when we consider ourselves as divine beings we are more likely to adorn ourselves. If you have a child or a pet that you love, or you worship a deity, it is about flowers or jewellery.

Another area that I have explored, which more ancient cultures are more comfortable with than us, is things like reincarnation, near-death experiences, past-life memories, terminal lucidity and mindsight.

Terminal lucidity is where people who have dementia or have had some kind of brain injury like a stroke, who have lost some level of consciousness, suddenly become completely lucid towards the end of their life. This tends to happen in the last hour or day before death, and they remember everything, going from having forgotten that they had children, to recognising them, knowing their names, speaking to them in the usual fashion and really getting to say goodbye.

That can happen and can be an amazing experience, but unfortunately it always means that person is close to death, so it is painful.

You have to prepare yourself for death throughout your own life, being grateful, being kind, being compassionate – if you do that you are going to have fewer regrets on your death bed. You're not going to be lying on your death bed thinking I wish I earned more money or gained higher status.

Mindsight is a near-death experience in a very small cohort of people that have been blind their whole life. They have never actually seen, maybe they can distinguish light and dark, but when they have a near-death experience, they can see.

If you put all of these things together, the fact that some children seem to have memories of a different life; that you can become very lucid even with an injury to your brain; that you can see if you've been blind – it does make you wonder about how connected consciousness needs to be to the physical form, and it does raise the question about what happens after physical death.

In ancient cultures there could be a belief in reincarnation, in the spirit world, in reading signs, for example. All of those things can help us become more comfortable with death and therefore allow us to live our lives in a better or slightly different way.

It really does come back to a connection with nature, the land, the seasons, eating seasonally, eating plant-based, respect for animals, respect for marginalised groups... all the things that actually make you happy in life.



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THE SCIENCE OF REACHING HUMAN POTENTIAL AND UNLOCKING SPIRITUAL SUPERPOWERS

The meaning of yoga is union, the meaning of ayurveda is the science of life, and the vedas are as far as we know the most ancient scriptures that exist in the world. The yogis are people that practised ayurveda and yoga, with yoga being much more than just practising poses, that is just one of eight limbs of yoga.

There are reports of people from those ancient times who meditated for hours and days and weeks in grottos in the Himalayas, being able to walk on hot coals, not feel pain, or with what we might call spiritual superpowers. Other spiritual superpowers that are less explained are things like your consciousness or your spirit being able to leave your spiritual body, and understanding and potentially communicating with people on a different plain. Depending on your beliefs about what happens to someone when they die, whether it is reincarnation or their consciousness from this life exists on a different astral plain, there is the question of whether or not you can communicate with that.

There are so many of these things that have not yet been proven by science. I have icons in my life who are doctors and who talk about this. They are well-known people: Dr Bruce Lipton, Deepak Chopra, Daniel Siegel, and they are talking about spiritual things.

What I have come to appreciate is that because I have a PhD in neuroscience and a medical degree, and I teach at MIT, if I can't have the courage to talk about these things then how easy is it to ridicule other people that do. I have found when I talk about things like life after death with people, people have opened up with stories that they haven't talked about before for fear that people would think they were crazy.

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By giving people permission, especially if you come from a background where people expect you to think that isn't true, we are hopefully as a society opening up those conversations. At minimum those can be so much comfort to people that have experienced loss and disconnection. When we talk about self-actualisation and reaching your highest potential, if I can make any contribution to people feeling less lost, lonely and disconnected, that would be me self-actualising.

Dr Bruce Greyson has written a book called *After*, and Dr Jim Tucker, who has written a book called *Before*, are colleagues at the University of Virginia and are both psychiatrists. They were both absolutely not into spirituality but as they had their careers as psychiatrists they kept coming across examples of near-death experiences and examples of past-life memories in children, respectively.

They have been in their careers for fifty-plus years and when they started there were very few documented cases of either of those things, but now there are so many. It is absolutely true that there are more of them in the Eastern cultures where people believe in reincarnation, but there are enough now in the United States of America, including in very Christian families where that is not in keeping with their beliefs, that it is an area of scientific research.

There is a fascinating documentary on Netflix called *Surviving Death* that has episodes on near-death experiences, reincarnations, mediums and signs, and there is more and more science starting to explain these things.



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WHAT NEUROSCIENCE SAYS ABOUT THE PINEAL GLAND

I come from a Hindu culture, so I was brought up absolutely being told that reincarnation was a fact. So when people talk about being able to create a distance between yourself and your thoughts and your feelings, that is a must. If you can't do that, you will be so emotionally dysregulated that it can ruin your life. It can affect your relationships, your health.

All you have to do is look at videos on the Headspace app that teach you that you don't have to identify with your emotions. If you feel angry, it doesn't mean that you're an angry person, it just means that you can experience anger temporarily. Equally, if you have a moment of gratitude it doesn't mean you're a grateful person, it is something you have to cultivate all the time.

The experience of being outside your body, probably because my parents were first-generation immigrants from India to the UK, was something I was experiencing as a child. And then I lost that ability because I lost the belief and started questioning it.

I have looked at the chakras of the body and been able to align them with various glands through the body. The pineal gland, which in Eastern traditions is thought of as the seat of the soul, is often calcified, so it can take on calcium from the body and that gets embedded around it.

That means when we look at brain scans, it appears as white in the area of your third eye. That has led to people saying it is your third eye, the seat of your soul. We don't know, it's not proven, but it does appear in brain scans in that area. Whether it is the antenna or not doesn't really matter, what matters is that we perceive it potentially as a physical representation of the third eye. It is more important to understand what the third eye is and why it might be important in your meditation practice or in the way that you consider your spiritual health.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE: LOVE & GRATITUDE

People need to realise how much potential they have in their brain to make things happen that they want to happen.

I am a scientist and I love neuroscience, and at the end of the day the most important things in life are love and gratitude. The science completely backs that up.



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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

HOW YOUR BRAIN INFLUENCES HEALTH,
RELATIONSHIPS AND WELLBEING
– DR TARA SWART



How your brain influences health, relationships and wellbeing – Dr Tara Swart

*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes



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HOW TO IMPROVE BRAIN HEALTH

There is a lack of understanding of the brain-body connection. High-performing executives were acting in the past as if their body was the vehicle that was moving their brain around from meeting to meeting. They were both disrespecting their physical health but also not understanding that they were being paid to use their brains and they weren't creating the best conditions for that brain to operate in.

Here we are talking about really basic things like diet, sleep, good hydration, managing stress and not being sedentary. This tiny organ, if it is not in an environment that is giving it the best chance of doing its job, is not going to and cracks are going to appear.

Fifteen years ago, people were dropping dead on the floor of banks with heart attacks and they asked me to help in my capacity as a former medical doctor with physical stuff. It was clear to me we had to address the mental and emotional piece because that was what was causing the problem.

The place to start is understanding that stress, and everything that you are experiencing mentally and emotionally that is challenging, along with things like a lot of travel, which raises levels of the hormone cortisol. That cortisol courses around your body and brain in your blood and the brain has receptors that understand what is going on in terms of a threat to your survival.

In a 24-hour cycle, depending on your age and your gender, there is a normal range for cortisol, and if something challenging happens you rise to meet that challenge. But when that level is above the top range all the time, those receptors in the brain think there is an imminent threat to your survival. That creates a whole cascade of hormones and cortisol causes inflammation of the body, around your heart and elsewhere, so those heart attacks were happening in the absence of high blood pressure or high cholesterol and were in fact caused by stress.

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I would define stress as when the load that you perceive on you, physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually, is too much for you to bear. So it is subjective. People in the past used the terms good stress and bad stress, and I found that difficult having been a psychiatrist to think that there is any such thing as good stress.

But there is an adaptive response that is a healthy response to the challenge, and we have that for a reason, we need that. But that should be a spike and go back down again. If it stays high all the time, that is not good.

STRESS IS CONTAGIOUS

Stress is contagious. Women who live together or work closely together will synchronise their menstrual periods within two or three months. When we were living in the cave, the men hunted and gathered and lived quite nomadically. They would go away for months at a time and then return.

In those days, the most important thing was that the alpha male pass on his genes. So if he was going to be away for months and there were not men there to defend the women from predators, he needed to make sure five women were impregnated with his sperm at any one time to ensure one child survived.

To be able to do that, they had to be fertile at the same time, so that is why that mechanism exists. We don't need that now but it is still wired into the way we operate. So those sex steroid hormones like oestrogen and progesterone leak out of our sweat and that is why if we live with other women then particles of hormone pass between us and we synchronise, and we typically synchronise around the alpha female.

Similarly, in troops of gorillas, the stress levels of the silverback gorilla affect the other gorillas more than the gorillas that are peers. We have a natural hierarchy, likely related to survival.

Cortisol is the main stress hormone and it works in the same way. It doesn't matter whether you are male or female, but it does matter where you are in the hierarchy. Usually the person that is more senior passes on stress to those that are more junior, and that is why this is so crucial to leadership. Your stress levels as a leader are going to have more impact on everybody else than the rest of the people put together.

So managing your stress is important to you but also important in terms of what happens to other people. Even if you don't tell people, they are going to know, physiologically, that you are stressed.



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ENCOURAGING BONDING

When a baby is born, one of the way it learns what emotion its mother is experiencing and how it develops its own pro-social behaviour is through eye contact. Most people are right-handed, so they will be holding their baby with their left arm, which means when you gaze at your baby, your right eye is looking into their left eye.

That interaction from the optic nerve goes around the brain, impacts the amygdala where emotions come from and creates an emotional resonance boom. That right eye to left eye eye contact is the most bonding eye contact you can have with someone because it triggers an emotional response that is innate in us.

Other tricks to encourage bonding when you meet someone new are physical interaction, so depending on the appropriateness you would want to shake someone's hand, maybe a hug, maybe a peck on the cheek. The more of that physical touch that you can get, the better.

Laughing together is another way to increase bonding. And for ourselves, taking a bath rather than a shower releases more oxytocin, and massage helps.

Going through something very emotional together is also very bonding. But that is not as practical as the things you can do every day when you meet people.

HOW TO LOSE STOMACH FAT

The other thing about cortisol is that as a survival mechanism it will help you to store fat around your abdomen. In the cave, if you were not going to find food for a month, you could store fat around your abdomen and survive until you could find food.

Stress leaks down and can lead to abdominal fat that is hard to shift. So stress causes belly fat, and that is the impact of cortisol. As long as you are still leaking out extra cortisol, nothing is going to change. Even exercising more or eating better will not shift that fat, you have to get to the root cause and reduce cortisol.

A person who is stressed and suppresses that, and gets promoted, will have an impact down the organisation.

If you are aware that you are stressed and have high levels of cortisol, that is half the battle. But if I give you a list of signs and symptoms – which include things like sleep disruption, the belly fat, indigestion, mood changes, skin problems – then there are two main things you can do.

One is physical exercise, because you can literally sweat excess cortisol out of your body. The other one is journalling, so writing out what is on your mind rather than just letting it go round and round, or speaking it out loud with a trusted friend. It is all about getting the cortisol or the negative thoughts out of your brain and body system.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Sleep is so important, even though for some people it is not a choice and they don't sleep well or their sleep gets interrupted.

We have always known that when you sleep you lay down your memories and new learning, you process your emotions, the cells in the body regenerate and so on. The ideal for most people is eight hours and fifteen minutes, and actually sleeping more than that can be depressogenic and start to lower your mood. You ideally need to be in bed for nine hours to get that amount of sleep.

There was some award-winning research around 2012 when we were beginning to understand how important the cleaning of the brain is overnight. This entirely new system that we didn't know existed, called the glymphatic system, was discovered. That system is a very active waterway channel cleansing the brain. We used to think the fluid around the brain passively dripped through the brain overnight, we did not expect to see jets of fluid flushing out toxins from the brain.

So the exact thing we see in pathology of dementing diseases is being flushed out of the brain very actively overnight, and that process takes seven to eight hours to complete the cleaning.

If you find yourself awake at night and you are not lying on your side, turn onto your side because that is the best position for this cleansing process. We evolved from co-sleeping in groups when you needed to cuddle together for warmth, and because of that you got more of the bonding hormone oxytocin. Our ancestors slept on their side to be ready for an attack from a predator, so they had to keep their dominant arm ready to grab something. Most likely they slept on the left to protect the heart.

Co-sleeping, emotionally and spiritually, is now fundamental to our survival. The bonding, the physical warmth and the skin-on-skin contact, the love and trust that comes with sleeping with a partner, is so good for you. You recoup resilience overnight – the power of sleeping together and cuddling overnight is so neuroprotective that I would encourage people to do it. We are not meant to sleep on our own.





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DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

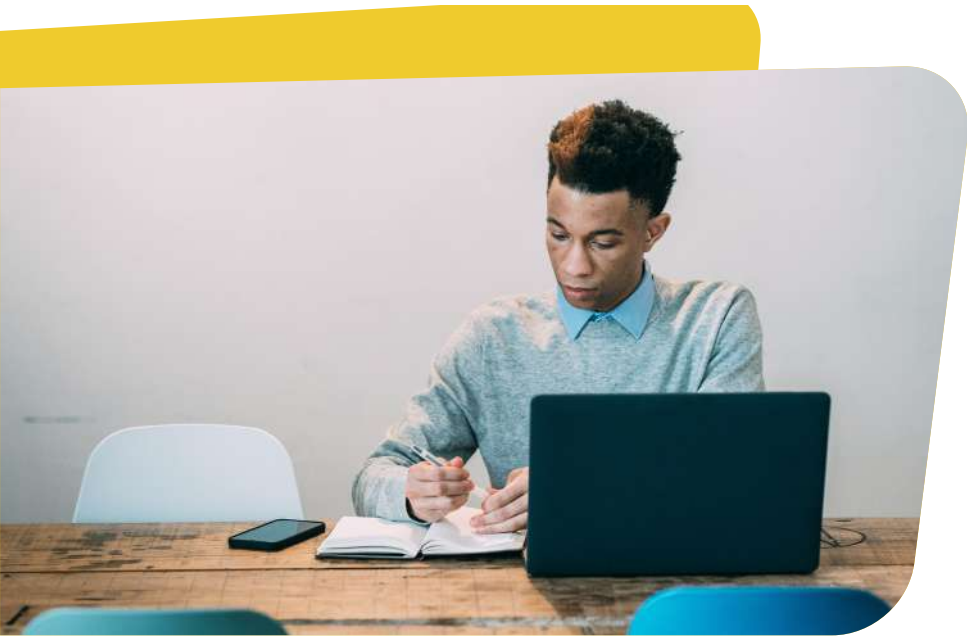
Thinking about differences between genders, if you had 100 people in a room, 50 men and 50 women, and you asked them to line up in order of height, not all the men would be taller than all the women – in the middle there would be a bit of a mixture. It is like that with the brain and intuition. There is some disparity, so most people would agree that it feels like more women are in touch with their intuition than men, but it is absolutely not all women versus all men.

I think women are more open to accepting intuition, and I think more men need the science to explain how intuition works. It has changed over time – seven years ago when I was teaching a class at MIT to senior executives, I remember someone standing up and saying they would never make a really important hiring or firing decision based on gut feeling. Over time, people are beginning to understand that with age, experience and wisdom, intuition should actually be your strongest decision-making modality.

What is intuition? Because you can't remember everything you've experienced in your whole life, somewhere in the neural architecture and in the gut neurons, that information is stored because you have experienced it. That wisdom and experience is the product of patterns you have seen experienced in your life, that are conscious to you. Intuition is the lessons you have picked up along the way that you are not conscious of but they are still stored in your nervous system.

The less conscious you are of them, the deeper they are pushed into the nervous system. There is a process called Hebbian Learning, named after the neuroscientist Donald Hebb, that says that the things you have learned today will be front of mind whereas things you learned when you were five are deep down and you are not really conscious of those – like when you put your finger in the fire and burnt yourself. We believe that wisdom gets pushed from the outer cortex, into the limbic system, into the brain stem, into the spinal cord and into the gut neurons. And that is why they sometimes call it gut instinct, because it is that feeling of knowing something but not really knowing why you know it.

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So it is actually to do with the fact that you have wisdom and experience embodied in you but you are not necessarily conscious of it. Your memories and your cognition and your IQ are in your brain, but your intuition is in your brain and your gut. All the organs in your gut are innervated, which means they have nerves going into them, the same as your heart. Your heart only knows how to beat because of the nerves that penetrate it.

That brings us back to the brain-body connection, because they are intimately connected and it is bi-directional. They can't exist without each other. The more you understand that constant feedback going back and forth, the more you can tap into that. You can know days before you get sick.

THE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

The mental health crisis is not looming any more, we are in crisis. All of the health anxiety and the fear that we experienced during the pandemic was bad enough, causing a level of stress that no one alive today has experienced before. But we have come out of it relatively back to normal, or in a new normal, and have not paid any attention to the consequences of what happened to us all.

We have not really acknowledged what happened and what we went through. Most people are not really understanding that what is going on at the moment is a result of that and we certainly haven't made any plans for the future.

I'm very interested in indigenous thinking and one of the things I have learned about the first Americans is that when they make a big decision for their community, they imagine the impact of that decision seven generations into the future. We don't even think about one generation into the future, we just think about what is going on right now. We don't even think about our own future sometimes.

I remember thinking in March 2020, this is going to be a mental health crisis, whatever happens physically. As time went on, that became more clear. Then I started to think about what else it could be. I had time, of course, to indulge other areas of interest and read more about spirituality and other cultures. I thought this could be a spiritual revolution.

My journey has gone from a very physical focus on stress and heart attacks, then I spent many years working on mental resilience with people, including emotional regulation. Some of the good things I have seen as a result of the pandemic are that we have definitely appreciated the importance of our time in nature. Most of us felt that and because there was no planes and no traffic, we began to appreciate sunsets and bird song, and now the studies are showing that time spent in nature actually has a really positive impact on your physical health, mental health and longevity.



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The other things of interest are that having a purpose that transcends yourself is really important to your mental health particularly. Having something that doesn't necessarily do anything for you but gives you purpose in life is very important – that could be volunteering, helping your elderly neighbour, checking in on friends – things that make you feel like life is worth living.

Two things we don't want to feel are that we are different or that we are not enough. Going back to evolution, a tribe couldn't afford to carry dead weight, so if you were not contributing then you might get left behind.

Then there is this really interesting new area of research called neuro aesthetics, or neuro arts, which is about having some kind of creative activity in your regular schedule. There is lots of research that shows if you are not doing something creative once a week, which could be dance, music, painting, going to the theatre, reading a novel, time in nature, then the impact of that on your mental health and your longevity is huge.

Even just every morning, smelling beautiful flowers in your house, listening to birdsong, that is all neuro aesthetics, living a life that is aesthetically pleasing to your brain. That is good for your health. Going back to evolution, if you were able to spare your resources to appreciate the beauty around you, that must mean that you're safe. That must mean you are not just trying to survive. So appreciating beauty is going to make us feel better, but also we are only going to be doing that if we have the luxury of being able to do that. It signals to your brain that you are safe because you have time to dance or read a novel.

The conclusion that I have come to about the spiritual revolution is that all the things that we need to go through that revolution have always been in the world as long as we have existed. That to me is beautiful. We don't have to do some crazy new things we have never thought of before. We know about generational trauma and how bad things can come down the line, but there is also a lot of beauty and wisdom that we can have access to by just going back to doing the things that we did when we were at peace.

I try to spend as much time in nature as I can and I have a lot of plants and flowers in and around my house. I'm very careful about who is in my tribe, so that it is positive, meaningful, deep spiritual relationships. I have respectful relationships, I have a lot of empathy for people, I look out for the people in my life that might be lonelier than me.

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SOCIAL CONTAGION

Just like stress contagion, there is a phenomenon called social contagion. There are studies that show the amount of time you spend communicating with friends online rather than face-to-face has an impact on how socially comfortable you are and how empathetic you are. In teenagers it can have a big impact on body dysmorphism. So it's fine to spend a lot of time online as long as you are also spending a lot of time with people face-to-face.

There are statistics that show that in your social group, if someone gets divorced, you are more likely to get divorced in the next year. If someone in your social group is obese, you are more likely to become obese. I'm absolutely not saying don't be friends with someone because they got divorced or put on weight, but the attitudinal stuff is interesting.

So how you treat other people, how generous you are, how kind you are, how open you are – you meet people that are at a similar psychological level to you and you want to be with people that are growing, open to challenge, open to learning, who care about mental health. It is really about having a circle of trust and knowing you have support but equally if you do something that is really not okay then someone is going to tell you.

NEUROPLASTICITY

When I was at medical school and doing my PhD in neuro science, we did not know about neuroplasticity. We absolutely thought that when you physically stopped growing, everything in your brain was set for the rest of your life – you couldn't change your intelligence, you couldn't learn to manage your emotions differently and it would be much harder to learn new things.

What we know now is that the brain is actively growing and changing until we are about 25 years old, and then from 25 to 65 years old, if you don't do anything to change your brain, it will tend to plateau. If you do things that are intense enough to force your brain to change then you can learn new things and get global benefits in your brain.

Let's say you decide to learn a new language. If you do that, your brain will not only get the benefit of being able to speak that language, but you will also improve your executive functions. These are the highest functions of the brain, controlling things like being able to regulate your emotions better, solve complex problems, think flexibly, think creatively, override any conscious or unconscious biases that you have. These are great benefits to get from something like learning a language or a musical instrument.

It can be smaller things like travel, interacting with people that have had a different life to you, cooking something new, taking a different route to work, reading a different magazine to the type you usually do. Those will induce neuroplasticity in your brain and create new pathways.



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So if you learn something new, it shifts your brain around and has other benefits. But what people are really looking for is changing habits and behaviours that are not serving them in life. So whether that is lack of motivation, over thinking, negative thinking, losing their temper, feeling stuck, people pleasing, so many things.

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The process for that, which is underpinned by what happens in the brain, is raised awareness. So let's say you have had a relationship break-up for the similar reasons as last time. Now you are beginning to see a pattern, you decide you need to do something about that. Step one is seeing the pattern and that is 50 percent of the battle.

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Once you know this is a thing that you think, believe or do that comes out with a result you don't want, that is the first stage. The next stage is called focused attention – you don't try to change anything straight away. You look around in your life, at work, at your personal life, at sports if you play them, and through your past. What triggers you to do that? What pushes you to do that? What do you believe about yourself? An important part of the raised awareness is getting below the thought and into the belief.

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The next step maybe in journaling, acknowledging what happens and the decision-making process. That is the focused attention. You are basically the sum of every decision you have made in your life, that is who you are.

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The next stage is deliberate practice. You may not be able to stop yourself repeating that behaviour, but this time you will do it armed with the knowledge and you will see it for what it is. Or you may be able to stop. So you say, I used to behave like this, the new me wants to be someone that does this.

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You then look for scenarios to practice this new behaviour, and at first it will be hard because you have a pathway there that has been set since childhood. The brain is a very energy-hungry organ so it is always trying to use the path of least resistance. Eventually that new pathway that you are building will become stronger than the one you had before and that is the new me.

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The fourth factor is accountability, because most people left to their own devices will give up on that process when it gets too hard. With years of practice and journaling, I have become much better at holding myself accountable, but for most people there has got to be some external. That could be a friend, or it could be a tangible action board that you put up in your home so you can clearly see whether you did what you set out to do. And of course you can also have an actual professional person there, like your language teacher, to hold you accountable.

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We have moved away from using the term 'hard-wired', which means something is there forever in the brain, and we talk about 'soft-wiring' now because of neuroplasticity. I know people who have been through incredible amounts of trauma, who have done so much work on themselves that they are now in a beautiful place. There is a lot that can happen – some people deal with the consequences of trauma for their whole life and it runs their life, and that's sad. You may not be able to deal with every single thing that you've experienced, or the full extent of it, but I do believe there is a lot that you can do.

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GENERATIONAL TRAUMA

Generational trauma is a relatively new area of research, and it is related to specific times of acts that were placed on to particular marginalised groups, so first Americans, slavery, some particular groups in Asia for example. The impact of generational trauma is that when something happened to one generation there is a psychological spillover – you may always feel isolated, or at the margin, for example. That is because a whole generation was treated in a certain way and that has an impact.

Inter-generational epigenetic trauma is about how some external event actually changes the expression of your feelings. So we have a genotype and a phenotype. Genotype is your DNA – it doesn't change, but the phenotype is which bits get switched on and switched off. The most famous examples of this are the holocaust and the Dutch famine. We are sufficient generations away from that now to have seen over three-plus generations there are changes in the stress responses. It is not always bad – sometimes people are more resilient because their parents or grandparents went through something terrible, and sometimes they are more anxious. It is hard to know necessarily why things go one way or another.

You are not born with the genes that your parents had when they were born; you are born with the expression of the genes that your parents had around the time of conception. And then of course your mother's stress levels through pregnancy.

This isn't meant to blame anybody for what happened in the past or how stressed they feel when they are pregnant. It is meant to raise awareness of the fact that if you have something in your family's history, or you did have a particularly stressful pregnancy, you can use neuroplasticity to improve the chances of your baby expressing genes that will be more helpful for them in life than if you didn't know about this.

Imagine the mother is a heroine addict, that is affecting the baby because they share the same blood supply. So if the mother is stressed and has high levels of cortisol, then that cortisol is going through the placenta into the baby's blood supply. Basically being stressed from in utero could switch on genes for being more liable to anxiety or mood disorder. It is not that all mums should be totally relaxed throughout because that is not reality, but all the things you can do to manage stress during pregnancy are helpful.

But then completely understanding that if your child starts to show symptoms of anxiety or inability to manage their emotions at an age when they should be able to do that, you can introduce them to meditation, you can sit with them and talk to them about their feelings, there are lots of great books and videos to educate them. Knowledge is power and unfortunately difficult things can happen to people in life. This can help you to overcome that and be better.



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GRIEF AND THE BRAIN

There are so many versions of grief that we have seen, particularly in the last few years, which include the loss of sense of self, loss of someone through a relationship breakdown, and loss of someone through death. I strongly believe that to ever heal from grief you have to go to the bottom of the hole, and how you do that is not something anyone else can comment on.

If you are doing things like throwing yourself back into work or partying too much to avoid it, that’s not right, but if somebody needs to go to somewhere emotionally to deal with grief, they have to be supported and allowed to do that. Maybe at times they should be gently nudged, in terms of whether they are feeling any kind of understanding or acceptance, but particularly with grief if we haven’t been through something similar ourselves it is very hard to imagine how bad it is.

My feeling that you have to go to the bottom of the hole is that we are very avoidant, emotionally. That is part of the greater issue, which is being lost and being disconnected. When my first marriage broke up and I was changing career, I remember thinking if I hadn’t been a psychiatrist and known the things I know, I could see how you could end up in a psychiatric ward going through the breakup of a marriage.

It is not that you have to feel terrible, but you have to process all the emotions and surrender to it a bit, because if you try to gloss over that it will come back and bite you later. I have seen many stories of that happening, where people did great things like showering all their love and attention onto other people and then eventually found they hadn’t dealt with their emotions. Only by processing all the emotions fully can you at some stage move forward – that doesn’t mean you forget the person or what happened, but if you try to gloss over it, that’s dangerous because it is such a deep emotion.





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MECHANISMS OF NEUROPLASTICITY

The first mechanism of neuroplasticity is myelination, and anyone who does a lot of sport and repeats certain training will understand that is what is happening in their muscles. If you repeat something, it becomes like a superpower and that is myelination.

Myelin is a fatty substance that coats some neuro pathways. Those pathways become fast pathways. There is a reason from evolution why we have some fast pathways and some slow pathways, and that reason is that if you put your hand in the fire, your reflex to snatch your hand out is a fast pathway but your pain reflex is a slow pathway. If you were incapacitated by pain straight away you wouldn't be able to get away.

One of the mechanisms of neuroplasticity is becoming even better at something that you are really good, which is myelination.

Another mechanism, where there is something you are quite good at but if you had loads of time you could become really good, happens through synaptic connection. That can feel like quite hard work, but if you put in the effort you can change your brain. That means that neurons that already exist in the brain connect up with each other and start to form new pathways.

The third mechanism, which doesn't happen a lot in the adult brain but does happen around the hippocampus, and a lot in children's brains, is called neurogenesis. That is little embryonic nerve cells that float around in the brain actually becoming fully formed nerve cells and connecting up through synaptic connections and maybe getting myelinated. There is a growth factor that is involved in that embryonic cell becoming an adult cell, which is called BDNF, or brain-derived neurotrophic factor. Trophic means growth so neurotrophic is growth of neurons.

The things that contribute the most to that are aerobic exercise and eating dark-skinned foods. If you are regularly doing aerobic exercise, the turnover of those cells in your brain is about 13-14%. If you haven't been doing exercise for a while and then you start, the rate of cell turnover is 30%, so it increases after a period of inactivity with starting up again. So doing exercise helps you learn and retain memories.



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IMPROVING MEMORY

Another example of mind over matter is an experiment done on two groups of weightlifters. One group lifted finger or elbow weights over a two-week study and they showed a 40% increase in muscle mass for the targeted muscle groups. The other group only imagined lifting weights for two weeks. By just visualising it, they had a 13% increase in muscle mass. So we can tell our brains to grow muscle, with the right intention and attention.

What is the harm of imagining yourself more muscular and more youthful, alongside eating the dark foods and getting enough sleep? It is part of the package.

On diet, where you can choose a darker version of a food, the pigment element of that food has higher levels of antioxidants called anthocyanins and they also contribute to neurogenesis. So it basically eating black beans instead of white beans, blueberries instead of strawberries and dark chocolate instead of milk chocolate. Good quality coffee also counts.

It is also about creating the conditions in your body for your brain to be able to do these things, so that is sleeping eight hours every night, having regular sleep and wake times, not being sedentary, eating 30 different plant products a week and varying the colour as much as possible, managing your stress and being hydrated.

If you are doing all of those things and you want to play at level two of the game, you could start doing time-restricted eating. I only eat between 12 noon and 8pm. That kind of fasting is very beneficial for your brain but only if you have got the foundations right.

Intermittent fasting helps to regulate your blood sugar levels and it has brain health and longevity benefits. But that is only if your foundations are right – if you are stressed, eating badly or not sleeping enough, then you will not benefit from time-restricted fasting. That's because it is a form of stress on your body but a form that your body can take and build on, if the baseline is good.

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BUILDING CONFIDENCE

If you are looking to build confidence and self-esteem, usually there is a particular recurring negative thought that is associated with feeling a lack of confidence. So if you can identify what that is and create a positive affirmation that is the opposite of it, that can be a great way to get started. It is about changing the language in your mind about the things that you think.

That is basically metacognition, which means understanding your own thinking, and then reversing that narrative quite strongly even if it doesn't feel like it's totally true. You can keep repeating that so much that you start to wear down that other pathway.

Language really matters. If you are repeating something in your mind or out loud, then if that is being repeated more than another statement, it is the one your brain is going to believe. So we can trick our brains by telling ourselves something repeatedly.

It does matter what we are saying though. Shallow things like 'I'm beautiful' or 'I'm amazing' are not going to work; sometimes just repeating to yourself 'I'm safe, I'm okay' is what is needed. Finding the stuff that you need to say to yourself that is not to do with social or parental expectations, what you really want to know for yourself, is what is going to set you up to go out into the world and do what you need to do.

MANIFESTATION

I believe in manifestation based on your brain, your thoughts, your beliefs and your actions. Your brain is the source of you being able to attract everything you want into your life. I sat down one summer and researched the laws of attraction and looked at whether I could explain them through cognitive science, and I could.

The first stage for me was understanding it is absolutely to do with the way that you think; it is not magically attracting something in the atmosphere, it is to do with the changes you make based on your thought processes.

I believe in vision boards but I call them action boards because I see them as a representation of what I want but I still have to go out there and make those things happen. It is also much more empowering to believe that it is your brain that is making things happen and not some external force.

So if you were single and you wanted to manifest the perfect partner into your life, for example, the preferred method is to create a list of the attributes you want in that person. But you then have to make sure that you are everything that is on that list.

You hear a lot of people saying this is what they want in someone, but you rarely hear people saying they have worked on themselves and this is what they feel they have to offer. Psychologically, you meet people at the level of psychological evolution that you are at, but also at the level of psychological wound that you have.



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So to be in a balanced relationship with someone that is really great, you have got to be bringing something to the party. We will rise to the level of our values and fall to the level of our wounds. What you have to offer in a relationship is just as important as what you want out of it. People that focus on what they want don't typically get what they want, but people that focus on what they have to offer typically get what they want.

NEURODIVERGENCE

From my experience as a psychiatrist, neurodiversity is basically anything that doesn't fall into the category of a typical brain, the way most of the population thinks and the way their brain works. That would include things like dyslexia, dyscalculia, ADHD, ADD, autism and other things.

A lot of it is to do with better diagnosis, so I'm not saying it isn't the case that these things have become more common but we are also much better at diagnosing them.

When I worked with mostly little boys with ADHD, when I saw them for the first time and took the full family history, there was quite often an absent father who had been in several different relationships and couldn't hold down a job. You thought he probably had it but was undiagnosed, so there is an element of that.

I do think it is an adaptation to the world, which is changing at such a rapid pace, always switched on, so much technology. Some people would say autism is a form of evolution to help us keep up with the changing pace of the world.

In areas like gender identity and sexual orientation, what I found in my research into indigenous wisdom is that those things were understood long ago. There was a place for people and an understanding of their role in society, sometimes even an elevated role. It is interesting we are grappling with that now and these ancient cultures were dealing with that all the time, no problem.

One theme that comes through quite strongly in indigenous wisdom is related to creativity, which is that doing things like humming and chanting is really beneficial. Those have been around forever and we don't really know why people did them in the first place, but in terms of expressing creativity and calming down the nervous system, that is one thing that comes through from ayurveda and from the first Americans.

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LONGEVITY AND AGEING

Psychological priming is the effect that the mindset of ageing has on our physical body and how our thoughts about ageing affect our physical abilities. There is a fascinating study where three groups of octogenarians were studied. One group was the control group and just lived like normal for a week; one group had to reminisce about being in their sixties for most of the week; and one group were actually driven to retrofitted versions of their homes that looked like their houses looked 20 years ago. They were given newspapers from 20 years ago, they had photos of themselves in that house when they were in their sixties, and they were treated like they were 60, having to carry their own cases, for example.

After one week, the people in that group were taller, because their posture improved, they had better muscoskeletal coordination than they had a week before, and in before and after photos shown to people that didn't know them they were rated as younger in the week-after photos. The reminiscing group also had some improvements but not as much as the group that were living as if they were in their sixties.

My optician that I was probably going to need reading glasses next year. I did not want that but I left and came back a year later. He did my eye test and said my eyes had actually got better, they hadn't got worse. He asked what I'd been doing and I said I'd just said no to reading glasses and when I'm looking at my phone or a book and it feels like it might be easier if I moved it further away, I just don't.

I refuse to accept the limitation or change my behaviour. That is what you see from the third group of people in that experiment, they have to change their behaviour to live without any help and in the way they did when they were younger, so that removed the limitations we impose on ourselves when we say that because we are X age we must need certain support.

There is an opposite experiment to that which was done with young medical students in Florida. They had to walk between five rooms and on the table were five pieces of paper with words on them and they had to string a sentence out of them. They thought that was the experiment, but the real experiment was that in one of the rooms the words that were on the table were Florida, beach, sunshine, walk and bungalow. All of them walked more slowly out of that room than out of any other room because those words are associated with retirement. That made them slow down, and that is how important language is to our brains.



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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

HOW TO MASTER THE BASIC FUNDAMENTALS OF LIFE AND SUCCESS - EARL NIGHTINGALE



*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes



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Two, we must never conform to the great mass of people. We must love them and help them, for our joy and success will be determined by the extent to which we serve them. But we must never lose our individuality and identity by permitting ourselves to be submerged in this suffocating scene of indirection and purposelessness.

There is nothing wrong with emulation, in fact it is a good idea, so long as we emulate a person who represents that which we wish to become but never the crowd. Never the 95%.

Do you know what the answer was, the secret to achievement that I devoted nearly 20 years to finding? Its pure simplicity had caused it to illude me just as it manages to illude the majority of people in any given age. I had been looking for something complicated, that something only a mind prepared by years of study could grab, and I found the answer so simple a child could understand it.

In six words, we are what we think about. Our minds, our thinking, controls our destinies here on earth to a degree totally unsuspected by the great majority of people. When you think about it, it becomes obvious, clear and simple. If we become what we think about, and if we can control our minds, then we can pretty well tell our own future. That is why each one of us is the architect of the structure fashioned by our years.

This means that if we are confused about what we wish to become or accomplish, our live environment will mirror that confusion. It also means that if we know what it is we seek, it must be accomplished, barring an act of God or a catastrophe over which we have no control. We as individuals can call our own shots for the rest of our lives. We can know what it means to go through life from one success to another, to play life according to the rules and reap the rewards. We can know what it means to have peace of mind and live calm, cheerful, successful lives.





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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

THE STRANGEST SECRET – EARL NIGHTINGALE



*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes

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Rollo May, the distinguished psychiatrist, wrote a wonderful book called Man's Search for Himself, and in this book he said: "The opposite of courage in our society is not cowardice. It is conformity." And there you have the trouble today. It is conformity: people acting like everyone else, without knowing why and without knowing where they are going.

In America, there are millions of people aged 65 and over, and the majority of them are broke and dependent on others for life's necessities. We learn to read by the time we are seven and we learn to make a living by the time we are 25; usually by that time are not only making a living but supporting a family. And yet by the time we are 65 we conform and we are acting like the wrong percentage group – the 95 percent who don't succeed.

Why do these people fail to succeed? They believe their lives are shaped by circumstances, by things that happen to them and by external forces. They are outer-directed people. A survey of working people once asked respondents why they worked and why they got up in the morning, and 19 out of 20 had no idea. If you ask people, they say everyone goes to work in the morning and that is the reason they do it.

Let's get back to our definition of success. The only person who succeeds is the one that is progressively realising a worthy idea. They are the one that says they are going to be something and then works towards that goal. A success is a school teacher who is teaching school because that is what they want to do, or a wife and mother doing what she wants to do, or someone who is running a petrol station, or is a successful salesman, because that is what they want. A success is anyone who is doing deliberately a pre-determined job because that is what they decided to do deliberately. But only one out of 20 does that.

That is why there is not really any competition unless we make it for ourselves. Instead of competing, all we have to do is create.

For 20 years, I looked for the key that would determine what would happen to a human being. Was there a key, I wanted to know, that would make the future a promise that we could foretell? Was there a key that would guarantee a person becoming successful if he only knew about it and knew how to use it?

Well, there is such a key, and I have found it.

Have you ever wondered why so many people work so hard and honestly without ever achieving anything in particular and others don't seem to work hard and yet seem to get everything? Have you ever noticed how someone that becomes successful tends to continue to be successful, and on the other hand the person that is a failure tends to continue to fail.

It is because of goals – some of us have them, some don't. People with goals succeed because they know where they're going. Think of a ship leaving a harbour, with a complete voyage mapped out and planned. The captain and crew know exactly where they are going and how long it will take. They have a definite goal. In most cases, that ship will get to where it started out to get.

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Dr Vincent Peale said: “This is one of the greatest laws in the universe. Fervently do I wish I had discovered it as a very young man. It dawned on me much later in life and I found it to be one of the greatest, if not my greatest, discovery, outside of my relationship to God. The great law briefly and simply stated is that if you think in negative terms, you will get negative results. If you think in positive terms, you will achieve positive results.”

That is the simple fact that is at the basis of an astonishing law of prosperity and success – the words believe and succeed. William Shakespeare put it this way: “Our doubts are traitors and make us lose the good we oft might win by fearing to attempt.”

George Bernard Shaw said: “People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don’t believe in circumstances. The people that get on in this life are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they can’t find them, make them.”

It is pretty apparent: We become what we think about.

It stands to reason that a person who is thinking about a concrete and worthy goal is going to reach it, because that is what they are thinking about and we become what we think about. Conversely, the person that has no goal, doesn’t know where they are going and is thinking about confusion, anxiety, fear and worry, will become what they think about. That life will become one of frustration, fear, anxiety and worry. If one thinks about nothing, one becomes nothing.

How does it work? Why do we become what we think about?



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The human mind isn't used merely because we take it for granted; familiarity breeds contempt. It can do any kind of job we assign to it, but we use it for little tasks rather than great big ones.

Universities have proved that each of us is operating at about 10 percent of our ability. So think about that: what is it that you want? Finding that is the most important decision you will ever make in your life. All you have to do is plant the seed in your mind, care for it and work steadily towards your goal and it will become a reality. There is no way that is cannot. It is a law, like the laws of Sir Isaac Newton and the laws of gravity.

If you get on the top of a building and jump off, you will always go down. It is the same with all the other laws of nature, they are inflexible. Think about your goal in a relaxed, positive way. Picture yourself in your mind's eye as having already achieved this goal, see yourself as having achieved the things you will be doing when you reach your goal. At a time when medical science has raised us to new levels of health and longevity, far too many of us worry ourselves to an early grave trying to cope with things in our own little ways without learning a few great laws that will take care of everything for us.

Every one of us is the sum total of our own thoughts, we are where we are because that is exactly where we want to be, whether we admit that or not. Each of us must live off the fruits of our thoughts in the future, because what you think today and tomorrow, next week and next year, will mould your life and determine your future. You are guided by your mind.

One time I was driving through Arizona and I saw one of those giant earth-moving machines whirring along the road at about 35mph with what looked like 20 tonnes of dirt in it. A tremendous and incredible machine, there was a little man perched up on top with the wheel in his hands guiding it. As I drove along, I was struck by the similarity of that machine to the human mind. Just suppose you are sitting at the controls of such a vast machine of energy. Are you going to sit back and fold your arms, and let it run itself into a ditch? Or are you going to keep both hands firmly on the wheel and control and direct this power to a specific, worthwhile purpose? It is up to you. You are in the driver's seat.

The law that gives us success is a two-edged sword. We must control our thinking. The same rule that can lead a person to a life of success, wealth and happiness can lead them into the gutter. It is all in how we use it, for good or for bad. This is the strangest secret in the world. I believe you could walk down the main street of your town and ask one person after another about the secret of success, and probably not one person in a month could tell you.

This information is enormously valuable to us if we understand it and apply it. It is valuable for our own lives and for the lives of those around us: our families, employees, associates and friends. Life should be an exciting adventure, it should never be a bore. A person should live fully, be alive, be glad to get out of bed in the morning and be doing a job they enjoy because they do it well.

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Thirdly, it is to use all your courage to force yourself to think positively on your own problems, to set a definite and clearly defined goal for yourself, and to let your marvellous mind think about your goal from all possible angles. Let your mind speculate freely upon many possible solutions, refuse to believe there are circumstances sufficiently strong to defeat you in the accomplishment of your purpose, and act competently and decisively when your course is clear to keep consciously aware that you are – at this moment – standing in the middle of your own acre of diamonds.

Fourth, save at least 10 percent of what you earn. Finally, remember that no matter what your present job, it has enormous possibilities if you are willing to pay the price.

To go over the important points on the price that each of us must pay to achieve the wonderful life that can be ours:

1. You will become what you think about.
2. Remember the word imagination and let your mind soar.
3. Courage – concentrate on your goal every day.
4. Save 10 percent of what you earn.
5. Action – ideas are worthless unless we act on them.

Now I will outline the 30-day test that I want you to take. Remember that you have nothing to lose from making this test and everything you could possibly want to gain.

There are two things that can be said of everyone: each of us wants something and each of us is afraid of something. Write on a card what it is you want more than anything else. It may be money, a beautiful home, success at your job, a more harmonious family. Write down specifically what it is that you want, and make sure it is a goal that is clearly defined. You don't need to show it to anyone but carry it with you so that you can look at it several times a day. Think about it in a relaxed, cheerful and positive way each morning when you get up and immediately you have something to work for and something to get out of bed for.

Look at it every chance you get during the day and just before going to bed at night. As you look at it, remember that you must become what you think about, and since you are thinking about your goal it must become yours. In fact, it is yours the moment you write it down and begin to think about it.

Look at the abundance all around you each day as you go about your business; you have as much right to this abundance as any other living creature. It is yours for the asking.

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Since making this test is difficult, some may ask why bother? Well, look at the alternative. No one wants to be a failure or a mediocre individual. No one wants a life constantly filled with fear or worry and frustration. So remember that you must reap that which you sow. If you sow negative thoughts, your life will be filled with negative things. If you sow positive thoughts, your life will be cheerful, successful and positive.

Gradually, you will have a tendency to forget what you have read on these pages. Read them often, keep reminding yourself of what you must do to form this new habit. Gather your whole family and share what has been said here at regular intervals.

Most people will tell you that they want to make money, without understanding the law. The only people that make money work in the mint. The rest of us must earn money. This is what causes those that keep looking for something for nothing, or a free ride, to fail in life. The only way to earn money is by providing people with services or products that are needed or useful. We exchange our product or service for the other person's money. Therefore the law is that our financial return will be in direct proportion to our service.

Success is not the result of making money. Making money is the result of success, and success is in direct proportion to our service. Most people have this law backwards, and believe you are successful if you earn a lot of money. The truth is that you can only earn money after you are successful.

It is like the story of the person who sat in front of a stove and said to it, give me heat and then I will add the wood. How many men and women do you suppose take the same attitude towards life? There are millions. We have got to put the fuel in before we can expect heat. Likewise, we have got to be of service first, before we can expect money. Don't concern yourself with money; be of service, build, work, dream, create. Do this and you will find there is no limit to the prosperity and abundance that will come to you.





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Prosperity is founded upon a law of mutual exchange. Any person who contributes to prosperity must prosper in turn. Sometimes the prosperity will not come from those you serve, but it must come to you from some place for that is the law. For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

As you go daily through your 30-day test period, remember that your success will always be measured by the quality and quantity of service you render, and money is a yardstick for measuring this service. No man can get rich himself unless he enriches others.

There are no exceptions to a law. You can drive down any street in America and from your car estimate the service that is being rendered by the people living on that street. Have you ever thought of this yardstick before? Some like ministers or priests measure their returns in the realm of the spiritual, but again their returns are equal to their service.

Once this law is fully understood, any thinking person can tell his own fortune. If he wants more, he must be of more service to those from whom he receives his return. If he wants less, he has only to reduce this service. This is the price you must pay for what you want.

If you believe you can enrich yourself by deluding others, you can only end up deluding yourself. It may take some time, but just as surely as you breathe, you will get back what you put in. Don't ever make the mistake of thinking you can avert this. Prisons are filled with people that tried to make new laws just for themselves. We may avoid the laws of man, but there are greater laws that cannot be broken.

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An outstanding doctor recently pointed out six steps that will help you realise success:

1. Set yourself a definite goal.
2. Quit running yourself down.
3. Stop thinking of all the reasons why you cannot be successful and instead think of all the reasons why you can.
4. Trace your attitudes back through your childhood and try to work out where you first got the idea that you couldn't be a success, if that's the way you've been thinking.
5. Change the image you have of yourself by writing out a description of the person you would like to be.
6. Act the part of the successful person you have decided to become.

The doctor who wrote those words is a noted West Coast psychiatrist, David Harold Fink. Do what all experts since the dawn of history have told you that you must do, pay the price by becoming the person you want to become. It is not nearly as difficult as living unsuccessfully. Make your 30-day test, then repeat it, and then repeat it again. Each time it will become more of a part of you until you'll wonder how you could have ever lived any other way.

Live this new way and the floodgates of abundance will open and pour over you more riches than you have ever dreamed existed. Money, lots of it, but more importantly you will have peace. You will be in that wonderful minority who lead calm, cheerful, successful lives.

Start today, you have nothing to lose, but you have a life to win.



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Thinking

INTO CHARACTER

YOU WERE BORN RICH
- BOB PROCTOR



You Were Born Rich - Bob Proctor

*Reproduced and updated by Regent – for teaching purposes



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Stop and think of exactly how you would like to be – the type of person you really want to be – and write it down in as much detail as possible, and write it in the present tense. You can draw on people that you admire and respect as people that you might want to emulate, but make this in as much as detail as possible in the present tense.

Begin by writing “I am so happy that I am...” and then describe the person you truly want to become in as much detail as you can. Don’t go any further with this until that is done. Don’t spent five seconds wondering how you are going to become this person, just make it very clear the person you want to become.

LET GO AND LET GOD

Let us start with a cute little story about Jonny and Billy, who were having a little bit of trouble in town on an ongoing basis. Mum didn’t know how to handle it, Dad had been gone for years, and if something went wrong these kids usually hid in the basement because they would get blamed for it whether they were involved or not.

Mum took Billy and Jonny down to the Minister. She told him she didn’t know what to do, the boys were constantly into trouble and every time something went wrong they got blamed. He sent her home and said he would take care of the situation.

He made Billy sit in the hallway in a chair and he took Jonny into his office. Jonny sat in a chair and the Reverend sat behind his big old oak desk. He looked down at Jonny and asked, “Where is God?” Jonny just sat up and was in a state of confusion, stuttering, and then he ran out, grabbed Billy and got out of there. He said, “Billy, we have to get out of here – God is missing and they’re going to blame that one on us too!”

Series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.



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Read my book and keep in mind that for 8,000 years all of the great thinkers have disagreed with one another on many things. There was only thing they were in complete and unanimous agreement with, that there is a power in this universe. They say that this power animates, motivates and penetrates the entire cosmos.

If you were to go to the entrance to the temple of Apollo at Delphi, you would see just two words inscribed over that ark – know thyself. But what do we really know about us and this power that animates and flows through us. This power is what Bob Proctor refers to as spirit.

In a marvellous book called Your Invisible Power by Genevieve Behrend, she said that to get good results in our lives, we must properly understand our relationship to this great impersonal power. If we are going to get the kind of results that we want, we are going to have to understand our relationship to this great, all-encompassing impersonal power. a lot of travel, which raises levels of the hormone cortisol. That cortisol courses around your body and brain in your blood and the brain has receptors that understand what is going on in terms of a threat to your survival.

In a 24-hour cycle, depending on your age and your gender, there is a normal range for cortisol, and if something challenging happens you rise to meet that challenge. But when that level is above the top range all the time, those receptors in the brain think there is an imminent threat to your survival. That creates a whole cascade of hormones and cortisol causes inflammation of the body, around your heart and elsewhere, so those heart attacks were happening in the absence of high blood pressure or high cholesterol and were in fact caused by stress.

She said this power is intelligent – you and I are intelligent – but it is these two intelligences working together that determines the kind of results we get.

So where do we go to find out a little bit more about this power? If you examine it, there are 178 different names to describe it. Rather than talk about the name, why don't we try to define the activity to see how it operates to, with and through us.

To find out what this power is requires two sources of reference: science and theology. The individual that works only with intellectual intelligence is not going to accomplish a whole lot, but the individual that can also work with that inner emotional and spiritual intelligence can open themselves up to unlimited possibilities.

So if we are going to define this power, and we go to the scientists and ask about the power that motivates, animates and penetrates the cosmos, they will tell us that power is called energy. If you ask what is energy, the only thing the scientists can tell you is that energy just is, it is neither created nor destroyed and it is the cause and effect of itself. It is 100% evenly present in all places at all times.

You may choose not to believe that, but if you don't believe in something you don't believe in anything.



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If you go over to theology and ask about this power, they will say there is a power in this universe that keeps everything in working order. Some people will call that power God. And the theologian will say that power just is, he is neither created nor destroyed, he is the cause and effect of himself and he is 100% present in all places at all times.

So the only thing that has changed is the name, and the activity is the same. You could say science is studying the energy and force around humanity while theology is studying the energy and the force within humanity, and they are eventually going to find out that they are studying one and the same force.

When we understand what Behrend said, we are intelligent, it is intelligent, but it is the working relationship with this power that brings about the kind of results we get. Because it can't do for you what it can only do through you.

For centuries there has been a select group of people who are the real thinkers. We could name many, but every one of them, though they had different ideas and philosophies, was in complete and unanimous agreement about one thing. These individuals have always known that everything we see around us is an expression of that power and so is everything that we feel.

The power operates in a very precise manner, which is generally called law. Some choose to call it God, others speak of divine mind, divine intelligence, or a whole host of other synonymous names. It doesn't really matter what you call it. The important thing to bear in mind is that it is the power that does the work, it is not you and I. It is something we work with, but it also works with us.

Everything comes from one source and that source power always flows then works to and through us, and that is us. Stated differently, the image that you have formed can only come to you on the physical plain of your life. In other words, your results come through faith. Faith moves this power into action.

There are only two words you need to remember: one is order and the other is movement. Order and movement, when both functioning together, create success, happiness, health and wealth.

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SPIRITUAL BEINGS

In covering this particular subject, you're hitting on one of the most important things anyone can study and yet very few people study it in any depth with respect to application in their life.

Spectacular things can take place when a person grasps this idea. One of our great problems is that we think we are physical beings and of course we're not. If we were just physical there would be a limit to what we could do. There is a limit to what a table can hold. If you put too much straw on a camel's back, eventually one straw will break the camel's back.

We are spiritual beings living in physical bodies. We have an intellect and through the proper use of that we can do wonderful things in our life.

We have no difficulty getting an image for the body, but it is hard to picture the mind. Think of the mind as a circle, with half of it being our conscious mind where we have the choice of what we think. We can build a negative concept or a positive concept, but we have the choice of what we are going to build.

If you could have everything you want and it starts in the form of an image, what would you start imagining. This works on both a negative and a positive basis. As you take this image into your mind, you can accept it or reject it. We can do anything we want with images that come into our brains – we don't have to get emotionally involved with them.

The other half of our brain is the spiritual side of our personality. This side has no ability to reject an idea. It just accepts whatever comes in and instantly moves the body into that vibration, in other words the image begins to move and to form through vibration and attraction.

One story that demonstrates this idea nicely is the story of a railway employee in Kansas who accidentally locked himself into a refrigerator car and then wasn't able to escape. Apparently this man banged and banged on the side of the car to attract attention, but no one heard him.





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He finally gave up and resigned himself to his fate. Sometime during the night, as he felt his body becoming numb, he began to scribble sentences on the wall of the car, recording some of his last sensations as he moved closer and closer to death. The first sentence said, 'I'm becoming colder', the second said, 'Still colder – nothing to do but wait.' Then it said, 'I'm slowly freezing to death.' Then, 'Half asleep now, I can hardly write.' And then finally, a sentence that said, 'These may be my last words.' Which in fact they were. When the railroad car was opened the following day, they found him dead.

Something startling about this story is that the freezing apparatus on the car had been malfunctioning and had not been operating properly for several days. Believe it or not, the temperature had not gotten below 49 degrees during the entire night that he was there. In other words, this man had become the victim of his own illusion. He had presumed that his time had come and his life was over when in fact there was no need for that presumption at all.

There are a lot of us that do that with our lives. We misread the signs of our predicaments, we presume that things are worse than they really are and so we too become the victims of our own illusion. We die, if you will, even though the temperature of our circumstance never gets close to freezing. This man used his reasoning incorrectly. He let what he thought were circumstances control his thinking, so he put that image into his mind and so that is exactly what he got.

Another example is seminar we delivered to 400 of Prudential's salespeople that suggested anyone in the room could go out and write \$5 million of new business by the end of the year. We were introducing the psyche and belief system into their thinking, which they had never had before. In the break, one of their people asked me if I'd ever sold insurance, and I said no. He said he could tell that as I didn't know what I was talking about. I said I'm operating on the premise that you already know how to write \$5 million of business. He said this company is 100 years old, with 20,000 agents, and we have never had one write \$5 million worth of business. I told him he could be the first.

This was around August and I had suggested that it could be done by year-end. I told him that if you can see yourself as a \$5 million producer, and you get emotionally involved with that idea and turn it over to that part of you that is unseen and non-physical, I guarantee that you will act differently, what you attract to you will be quite different, and you will do it.

That man went on to close the year with the better part of \$6 million worth of business, and the strange part about this is when he crossed that imaginary line there was a whole string of people following.

You see for every person, everywhere in history, there can be an image of what they wanted. They burned that image into their mind, they refused to accept circumstances. Every one of them has accomplished what they imagined. For years, people had tried to run a mile in four minutes. They thought it couldn't be done. But in the spring of 1954 a young guy named Roger Bannister quit believing in the experts, started believing in Roger Bannister and he ran a mile in under four minutes. Within a month, other people were running a four-minute mile.

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COMMITMENT

You could all tell a story like this about yourself. But it's vitally important that you remain committed to your goal. Understand that if you have got a vision, there is no such thing as an unrealistic vision. You can do it. Don't listen to people that tell you that you can't.

Don't let anything stop you, stay committed to your goal, keep that image within your mind and understand that the power within you will have you achieve it if you just hold it there and give it everything you've got.

When I saw this child playing yo-yo in Columbia, we were told that if we learned tricks we'd get a sweater. And you talk about getting emotionally involved. Feeling is conscious awareness of vibration, and getting emotionally involved in an idea puts the body in vibration and once you become consciously aware of that you call it a feeling.

I could actually feel that sweater on me and everyone saying that's the guy that won the sweater. I had to have that sweater. I was just a kid learning a phenomenal life lesson.

BELIEF

Any person could learn how to do the yo-yo tricks, if they wanted the sweater bad enough. I had to believe I could get it. Napoleon Hill said there is a difference between wishing for something and believing you can receive it; the key is you have to believe you can receive it. William James said your belief can create fact.

That's where it all starts, and it works both ways. It has no ability to change the idea – whatever you ask for is exactly what you get. As you take the idea that you build, you have the ability to sit down and design any idea that you want. If you're going to decorate your room, you get an idea in your mind first and then you get the things you need and put them in place until you have built in the physical plain of life a replica of what you have built in your mind.

Some people say they are not creative. That's not true. Everyone is creative, we have all been given the same tools, and some of us have just developed those more. This is where it starts. You are working with a power that is within you.

When you throw a pebble into the lake, the entire shoreline has changed. If you throw a pebble into the Atlantic Ocean, the entire shoreline has altered. Our problem is we cannot see that physically with our eyes.

We are all working with the same power. If we put in that idea and get emotionally involved, we can move into a different kind of vibration and all kinds of things can change. It is not an accident if there are two businesses side-by-side and one wins and one loses. If you have a financial problem, a cashflow problem or a marital problem, that is what you concentrate on. If a doctor tells you that you have a sickness, you concentrate on sickness. You should ask for help and stop letting your past results compel your thinking.



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When we really grasp this universal concept, we see that we are all working with the same power. Everything you have is going to belong to someone else at the time of your death, but what you have is yours forever.

A PERFECT INSTRUMENT

You are a perfect instrument for a spirit to express itself through. Every time you think of yourself, see yourself as a perfectly endowed spiritual instrument without limitation. Then you will find it easy and natural to expect the good you desire. You will also understand that doubt simply obstructs the unfolding of prosperity in your life.

Doubt does not shut down the workings of the power, the power is always working. It never stops. You ask and you shall receive; you ask for the wrong thing, you are going to get it. The doubt you hold becomes a picture that will turn into your physical results.

When you build the picture, you control from inside, not from outside. Regardless of the circumstances of present results, things will change if you conceive the idea and strive to reach it. An ideal is an idea that you fall in love with. And love is resonance, it's in tune, operating with the highest frequency.

When you are not in tune, if there is conflict in the mind, there will be conflict in the body. What do you think dis-ease is? It is the opposite of at ease.

FAITH

One of the best definitions of faith ever heard came from Clarence Smitherson in Chicago, who said faith is the ability to see the invisible, to believe in the incredible. What is incredible is there is a power in every cell of your being that operates in this manner. It will take whatever image you impress upon it and move you into the vibration you have to be in, to act the way you have to act, for the manifestation of the image that you choose to build.

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 If you can show me a person that achieves great things, I can show you a person who has great faith in themselves and their ability to achieve what they imagine.

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 It's what is on the inside, not what is on the outside. There is the story of a little boy that went to the carnival, and there was a man there blowing up balloons and filling them with helium gas, then letting them go. He filled a red balloon, tied it up and let him go, while the little boy stood watching. Then he did the same with a yellow balloon. Then he filled a green balloon and let it go. The little boy asked, "Can black balloons fly?" and the man said, "Yes, it is not what is on the outside that counts, it is what is on the inside that makes it fly. Any balloon can fly." That's the way it works.

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 Comparatively few people today realise just how much faith in oneself has to do with achievement. The majority of people never seem to conceive of faith as being a genuine creative force. Yet the truth is that not only is faith a bona fide power, it is the greatest one you will ever encounter. In fact, whatever you accomplish in your lifetime will be in direct proportion to the intensity and persistence of your faith.

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 The will gives us the ability to concentrate on an idea, and the more we concentrate on an idea, the more we are taking that power and giving it over. We are giving more energy to the idea. The only thing that can grow is the thing you give energy to.

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 You should take this new understanding that you are developing, take the description of the new you that you wrote out, and that new description should include no negatives, be in the present tense, saying 'I am,' and describing everything that you want to be. It is vitally important that it is in present tense. This part of your personality knows nothing about past or future, there is only now. So it should be written in present tense, everything is positive, and when you write it out you have built brain cells.

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 You are building new brain cells that hold an image of the new you. This is how the change is made. You use this and you let yourself totally relax. You let yourself get emotionally involved in this image. Every time you trigger those brain cells, in a very relaxed state, you just think of the new you and that picture comes up. Every time you do that, you are giving more and more energy to those brain cells. They become stronger and stronger, and in a relatively short period of time, those ideas will be fixed in your mind and that's the way you'll live.

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 When Cary Grant passed away, I read an obituary of Cary Grant. There was an entire page of one-liners. The last one was by Cary Grant himself. He said: "I acted like Cary Grant for so long I became him." You can say, "I've acted like this person that I have imagined for so long that I became that person."

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 Now, you can go over this lesson and go over – you can't possibly go over it too often.



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WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT

You are going to find that expectation really makes the difference. If you have painted the picture and every time you get emotionally involved, you rewrite it, crystallise it and make it better. Every time you do that you are moving yourself into a good vibration, and you will get to a point where you will expect the good that you desire.

You may not believe what you write on that page, but try it. I can guarantee that you won't think it's silly for long. If you write a lie on the card and you read it often enough, you are going to believe it, and you are going to find that your belief will literally create fact. As you wrote down the person you wanted to be, you might have thought of that as a fantasy. Some people truly live their fantasies.

What was actually happening as you sat and thought of the person you wanted to become? You built that picture in your mind, and you built brain cells. As you made the written description, you built those brain cells and now you need to activate them.

If you relax and enter a higher state of consciousness, you can flick the switch to activate those brain cells, so that fantasy will turn into a theory in your mind. Crystallise the picture of the person you want to be, and the power within will ultimately take this image of yours and begin to express it as fact.

When you come back to a normal conscious state, it's very important that you rewrite it. As you rewrite it, you crystallise it, and your fantasy will literally become a fact.

EXPECT AN ABUNDANCE

The individual who has a desire can achieve that desire when they understand the relationship of being able to see it with their mind. Some people put a crown on circumstance and think that is what is in control. But if you think about all the things that you desire, on a scale of 1-10, I would bet your desire for a lot of them is at a 10. Nobody lacks desire. If you take a define that word, it is the effort of an unexpressed possibility within us that is seeking expression through us.

The word desire comes from Latin and means 'to give birth to'. Everyone of us has a desire within us that we want to give birth to. Desire is the language of spirit, but the basic difference in people who experience their desire versus people who do not experience their desire is to do with this great principle of expectation.

If you had to take and write down something that surrounds this central purpose, just for a moment, you will all have a desire to be more, to do more and to have more. But how many people actually expect it to happen?

There was a great point in history where Moses was leading people around the desert. Most people thought he was lost, but he was not lost – Moses was a man of wisdom. He was leading these people around and around in circles until he was able to change their attitude or consciousness before he went into this new land. All the people came to him and said they had no water, what are you going to do?

Dotted lines for taking notes.

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He said you go and pray to your God for rain. And away they went and back they came.

They came back and said God has forsaken us, we have no rain. Moses said tell me where are the ditches. If you believed it was going to rain, you would have dug ditches. You can go around and desire all the things you want to be, all the things you want to do and all the things you want to have, but until you are able to see yourself on the screen of your mind, you will never ever experience the desire. Until you are able to see it, and proceed by acting on it, you will never experience the desire.

Everybody started out even, in search of a better condition, an improved quality of life. But for some reason or other, somewhere in the neighbourhood of 20% of the people actually experience the goal or the purpose that they started out with. What happens to 80% of the people who start off with this great desire to become more, to have more and to do more? We must give that desire the channel of expression.

So how many people expect what it is they desire? We should never desire something we don't expect and we should never expect something we don't desire.

At certain times of the year we expect to catch a cold. That expectation is a magnet and it will attract everything of a like nature.

Isn't it interesting that we all started out in pursuit of that goal but something happens along the way and we run into conflict or an issue. It seems that we run into demands and risks, when we start to improve the quality of our life. Be a little better as a person, be a little better at your job. When the mind is presented with a demand or a risk, it will offer us the escape hatch. We then start expecting the result that we don't want.





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We are a force of energy and we don't attract everything of a like nature. This mental state of vibration, which attracts this physical state of vibration, which moves this body into action, is nothing more than your thoughts, your feelings and your actions.

Attitude is nothing more than our thoughts, our feelings and our actions. That is your state of vibration, the energy you send out into life. The only thing that flows in your life is based on what flows out of your life. Your thoughts, feelings and actions release this energy and will attract everything that corresponds to that ruling state.

Expectation can be either a blessing or a curse, but either way it is certainly one of the most powerful unseen forces in your life. What do you expect? Take a look at the results in your life. Your results will tell you exactly what you have been expecting.

Worry is the opposite of expectation, using the same energy. Worry sets up a magnetic force that attracts things of a like nature to cause that worried state to manifest in one's life. No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.

List the things you really want and write alongside them whether or not you have been expecting them. If you have not been expecting them, you are allowing the demands or the risks to get in the way. Do not allow others, and do not allow circumstances, to control the way you feel about you. You determine your mental ruling state.

What are you doing to increase your income, your relationships, your wellbeing, your productivity? If your answer is nothing, or you are just beginning to think about what you should do, you have not followed this so far.

If we want to change the circumstances, we have to change the level of thinking that is responsible for it. Which is our expectations must move to a new dimension. If these ideas are applied with intelligence, then expectation can be a triggering mechanism that attracts into your life every good that you desire.

If you have something that you desire to do today, that puts you in touch with it right now. But it is your expectation that moves it into your life. We will always gravitate towards that which we most secretly love, for into your hand will be placed the exact result of your ideal and your vision. So expectation is the triggering mechanism.

However, if you do not exercise extreme caution, expectation can also turn just as rapidly into a destructive, lethal enemy. Because people go around expecting bad things to happen to them. You must be cognisant of how you are exercising this invisible but powerful force. We believe then that you already understand that you cannot have wealth in your material world until you first visualise the wealth in your mind.

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Have you ever considered that the highest, most noble and the most excellent thing about you is formless in nature? But what does this really mean? It means that before any one of us can begin to overcome the poverty which surrounds us in our external world, we must first conquer the impoverishment that is buried deep within ourselves.

When you come back to a normal conscious state, it's very important that you rewrite it. As you rewrite it, you crystallise it, and your fantasy will literally become a fact.

LIMITLESS POWER

Imagine an elderly couple that are living in the back woods and have been there all their lives. They know nothing except what is in their own immediate environment. This elderly couple has never had an experience of using electricity. All they have ever illuminated their home with is a wax candle or a kerosene lamp. They have had travellers drop by periodically who have talked about this idea of electricity, but they have never used it.

In the latter years of their lives, they are transported into a small town and to their amazement this house is lit with small bulbs. Keep in mind all they have ever used is the wax candle or the kerosene lamp. To their amazement, they have electricity, which would truly be magic to them.

Imagine if you just purchased a microwave oven that has a sensory touch so just the energy coming from your finger would activate the switch and cook a hotdog faster than you could pour a glass of milk. This couple would go over and touch the switch and they are amazed that the light doesn't burn them, because their expectation is that of fire. Try and experience that in your mind.

Electricity is very much like this power that we use in many respects. If you're going to work with electricity, you must work from a higher to a lower potential. Any engineer will be quick to tell you that if you attempt to work from a lower to a higher potential, you will get no use out of the electricity. They will also tell you that electricity can cook a person's dinner or it can cook a person. You can use the electricity to freeze food or to fry food. It can be used one way or another.

One day, after the elderly couple had become used to this new concept and can turn the light on with no fear of being burned, a traveller knocks on their door, holding a light bulb. He says those little bulbs are no good any more, there is not enough light from them. The illumination is limited. What you really need is one of these bigger bulbs. The elderly couple of course doesn't really know what the traveller is talking about.

He says let me show you, and he goes around and loosens all the little bulbs but one. Then he takes the one remaining bulb that's burning out of the socket, and he puts in the new bulb. That entire room is then illuminated like daylight. They have great difficulty believing that so much light could come from one bulb.



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153 Great Titchfield Street
Fitzrovia
London
W1W 5BD
T. +44 (0)203 870 6666
www.regent.global