

Be the Champion of Your Life



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WISDOM PROJECT

*To the Generations that follow
The Deep Wisdom I learned
that I wished I knew when I was young*

**Be the Champion of Your Life
*Transform Your Destiny!***

Thoughts, Insights, and Inspirations
to guide you through the
traumas and transitions of life.

Contained within are wonderful tools to turn:

**Tragedy Into Triumph,
Adversity Into Advantage,
Anxiety Into Action,
Chaos into Clarity,
Breakdowns into Breakthroughs,
Fear Into Fortitude,
Pain into Possibility,
Calamity Into Courage, &
Vision Into Value.**

By Robert Porter Lynch

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Preface – How this series came to be

Just prior to my 65th birthday, I missed the middle-school graduation of my foster son (who achieved “high honors”) and my niece Molly Zanella from the University of Rhode Island. Teaching assignments in Canada and California meant I couldn’t be with family on these important days of their lives.

After Molly’s graduation, I received this email:

Hi Uncle Bobby!!

I just wanted to let you know the “Circle of Life” team (Molly Zanella, Amy Ryan, Ari Orefice, and Kaila Palumbo) was thinking of you at our graduation.

We had an author speak at our main commencement and after our graduation we all ran into each other and said how we All thought you would have been the perfect candidate to speak to our class!!

Our speaker was not as motivational as you have been to us. We all miss you and the girls wanted me to say hello for them.

We are having a graduation party for me on June 9th at 3pm at our home in Fairfield. I know you are busy with work and may be out of town but in any case, if you are free we'd love to see you there!! (the circle of life team will be there as well... I think we need some words of wisdom!)

Hope to hear from you soon,

Hope all is well,

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Hi Molly,

I woke up this morning thinking about what to give you for a graduation present. Of course, the "normal" stuff went through my mind: money, gifts, etc. Then I got an inspiration.

What if I wrote a book for you and the Circle of Life Team of the deepest wisdom I have accessed -- going far back into the ancient masters plus my new discoveries?

A spiritual message came through to me: It should be called:

*Keys to the Kingdom:
Finding Meaning and Purpose in Your Life*

I can publish a special edition for you and the Circle of Life.

Is this something that you might find useful? Be aware, this stuff is very deep -- it might take a while for you to digest it. But I somehow feel compelled to give it to you, and then give it to the world at large at a later time.

That night I thought about Molly, wondering what to do for them when I returned home from my trip.

Molly responded very favorably, and the result of missing Molly's Graduations is this book (plus another five volumes) filled with the wisdom I've gathered over the years.

Hopefully, by passing this on, I will spare you some of the turmoil on life's journeying and enable you to arrive at a higher destination than I, with fewer of the detours, eddy currents, and disappointments.

Blessings

Robert Porter Lynch

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Personal Prelude

I once had a goal to become a millionaire by the time I was 40 years old. With great pride, I reached that goal. But it was not long after, by what seemed to be a unfortunate strokes of bad luck, I lost just about everything I had -- my marriage, my earnings, my savings -- I was over \$1million in debt and almost ready to file for bankruptcy. I blamed bad fate, the government, and numerous others for my demise.

Had I continued to blame others, there would have been no end to the blame, and my life would have become a never-ending series of excuses. However, I began to learn the true meaning of regenerativity – a positive adversity response: how to see this situation as a hidden opportunity, a true blessing to release myself to do something much greater, much more powerful, much more inspiring.

God had sent me a message that I'd been playing too small a game at too low a level. It was time not to withdraw, but to expand the scope, expand the possibilities, and to pursue what was truly my highest and best destiny. We transform experience by seeing that tough times hold the seedlings of a new vision and a new future, but only through new beliefs and boldness. By looking to God, and into my soul, I found my true calling. As Christ said:

*If you bring forth [the light] that is within you,
what you bring forth will save you,
If you do not bring forth [the light] within you,
[the darkness within you] will destroy you.
As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.*

This set of books is also a study of the Source Code of Greatness. In my study of great people, I found three things in common:

- 1) *Belief in God,*
- 2) *Clear Sense of Destiny/Purpose, and*
- 3) *Ability to Build Trusting Relationships*
(all three together will add at least five years to one's life.)

In this volume are some of my favorite inspirational quotes and my own personal observations which I have used in my life. I hope you find them insightful in your own search for meaning, synergy, and wisdom.

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The search for synergy starts on the inside – creating synergy within. This should not be too surprising. Our body is a synergistic system composed of heart, brain, lungs, and scores of other organs all working together to create a whole – the whole is far greater than the sum of the parts.

But synergy is not just a bio-physical phenomenon. Creating synergy requires we create a powerful connection between our own conflicted selves. Resolution of our inner conflicts, struggles, and turmoil is the essence of the synergistic journey. The biggest conflict for most people is between ego and soul. When these are in conflict, our spirit is angry or depressed or anxiety ridden. When ego and soul become aligned, they surpass harmony and enter into a synergistic interaction that supports and sustains us.

In this first volume, the key theme is to create the glorious alliance between ego and soul, which unifies our psyche and enables the building of great relationships around us, bringing out the best in others.

Look to the volumes that follow for deeper, more meaningful insight for the “source code” that empowers people to do great things.

With friendship and inspiration,

Robert Porter Lynch, Naples, Florida

Robert Ulich, a renowned professor at the Harvard School of Education in the 1950s said in *“Crisis and Hope in American Education:”*

If our schools fail to help a person discover his or her purpose [in life], they fail in almost everything that really matters.

Our schools have failed even to show the *path* towards one’s purpose. To this insight I would add that schools should also teach how to overcome *adversity*, see life itself as *lifelong learning*, and understand how to build a world you can *trust*. One aim of this set of six volumes is to correct this deficiency.

Introduction: Embracing Wisdom

I am writing this introduction to a book about wisdom more than two decades after having begun to compile the book and four decades after beginning the quest. It is only now, in my seventy seventh year, that I seem to understand what wisdom is and how it works and why it is so important.

And, for a younger generation that is evolving in a chaotic world governed more by emotions than reason, why developing wisdom early in life is so vital to finding peace, happiness, clarity, and synergy in life.

WISDOM IS THE PINNACLE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Wisdom is often seen as the Pinnacle of Human Development and Leadership Capability, enhancing creativity, innovative thinking, and the ability to handle complex social situations.

The ancient traditions of the Greeks, Hebrews, Chinese, and Buddhist cultures were insightful about the power and value of wisdom. Many of those insights I have embraced and included in this book.

Wisdom is not just about knowledge or intelligence, but also about how one applies knowledge and understanding into action to navigate complexities, solve problems, and lead a meaningful life. It is often associated with maturity and the ability to offer valuable advice or guidance to others.

Wisdom emerges from the integration of thought, heart, soul and action in personal development while balancing one's own self-interest with mutually maintaining and enhancing the greater good.

It involves reflecting on situations, evaluating options, and making principle-based choices within the context of specific situations – each is unique. In this way, wisdom respects “laws” but recognizes that each contextual relationships needs to be understood through weighing different insights and principles.

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Wisdom means the understanding of Human Behavior – how people will respond or react to a situation, a breakdown, to a relationship, to a crisis, to a leader, to a new environment. Wise people recognize that people respond to stress and uncertainty differently, and embracing each as a reality.

Wisdom is a deep understanding and insight into various aspects of life, gained through experience, reflection, and learning. It involves the ability to make sound judgments and decisions based on knowledge, experience, understanding, and a sense of justice and compassion; the ability to synthesize ideas, knowledge, heart and soul, with experience, producing actions which create the best possible results, bringing out the best in people, and producing serendipitous, attractive, virtuous energies from others.

Seven Dynamic Energies of Wisdom

Think of Wisdom as the interaction of *Seven Dynamic Energies* – each very closely integrated – each energy linked to the each other – and when they align and are balanced, they enable the creation of a synergistic system.



A wise person combines information from various sources to gain deeper insights and solve complex, often anxiety-ridden problems.

KEY QUALITIES OF WISDOM IN CHAMPIONS

Trust

Trust determines the course of history, the destiny of nations, and the fate of people. This was said to me in a personal discussion by Professor Paul Lawrence, Harvard Business School. He was first my mentor then friend.

For this reason, trust belongs first on the list of the qualities of Wisdom in Champions. Without trust, leaders have either little influence on others, or they must resort to fear to gain people's attention. Wise leaders understand that without trust, they cannot get people to work collaboratively, teamwork will disintegrate into everyman working to protect or maximize their self-interest, coordination will be difficult, and people will not focus on the mission.

Leaders who understand the nature of trust have a better understanding of human behavior, and how to motivate an organization.

Character

Since ancient times, humans have understood that trustworthy people have great character – integrity, strong values, deep commitments to friends, family, and community, compassion for others, devotion to higher spiritual authority, and especially the courage – the capacity of those with good character to overcome their fears and do the right thing, regardless of the consequences.

Good character enables a leader to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others.

Courage

Of all the qualities of a wisdom, the Greeks considered courage to be the most honorable and important. Charles Darwin, commenting in his landmark book: "The Descent of Man" stated:

"Courage is the most noble of all the attributes of man, leading him without a moment's hesitation to risk his life for that of a fellow creature; or ... to sacrifice it for some great cause." "No man can be useful or faithful to his tribe without courage. This quality has been universally placed in the highest rank."

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Ethics and Morality

Wisdom means one has conquered their own need for self-aggrandizement, becoming attuned to the need for the greater good of the whole – their organization or community. They do the right thing because they understand that it is not only a good leadership trait, but also the only way to enable a group of people to rise to the highest order of functioning. If everyone operates ethically and morally, together we attain a high standard of behavioral excellence. A wise champion has strong, sharpened values, honed on the grindstone of experience.

Resilience

People who trust themselves have good character, determined to be driven to rise to adversity with courage. They can be trusted to do the right thing under the pressure. They have the “courage of character” – they won’t break when things go wrong. People with practical wisdom have the moral will to do the right thing and the moral skill to figure out what the right thing is in any particular situation. Wise decisions are typically guided by values such as empathy, fairness, and ethical considerations, aiming for the greater good.

While resilience means to “bounce back,” the wise leader rebounds forward, not backward, and higher than they started out, doing something greater, broader, more energized, often with a paradigm shift, learning from the breakdowns, turning them into breakthroughs.

Identity

The combination of these qualities enables a champion to be clear about their identity – they know who they are in their mind, heart, and soul. They can see reality as multi-dimensional, understanding others and the unique truths each person beholds.

Their identity is based on their inner values and their character, not primarily their cultural influences nor the social group with whom they identify. As Martin Luther King said in his inspirational “I have a Dream” speech, people should be judged by the quality of their character, not by the color of their skin or other superficial qualities like race, sex, or heritage.

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Empathy and Compassion:

Wise people have a fine-tuned ability to understand and share the feelings of others, coupled with a desire to help. They feel the experience of others. However, the wise person also knows how to balance this compassion with other dynamics, such as strength of character, to ensure that empathy is not overly extended, thus depriving another of the opportunity to overcome adversity, build capabilities to overcome adversity, and rise to their highest in times of darkness and despair.

Inspiration & Enthusiasm

The wise champion of one's life understands that trust is not a cold ethical condition, nor a syrupy gushy emotional mutual commiseration, but also contains an uplift – a boost to overcome, conquer one's fears, elevating the dignity of the human spirit.

Holistic Perspective

Wise champions, while they are attuned to details, they have depth of perspective – the ability to see underlying patterns and connections that most people don't see – it's both a historic, immediate, and futuristic view. This enables the wise person to compare experience with the present situation, and predict future outcomes, seeing “around corners and over the horizon.”

This points in the direction that wisdom involves understanding complex situations and distilling them into simpler, more comprehensible insights – finding simplicity on the far side of complexity.

And, in adversity, wise champions embrace a holistic insight that allows firms to consider environmental, behavioral, cultural, and social-systemic domains together. It involves seeing multidimensional underlying patterns and connections that most people don't see. Wisdom brings clarity to complex situations.

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Vision

Wise champions always have a sense of a long-term vision. They know where they want to go, the obstacles they will encounter, the opportunities as they emerge, and the value of achieving a goal.

The Old Testament's Book of Proverbs, [29:18] states: "*Where there is no Vision, the People Perish.*" 2500 years ago it was recognized the power of vision, because it sets the foundation for finding meaning and purpose in people's lives.

Meaning & Purpose

Every human, as distinct from any other animal in the kingdom of nature, has a deep yearning desire to find meaning and purpose in their lives. Without meaning and purpose, people flounder, their "North Star" becomes obscured with "ministrivia and minutiae."

Wisdom finds meaning and purpose by setting goals that have far more than materialistic benefit. Wise champions are more interested in creating value and living abundantly than simply monetary wealth.

Wisdom is often conceptualized as having cognitive, affective, and reflective dimensions. *Integration* of these many dimensions happens in the mind and heart – my ego and my soul become aligned, balanced and connected – I become *Integral*, I have *Integrity*, thus I can *Trust Myself*, and consequently others can *Trust Me*.

Building Community

Because the wise champion is not self-centered but sees themselves as part of the greater whole, the quest for building stronger communities is a central organizing principle. This helps the champion bring out the best in others, to form teams, and build a small group of "wise counselors" who can provide deeper insight, analysis, determination, discernment, and ultimately an effective course of action.

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Humility

Humility is a pivotal quality of wisdom and crucial to becoming the champion of causes because it fosters continuous learning and growth. Humble leaders acknowledge they don't have all the answers, which opens them to new ideas and perspectives.

Humility builds trust and respect by letting us build better relationships, encouraging open communication where others feel safe to share their thoughts and concerns. This interaction makes everyone more adaptable, able to shift thinking and becoming more flexible.

Humility influences how we make decisions, by being open to input from others, a champion can make more informed and balanced decisions. When leaders are humble, they create a more collaborative environment, which boosts human energy. They consider diverse ideas, leading to innovative solutions. In this way humble leaders deeper, more meaningful connections with their team members, community, and any stakeholders in the causes they champion.

While wisdom lessens the chances of making mistakes, humble leaders are more likely to admit mistakes and take responsibility, creating a foundation for great learning and turning breakdowns into breakthroughs.

Power of Progression

Great champions live in a perpetual state of “enlightened dissatisfaction:” that sacred space between their current reality and an envisioned possibility, where the tension between reality and possibility continually draws them forward in a Quest for Excellence – what the Greeks called Arete. This is not just a personal quest, but also a communal quest to bring along their team, organization, community, or nation to reach a higher state of enlightened existence. Wisdom gives us the foundation for improving our world, enabling the champion to leave the world a better place than we found it.

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Synchronicity:

Much of wisdom is knowing when the timing is right to take action, to say something, when to wait, and how to ensure a high degree of coordination among all the moving parts of an organization. Wise champions have a far better sense of knowing when to listen, when to inquire, when speak, when to act, when to reflect, and when to do nothing. Synchronicity is an essential ingredient in creating synergy.

Insight & Foresight:

Wisdom enhances the ability to see beneath the surface of things, to grasp underlying truths and principles that may not be immediately apparent, recognizing patterns, predicting outcomes, understanding consequences, and foreseeing impacts before taking action.

Decisiveness: Integrating Thought & Action:

Wise champions have an increased capacity to make sound decisions by weighing multiple factors and considering long-term consequences. Their good character helps them to discern other leaders with good character, which enables more effective discernment and incisive decision-making, especially when complexity prevalent. By considering various perspectives and consequences, better understanding of a situation and having the ability to make sound judgments and decisions that consider multiple perspectives and wider social and ethical considerations.

Resourcefulness

The wise champion has the humility to embrace a strategy creating “organizational wisdom,” which is embedded and distributed in social practices and interactions throughout the organization, rather than being solely an individual trait: Wisdom strengthens an organization's ability to work towards multiple goals simultaneously, assign priorities appropriately, and rely less on rigid rules or guidance, thus using resources more efficiently and effectively.

It is upon this compelling rationale we enter the realm of wisdom. I encourage you to embrace deep insights who have travelled this path.

Chapter ONE: INSIGHTS & INSPIRATION

This opening chapter contains quotes that are enlightening, or profound, or insightful. I chose these because they were helpful in my personal journey. Find a dozen that are your favorites because they speak to something that stirs in the heart of your mind.

When I was going into my soul to search for my destiny and purpose, I framed a dozen of them and put them on my wall. Every morning I read one or more of them as an affirmation. In the following chapters and volumes I will provide the “source codes” that reveal why and how these quotes actually work to produce great results.

CREATING REALITY

There is no such thing as “objective reality” – reality is what we make it. We are the ultimate creators of the world we experience. Yes, there are hard times, betrayals, evil people, and unnecessary rancor. On the other side, there are the joyous moments, the loyalties, the truly good people, and unexpected acts of kindness. These simply make up our multi-layered experience.

The important thing is to know *how to respond* to this kaleidoscopic variety of experiences and know that *your identity is not your experience*. Your identity as a person is much more the response to your experience.

Life is made up of choices, and each person’s response is a reflection of either their conscious thought or their unconscious (and often self-centered) reaction.

One of the most powerful ways of training our responses is to choose heroes for our lives. At a very young age my father read history to me, some of it quite lively. My first memories were of him reading Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Treasure Island* to me at night, a chapter at a time as part of a ritual of going to bed. He also read stories of naval heroes. (I still have the books).

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Before I was ten I had devoured scores of books about people like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, and Thomas Edison, among many others. In the fourth grade, I had read a number of the “You were there at...” books that described, from a young person’s perspective, the battle of Bunker Hill, or Pearl Harbor.

Heroes are important in one’s life because they speak to a part of our soul to which we can connect: “Yes, I’d like to be like that!” or “How did he do that?” I recall reading about Thomas Edison as a young boy doing chemistry experiments, and I had to have a chemistry set. But more: how could he have tried and failed over 10,000 times in his attempt to find a filament for a light bulb? And how could he come up with so many ideas that he could file a patent every three weeks during his career?

I was deeply impressed when I read that George Washington was so honest and how he cared for his troops. I wondered how he could have tolerated so much strife, lack of support from Congress, aching and infected teeth, and still been capable of beating the British Army, which was the most hardened military force in the world? And when he won, how could he be so magnanimous?

When Teddy Roosevelt was in a college wrestling match at Harvard, a callous opponent struck him after the bell struck that ended the match. While I would have been so incensed, I might have struck the opponent in retaliation, Roosevelt graciously said “He didn’t hear the bell!” What character made up a man that was so passionate? But he also knew how and when to be angry at the right things.

Gandhi’s battle with the British to liberate India was one of the most interesting battles of peaceful resistance the world will ever experience. How a Hindu, who studied in England, learned the method of using Christian principles to attain justice is a marvel.

Reality is multi-faceted, depending upon perspective. There are *higher* realities and *lower* realities, different points of view realities, contextual realities, moral perspective realities, circumstantial realities, and so forth.

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This does not deny the validity of *Divine Reality* being of the highest order, but if a man is dying of thirst in a desert, *Divine Reality* may prolong his life, but only the *Worldly Reality* of a drink of water will ultimately save him.

Similarly, if a priest is attacked by a psychopath, the best defensive strategy may not be a prayer, but to disarm his beliefs. To say that the Reality of the Spirit (*Divine Reality*) is the only “true” reality is dangerous on this planet (but not in heaven). Such denial of the Ego Reality would cause us to deny the reality of the Dark Triad; and anyone who does puts their physical and economic realities in dire jeopardy on this planet. Such is not prudent.

Because *Divine Reality* is the Superior Reality does not mean that we sacrifice the physical for the spiritual. We must bring these two into harmony and alignment to create the synergy of the energy forces.

In the movie *Camelot*, Arthur goes into the forest to seek wisdom from the sage Merlin. Merlin takes Arthur to a pool of water and has him kneel down and bend over to look in the pool. Merlin then asks Arthur: “What to do you see.”

Arthur exclaims: “Why I see a reflection of myself!” (Reality #1)

Merlin responds: “Look deeper Arthur! Now what to you see?”

Arthur proclaims: “Why I see a fish.” (Reality #2)

And Merlin advises: “Now Arthur - *Be The Fish*; (Reality #3) and what do you experience?”

Arthur then says: “I’m a big fish eating little fish!”

Reality is a matter of perception, interpretation, and thinking.

From my study of heroes, I have been able to know my own destiny and purpose far more intimately. This quote expresses the heroic journey quite clearly.

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Positive Affirmations

Positive affirmations are the enabling legislation of the mind, coupling desire with willpower.

Know your heroes for your life. By emulating them, you borrow their power and inspiration.

If you want to be the hero of your drama, take the stage, take possession of your domain. Behave admirably, intelligently, with humor and a quiet dignity.

We watch people who project a positive sense of themselves, who have a sense of flair and an air of confidence, and above all who are absolutely present in the moment.

Look, act, and feel the part. Create the reality you seek.

--Gerald Jackson

Don't quit!

Too many of us give up before we achieve our goals. None of us like the idea of "struggle," but there is a difference between persistence and obstinacy. The *obstinate* will just push and shove, often butting their head against the wall.

The *persistent* will change tactics, learn from their mistakes, alter course to avoid immovable objects, and use opposing forces to gain momentum. Persistence requires staying in top physical condition, clarity of purpose, and spiritual elevation. This quote inspired me:

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,

Transform Your Destiny!

When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must, but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about,
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up though the pace seems slow--
You may succeed with another blow.

Often the goal is nearer than
It seems to a faint and faltering man,
Often the struggler has given up,
When he might have captured the victor's cup,
And he learned too late when the night slipped down,
How close he was to the golden crown.

Success is failure turned inside out--
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far,
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit--
It's when things seem worst that you must not quit.

- Author unknown

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Persistence

Nothing in the world

Can take the place of PERSISTENCE....

TALENT will not;

Nothing is more common

Than unsuccessful men with talent....

GENIUS will not;

Unrewarded genius is almost a proverb....

EDUCATION will not;

The world is full of educated derelicts....

PERSISTENCE and DETERMINATION

alone are OMNIPOTENT.

The slogan "PRESS ON" has solved....

And always will solve,

The problems of the human race.

--Calvin Coolidge

When you're going through hell ---Don't stop!

Illegitimus Non Carborundum

Latin: Don't let the bastards grind you down!

- General Joe Stillwell

THOUGHTS ARE THINGS

I hold it true that thoughts are things
Endowed with bodies, breath, and wings,
And that we send them forth to fill
The world with good results - or ill.

That which we call our secret thought
Speeds to the earth's remotest spot,
And leaves its blessings or its woes
Like tracks behind it as it goes.

It is God's law. Remember it
In your still chamber as you sit
With thoughts you would not dare have known,
And yet made comrades when alone.

These thoughts have life; and they will fly
And leave their impress by-and-by,
Like some marsh breeze, whose poisoned breath
Breathes into homes its fevered breath.

And after you have quite forgot
Or all outgrown some vanished thought,
Back to your mind to make its home,
A dove or raven, it will come.

Then let your secret thoughts be fair;
They have a vital part and share
In shaping worlds and moulding fate --
God's system is so intricate."

— Ella Wheeler Wilcox

THOUGHTS DESIGN REALITY

Ultimately, how we choose to think, how we choose to see our experience, and how we make choices in our responses creates the reality we experience. Thus, reality is dynamic and open to our ability to design the architecture that determines our lives and the pathways that make up our journey.

Be careful when you see reality through someone else's lenses, such as a newspaper account, social media, a history book, or a movie. You are not in charge of your reality in these cases, you are experiencing someone else's reality, even if it is a touching, although vicarious, experience.

History Rigidifies Reality,
Analysis Dissects Reality,
Knowledge Freezes Reality,
Answers Limit Reality,
Questions Explore Reality,
Arguing Disproves Reality,
Boundaries Confine Reality,
Control Manipulates Reality,
Emotions Interpret Reality,
Fear Negates Reality,
Memories Revive Reality,
Living in the Moment Unfolds Reality,
Creativity Stimulates New Reality,
Joy Unleashes Reality,
Wisdom Tempers Reality,
Anxiety Aggravates Reality,

Transform Your Destiny!

Anger Poisons Reality,
Vision Enlivens Reality,
Empowerment Regenerates Reality,
Freedom Expands Reality
Love Lifts Reality,
Paradox Validates Alternative Reality,
Spirituality Enlarges Reality,
the Soul Embraces Divine Reality,

Reality is the Dynamic Absence of Limitation

– Robert Porter Lynch

HISTORY

Our modern view of history can rigidify reality, because all-too-often it focuses on events and chronology, not intent and interaction. When history was first created by the Greeks, the essence of history (from the word *historia*) meant *an inquiry into meaning, a learning or knowing by inquiry; an account of one's inquiries; knowledge, account, historical account, record, narrative,*" – to search, inquire, finding *first causes*, understanding the inner motives of leaders, and exploring the nature of human behavior. History gave meaning to the past, challenged conventional thought, and was intended to enlighten both the mind and the soul.

We can view history as a matter of choices – perceptions, interpretations, something to be cherished or vilified or built upon.

History is the navigational landmark from which to plot the course of the future. The past holds the possibility from which we can propel and spark our imagination and inspiration. Or we

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can look with disdain upon its transgressions and wallow in remorse. But to neglect the past is to turn our backs and receive its deadly arrows at our most vulnerable times unprepared for such an intense onslaught.

-- Robert Porter Lynch

Great Minds

Great minds discuss ideas;
Average minds discuss things;
Small minds discuss people.

-Eleanor Roosevelt

Shift Perceptions

When faced with an Unalterable Fate,
Our Greatest Freedom is our ability to ...
.....Alter Our Perception of it.

-- Victor Frankl

Dawn of Life

For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin - real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be got through first, some unfinished business, time still to be served, a debt to be paid.

Then life would begin.

Finally it dawned on me: these obstacles *were*
my life.

-- Alfred D'Souza

Transform Your Destiny!

Extraordinary Results

How do great people get such great results? One thing they do is to set *unreasonable* goals. Why? Because great people are *unreasonable*. (I'm not implying that they are irrational or unrealistic.)

One of my favorite movies is *Miracle*, the story of the 1984 U.S. Olympic Hockey team composed of a bunch of college guys who challenged the Soviet team that had won every Olympic Gold Medal since 1960. (this was the time before professionals were allowed to compete in the Olympics.)

The Russians were behemoths; monsters on ice. The game was a David versus Goliath spectacle. On paper, there was no way the U.S. amateurs could beat the Russians. Every reasonable pundit knew that.

But they didn't factor in the fact that coach Herb Brooks was an unreasonable man. He believed the college guys could beat the Soviet team, despite the daunting odds. Brooks conditioned his team, pushed his players to the limit, brought out the best in their team spirit.

Result: The Soviet team went down in a humiliating defeat to a team of amateurs that wanted victory more than the Russians who expected it.

Reasonable People produce Reasonable Results.

Extraordinary Results flow from

Persistent Visionaries committed to

Unreasonably Worthy Goals.

Their Spirit Thrives in a Perpetual State of

Enlightened Dissatisfaction Committed to the Idea:

"IT CAN BE DONE!"

-- Robert Porter Lynch
(with inspiration from George Bernard Shaw)

Noblest Way to Fail

John Milton was a failure. In writing *Paradise Lost*, his aim was to "justify the ways of God to men." Inevitably, he fell short and wrote only a monumental poem.

Beethoven, whose music was conceived to transcend fate, was a failure, as was Socrates, whose ambition was to make people happy by making them reasonable and just.

The surest, noblest way to fail is to set one's standards titanicly high.

The flip side of that proposition also seems true. The surest way to succeed is to keep one's striving low. Many people, by external standards, will be "successes." They will own homes, eat in better restaurants, dress well and, in some instances, perform socially useful work.

Yet fewer people are putting themselves on the line, making as much of their minds and talents as they might.

Frequently, success is what people settle for when they can't think of something noble enough to be worth failing at.

-- Letter to Editor, New York Times

Transform Your Destiny!

Vision & Planning

There are some old adages in the profession of carpentry that set standards of excellence.

On the negative side there's the admonition:
"A little putty and a little paint,
make a carpenter what he ain't."

In other words, you can cover up your inadequacies, but in the end, the flaws are still there. There's a better expression:

"Measure Twice, Cut Once"

In other words, don't make a vital move unless you know what you are doing and understand the consequences. This is important if you are executing someone else's plans.

My grandfather observed: even if you are executing someone else's plans, think carefully about *planning* before jumping into the *doing*.

"Plan Thrice, Measure Twice, Cut Once"

The first level of planning is to think *Three Steps Ahead* (or more) – What's the "concept?" (the big picture?) What's are the "system requirements?" What are the objectives? What are the alternatives? How will the project unfold? What people, parts and tools are needed? How do you align/integrate the parts?

The second layer is for *Execution* – getting the idea down to the details, the costs, the functionality, the nuts and bolts about how the idea really has to work in the harsh realities of the real world.

The last layer is about where it will *Breakdown*? How to fix it when breakdowns occur or it needs upgrading? How the pieces connect? Is there an Early Warning Signal before a breakdown?

-- Robert Porter Lynch

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It is no wonder, that chance has so great a hold over us, since we live by chance. – Seneca

How many of us live our lives by chance, with no thought of design? Our plans go awry because they have neither aim, nor wisdom, nor design. -- Robert Porter Lynch

The archer must first know at what he is aiming, and then accommodate his hand, his bow, the string, the arrow and his movements, accordingly.

“Your Arrows are falling short because your aim is not high enough.” --Master Archer to his student

We can only create the path by walking on it.

-- Native American Saying

Shouldn't we spend a bit more time surveying the terrain and thinking about the journey before aimlessly creating a path to oblivion? -Robert Porter Lynch

God doesn't require us to succeed;

He only requires that you try. -Mother Teresa

A Life Half-Lived is Not Worth Living.

-- inspired by Socrates

RESISTANCE

Beware of the self-righteous, especially if you are prone to be self-righteous yourself. This is a problem for anyone who makes a stand to do the right thing, and consciously avoids making ethical errors.

But beware. There is ever so fine a line between doing the right thing, and becoming self-righteous. In the New Testament Christ chastises the self-righteous for having no caring and no respect for others.

One's righteousness should be carried quietly with strength, on display only when called for.

Those who make righteousness the centerpiece of their essence, and not just a component of their character, become self-centered, and, frankly boring, if not ugly in their demeanor.

Falstaff said in a Shakespearean play: "Me thinks he does protest too much." We all too often read of the evangelical minister who professes from the pulpit about being pure in thought and gets caught in a brothel.

Is it that what we hate in others is what we hate in ourselves? Is it that what we obsess about condemning shuts out all compassion, respect, and creativity for a new solution?

What you Resist....

--You Attract or Become.

What you Resist....

--Persists!

Similarly, the so-called "Law of Attraction" means you will attract people of like minds, and the very people you despise. Opposites attract and their collision is typically not productive, kind, or inspiring. Bright souls will attract dark forces, strugglers and energy suckers.

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Hope

Most people think of hope as a positive force in our lives. To a certain extent it is true. But hope is not an ending, it's a beginning.

Hope is what we often choose out of desperation, as an alternative to depression.

It's easy to fuss and stew over things, especially money and love and health. Worrying often turns into helplessness, hurt, and impotence.

We choose hope as the first best alternative to depression. But hope is an opiate to the mind; it will lift us momentarily, but it is not a foundation for a life or a destiny.

*Hope is a Good Breakfast,
But a Bad Supper--Francis Bacon*

Hope has no power, because it lacks commitment. Build a plan, set goals, get the wheels in motion, make something happen.

Recently an older friend, Dianna, had a nervous breakdown. Before the breakdown she was a vibrant, vivacious, and vital person filled with passion and a love of life. Now Dianna was immobilized and inactive, suffering from deep depression, a shell of her former self.

I asked her what she really wanted to do for the rest of her life. She said she'd like to work with children. I encouraged her to begin that journey now.

Dianna refrained, saying that she didn't want to start until she was healed. I suggested that her best way of healing was to start working with children now -- *get her brain reconfigured by taking action.*

It's just like a warrior in battle who is severely injured and can no longer walk. The best therapy *is not to wait for the person to be healed* before retraining them to walk, but to start walking as soon as possible; *the brain will rise to the aspiration.*

Transform Your Destiny!

The Set of the Soul

Starting in life, it's easy to chase rainbows, get-rich-quick schemes, and taking the easy way. Later in life, it becomes obvious what a difference one's choices make.

One ship goes East another West,
By the same-self winds that blow.

'Tis the set of the sails and not the Gale,
That determines the way they go.

Like the ships at sea are the ways of fate,
As we voyage along through life.

'Tis the set of the soul
that decides the goal,
And not the calm or strife.

-- Ella Wheeler Wilcox

No wind serves the ship that has no port or destination.

At my twentieth college reunion I spoke with numerous classmates about their career choices. Many chose the legal profession because it paid well and gave them a certain stature in life.

I asked them if they had the choice to make again, would they take this path? The large majority said "no;" it just wasn't productive or satisfying. The law turned out to be a bitter adversarial game, with little justice, few victories worth fighting for, and even fewer psychic rewards.

It is not our circumstances that determines our fate, but our vision and courage to turn the tide. -- Robert Porter Lynch

Panic is a sudden succumbing to our fears, becoming swamped by a flood-tide of negativity and darkness, extinguishing the glow of possibility. -- Robert Porter Lynch

Viciousness engulfs the void not filled by virtue. -- Robert Porter Lynch

Passion cannot see beyond its nose; Reason sees over the horizon and around corners -- Robert Porter Lynch

Self-distrust is the cause of most of our failure. In the assurance of strength there is strength, and, they are the weakest, however strong, who have no faith in themselves or their powers. — Christian Nevell Bovee

MONEY

Only the Greedy can never have enough Money.

Happiness is never at the end of the road in the quest for money.

One can be wealthy, but still have poverty of the soul, which is the most forsaken form of poverty.

Don't forget to count your blessings when you are counting your money.

What is the value of a wonderful smile or a Gift given from the Heart?

I'm too poor to buy cheap stuff --old Turkish Saying

The real value of anything is "the second highest bid" in an auction.

- old Jewish Saying

What does a pickpocket see when he encounters an Angel?

No pockets!

A fool knows the price of everything,
and the value of nothing

Money can't buy me Love! - the Beatles

Value: an Old Yankee Story:

Hyrum to Cyrus: Them new shoes you're wearin'?

Cyrus: Yup!

Hyrum: How much didja pay for 'em?

Cyrus: Don't know; ain't finished wearin' em yet!

SUCCESS

We all want to be successful in life, it's normal. You might want to be wary of someone who doesn't choose success – their standards might be far too low, or their expectations for life too mediocre.

However, for most people success is just an illusion, the false belief that it is measured in material terms: money, homes, cars, and so forth.

In reality, success is a far more soulful experience, requiring an ever-evolving unfolding of the creation new possibilities.

Don't Aim at Success;

The more you Aim at it,

And make it a Target,

The more you will Miss It.

For Success, like Happiness,

Cannot be Pursued,

It must Ensur...

As the Unintended Side Effect

Of one's Personal Dedication

to a Course Greater Than Oneself.

-- Viktor Frankl
from *Man's Search for Meaning*

Transform Your Destiny!

Visions & Ideals

Starting the journey begins with aiming high.... it's always easier to dial back a lofty ideal than to energize the mundane. Better to shoot for the moon and hit a mountain top than to shoot for your foot which you are sure to hit.

Dream Lofty Dreams

and as you Dream, so you shall Become.

The Vision Glorified in your Mind,

Is the Promise of what you shall one day Be;

The Ideal Enthroned in your Heart,

Is the Prophecy of what you shall at last Unveil.

The Greatest Achievement was at first

and for a time a Dream:

the oak sleeps in the acorn;

the bird waits in the egg;

in the Highest Vision of the Soul

a waking angel stirs.

Dreams are the Seedlings of Realities.

Cherish your Visions; Cherish your Ideals;

Cherish the Vision that stirs in your Heart,

The Beauty that forms in your Mind,

The Loveliness that drapes your Purest Thoughts,

For out of them will grow Delightful Conditions,

All Heavenly Environment;

Of these, if you but Remain True to them

YOUR WORLD WILL AT LAST BE BUILT.

--James Allen, from *As a Man Thinketh*

Action in the Pursuit of a Dream

Lofty dreams are admirable and worthy of one's pursuit. But high-minded vision is not a salve for anxiety. The standard bearer is a lightning rod for opinions, jealousy, and those who are distressed and threatened by someone who has found their path, as this quote illustrates:

The person who takes action in the pursuit of a dream will inevitably draw strong feelings.

Such emotions always follow the daring leader; he draws love or hate, the crown of olives or the assassin's bullet.

Perhaps if he is truly charismatic, his brow will be kissed by both -- Lucky him, for the first requirement of immortality is death -- and lucky too, while mortal, to have been spared the living death of apathy. JOHN WAREHAM -- *Secrets of a Corporate Headhunter*

Greatness

The pathway to one's destiny does not necessarily lead to greatness. For some, destiny's dream may simply be to a wonderful mother, or a very honest, capable car mechanic who treats his customers fairly..

But no matter what the path, a very special force flows through one when on the path of destiny. An energy takes over that has a wonderful and miraculous effect on the destiny seeker and those who come into his or her presence.

Think like a Man of Action; Act like a Man of Thought

-- Anonymous

Really great men have a curious feeling
that the greatness is not *in* them,
but *through* them. --John Ruskin

How this energy manifests is exactly as Ruskin suggests above, and often it manifests when one least expects: It was Christmas Eve, and I was running late on grocery shopping for a Christmas dinner to be served the next day. I dashed into the supermarket at 6:30 to find some last minute ingredients for a special meal. As I went through the checkout counter, the bag-boy, who was about 18 years old, commented that I was one of the last customers before they closed. He needed to do some last minute shopping himself; he needed to find a gift for his mother.

I looked at him and smiled.

I said, "Your mother would appreciate one gift above and beyond all else. She is a great woman – raising a son is an enormous task. Just think of all the stinking diapers she changed, all the meals she cooked, all the dirty clothes she washed, and all the time she took to raise you as a well-mannered young man. Here's the best present you could give you mother – first go over to the flower section, and choose a beautiful bouquet. Then take an hour's time and write her the most heart-felt love letter you can compose, that expresses your love for her and gives her thanks and gratitude for what she has done for you."

The boy beamed; his eyes sparkled, and his burden was lifted. He said he would start thinking of the words right now!

The difference between arrogance and fortitude should be
the difference between self-service and the greater good.

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Winning

Everyone wants to be a winner, but not everyone likes a winner. Football coach Vince Lombardi once said:

*Winning isn't everything. It's the only thing!*¹

Lombardi often regretted this statement. He said it in times of frustration and stress, and knew that anyone who followed this advice all the time would be headed for trouble. Richard Nixon made this mistake, caught himself in the Watergate trap, and left the presidency in disgrace. So did Lance Armstrong, Barry Bonds and others who cheated sports with drugs. As Lombardi's son reflected:

"He would do anything in his power – and the power of those under his command – to win, including pushing his players to perform beyond their own perceptions of their limits and demanding the utmost commitment from every member of the team. This is certainly not to say he tolerated dishonest means of achieving victory, a notion that appalled his Jesuit-derived (and West Point nurtured) code of honor. He was known to pull players from games if they resorted to playing outside the rules."²

More insightfully, Lombardi zeroed in on deeper fundamentals:

*Battles are won primarily in the hearts of men....A guy may have the potential to be the best player of all time ... able, agile and intelligent. Yet unless he is totally committed to the team and victory as a unit, he won't win ball games. And winning is the name of the game.*³

In the final analysis, winning can be an obsession instead of an objective. Winning is not really about the glory in the end; it's about pushing oneself to work together as a team, to overcome mental and physical obstacles, to pay the price of winning without cheating one's character and soul. One wins inside first, so that what shows up on the outside is something everyone can admire.

A scoundrel who wins is a lowly loser in disguise.

INSIGHT AND BALANCE

It's quite easy to let one's ego become carried away with oneself. The ancient Chinese were quite aware of the importance of humbleness and the paradox of success.

Both Praise and Blame create Difficulties,
For they bring people Hope and Fear.

Hope and Fear, Success and Failure,
are all Illusions that only exist when you
experience yourself as the Center of Everything.

When you're Centered on Learning
you only Experience Results.

Fame or Integrity:
which is more Powerful?

Success or Failure:
which is more Destructive?

Health or Possessions:
which has more Worth?

Money or Happiness:
which is more Rewarding?

Great Devotion incurs Great Expense;
Great Wealth incurs Great Fear.

--Adapted from the Tao Te Ching ~500 B.C.

Of all the many statements about life itself, perhaps none is more striking than Rudyard Kipling's poem *If*. It expresses a fullness of the many struggles and travails that one must transcend to evolve as an ever-learning, ever-caring soul.

Transform Your Destiny!

Attaining the standards Kipling describes in *If* takes a lifetime of work, discovering one's real value and purpose in life, and building one's character. The Greeks understood the time it takes to build one's character; the word is derived from *kharakter* which means to *carve into*, signifying the depth and strength and permanency created by character.

***Definition: Character** - the inherent complex of attributes that determines a person's moral and ethical actions and reactions;*

trait - a distinguishing feature of your personal nature
personality - the complex of all the attributes--behavioral, temperamental, emotional and mental--that characterize a unique individual; "their different reactions reflected their very different personalities"; "it is his nature to help others"

spirit - a fundamental emotional and activating principle determining one's character

thoughtfulness - the trait of thinking carefully before acting

responsibleness, responsibility - a form of trustworthiness; the trait of being answerable to someone for something or being responsible for one's conduct; "he holds a position of great responsibility"

integrity - moral soundness; "he expects to find in us the common honesty and integrity of men of business"; "they admired his scrupulous professional integrity"

The Power of Thoughts

The idea of *character becomes destiny* was first proposed by Heraclitus, a Greek who lived about 500 BC. It is so true, because character will mold your everyday decisions that form the pattern of your life: your goals, your understanding of situations, the opportunities that emerge for you, your responses to difficulty, and ultimately how you make a difference in the world. This all starts with what you think about:

Watch your thoughts;

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they become belief systems.
Watch your belief systems,
they become actions.
Watch your actions;
they become habits.
Watch your habits;
they become identity.
Watch your identity;
it becomes character.
Watch your character;
it becomes your destiny.

(Adapted from Marcus Aurelius)

All too often we fall into our identity and thus our character blindly, without choice, without thinking, without conscious decisions.

Four dirty little tricks get played in the mind by our egos: the first is the *blame game*, the second *grandiosity*, the third *anger*, last *complaining*.

Mythology

Modern legends are just like Greek Myths – an amalgam of half truths, hallucinatory bubbles, peppered with veracity, and portrayed as reality.

– Robert Porter Lynch

Transform Your Destiny!

The Blame Game

The blame game tricks us into giving away our power to move the world. By blaming others and thus taking away our own accountability and responsibility in either creating the problem or generating a solution that embraces others. The blame game divides people against each other and causes them to play the other side either by defending themselves or by attacking in return; both options make matters worse.

He who complies against his will,
Is of the same opinion still. - Old English Saying

He who seeks trouble,
Will likely find it double. - my Grandmother's Saying

He who always finds blame,
Will likely lose the game. --Robert Porter Lynch

Humbleness

Avoiding grandiosity is a discipline needed to keep the ego in check because it breaks our connection to our soul.

A large Ego may house a large brain,
But Ego-driven arrogance
Drives blame, self-righteousness, and anger.
It's a massive impediment to real learning.

A large Soul is a strong dose of humbleness
Driving vision, compassion, and character.
It's the foundation of everlasting growth.

--Robert Porter Lynch

ADAPT

As the seasons change, a tree sheds its leaves but keeps its roots.
So too shed your opinions but keep your divine principles.
We enslave our minds within the jaws of narrow opinions.

- Robert Porter Lynch

The Shortest Distance

The engineer and mathematician hold firm the belief that the shortest distance is a straight line.

They consulted neither a river nor a lightning bolt, who would advise: "it's the path of least resistance."

- Robert Porter Lynch

EGO

Our egos are not bad things to be despised and rejected and demeaned and desecrated. Ego serves an important purpose in hostile environments for our self-preservation, to ensure we get what we need to survive, to give us the will power to assert ourselves when there is scarcity.

However, the problem comes when we let our ego take over, dominating our soul, demanding when we should be giving, hoarding when it is better to be sharing, focusing on our needs when our family, team, partner, or friends have greater needs.

Ultimately, ensuring our soul (or conscience if you prefer another name) must always be given final say in the game of life. Soul is the *guiding* force; Ego is the *driving* force. Never should the ego take on both roles.

When the Ego takes center stage in our lives, too often blame and grandiosity team up to destroy relationships and guide down a slippery path to perdition.

My friend Dante is a spiritual seeker who professes to have found enlightenment, extols the virtues of unconditional love, and pontificates about acting with conscious awareness. He has taken classes in spiritual wisdom, and knows, from an intellectual perspective, all the great spiritual philosophers. But his Ego is still in charge. He has not assimilated spiritual wisdom and let his Soul guide his Ego in the assessments of relationships.

ANGER

Of all the many passions in life, the most dangerous is anger. It is the most damaging of all emotions; uncontrolled death and destruction are its ugly birth-child.

Emotions may be real to you, but they are not “reality;” emotions are our personal *response* to a real experience. But too many people treat their emotions as if they were “reality,” then they take inappropriate action on the rage that pours through them.

My friend Dante has a very real, debilitating anger problem, and it has damaged our relationship. Unfortunately, in real life, Dante, now an old man, has never confronted his problem. His ego relishes in getting angry. He gets a passionate rush of superiority. When his computer doesn't function the way he wants it to, Dante screams and cusses in anger, blaming it for its sinful behavior. (Of course the computer just behaved normally as it was programmed; Dante wanted the computer to change its operating rules.). And Dante simply doesn't realize that cussing just poisons his soul, which further intensifies the anger.

When something doesn't go his way, when he senses he loses control, he cusses, blames, rants, and turns into a self-righteous monster, playing victim, and using his intellectual powers to find fault with others. It happens over and over again. When people don't respond to him the way he wants, he throws temper tantrums just like a little child, walling himself off from others. People who are his “friends” suddenly become the object of his wrath. He has lost his longest and dearest friends, alienated himself from his children, and never seen that the one common denominator in life's picture is *himself*. His blame game is just a way of him playing victim to garner pity and attention. Life has pooped on him. He makes enemies out of friends, but says this was never his intention.

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He who angers you, conquers you.

-- Sister Elizabeth Kenny

No conflict is so severe

..... as his who labors to subdue himself.

--Thomas A. Kempis (1380-1471)

In a false quarrel there is no true valor.

--Shakespeare

The man who strikes first admits

that his ideas have given out. --Chinese Proverb

Be calm in arguing;

for fierceness makes error a fault,

and truth discourtesy. --Herbert (1593-1632)

Don't take the wrong side of an argument just
because your opponent has taken the right
side.

--Baltasar Gracian (1601-1658)

Strong and bitter words indicate a weak cause.

--Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

Controversy equalizes fools and wise men

- and the fools know it.

--Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894)

Act nothing in a furious passion;

It's putting to sea in a raging storm.

Fuller (1608-1661)

Viciousness engulfs the void not filled by virtue.

Transform Your Destiny!

--Robert Porter Lynch

Anger may repast with thee for an hour,
But not repose for a night;
The continuance of anger is hatred,
The continuance of hatred turns malice.
Anger is not warranted
which hath seen two suns.

Quarles

In rage deaf as the sea; Hasty as fire;
Oppose not rage while in its force,
But give it way and let it waste.

Shakespeare

If you hate a person,
you hate something in him that is
part of yourself.

What isn't part of ourselves...
...doesn't disturb us.

Herman Hesse

Passion cannot see beyond its nose;
Reason sees over the horizon and around corners.

--Robert Porter Lynch

To be angry is to revenge
the faults of others on ourselves.

Pope

Wisdom Project

Hatred is the coward's revenge
for being intimidated.

G.B. Shaw

How much more grievous are the
consequences of anger, than the causes of it.

Marcus Aurelius

Indulge not thyself in the passion of anger;
It sharpens a sword...

...to wound thine own breast,
...or murder thy friend.

The root of revenge
is in the weakness of the Soul;
the most abject and timorous
are the most addicted to it.

There is nothing so easy
as to revenge an offense;
but nothing so honourable as to pardon it.

Akhenaton (c. B.C. 1375)

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end;

I was angry with my foe;
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

Blake

If we open a quarrel between the past and the
present, we shall find we have lost the future.

-- Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

It ain't so much the things we don't know that get us into trouble.

It's the things we do know that just ain't so.

— Artemus Ward

When angry, count ten before you speak,
if very angry, count to a hundred. – Thomas Jefferson

Always remember, others may hate you, but those who hate you don't win unless you hate them, and then you destroy yourself. -- Richard Nixon

Power & Freedom

The Advance of Freedom is neither inevitable nor permanent. In politics, where the lure of power is strong, and the temptation to abuse it is often irresistible, there are no permanent victories, nor defeats.

Bill Clinton, commenting on Madeline Albright at her funeral

Take Anger Slowly

Don't lose your temper – the passion of anger becomes consuming and self-degenerative. Slow down time. Before speaking or writing your anger, ask three questions:

1. **Am I in impending danger?** (if not, then take it slowly)
2. **What am I assuming?** (probably a whole lot!)
 - Did the other person intend to harm me?
 - Or was it just their ignorance or negligence?
 - What was the other person's intention?
(maybe I should talk to them first!)

- What was the other person's situation/perspective?
3. **What does wisdom tell me about this situation?**
- Is it my ego that's angry?
 - What does my soul tell me? -- RPL

An insidious trick the ego plays on us to protect us from taking responsibility for our lives takes the form of *complaining*.

Often *complaining* teams up with the *blame game* in the form of *gossip*, or worse, the sense of being *prosecuted/persecuted*. Or *complaining* teams up with *anger* in the form of *negativity*, coloring our world in deep darkness. These mind-tricks becomes stuff in our heads, comments we make to ourselves, psycho-babble that ends up making us victims, looking for pity or a rescuer.

Another trick the ego will play is to turn *complaining* into *worrying*, an emotion that is based simply on fear. Anxiety is just a form of fear – the anticipation of something hurtful, harmful, or dangerous. This fear makes every interaction a win-lose game.

A Prelude to Action

Most people complain about the conditions around them. Surprisingly, complaints never seem to make any difference at all.

Truly effective people only complain about the things they can do something about; it's an affirmation signaling that they are gearing up to translate pain into remedy:

My Complaint is a *Prelude to Action*;

My Lament is a *Prelude to Transformation*

– Robert Porter Lynch

FEAR

Few people can be fearless. Child psychologists maintain that we are born with only two natural fears – fear of falling and fear of loud noises. (some add the fear of abandonment) But by the time we reach adulthood there have been enough incursions on our safety and security by parents, bullies, employers, and strangers, along with what we've been exposed to from television, movies, and the internet, we have learned many things and ways to fear. In other words, fear, for the most part is *learned*. That's the bad news.

The good news is that we can *learn* many things to *neutralize, transform, and transcend* fear. This doesn't mean fear goes away. Brain science tells us that fear is seared into the memory structure of the mind and will reemerge when triggered by any pattern of experience in the "now" that resembles a fearful situation from the "past."

As a Vietnam war veteran, the crack of a firecracker sounds eerily like the crack of a sniper's rifle. At a Fourth of July celebration, my body still jumps when I heard a loud noise as memories of war are recalled in a millisecond. Similarly, the smell of the gunpowder from the fireworks resembles the smell of death and destruction.

When any of those trigger my senses, I breathe deeply, determine if I'm in danger, then take appropriate action, which is usually to sit back and enjoy the show.

Fear is implanted in us as a preservative from evil;
but its duty, like that of other passions, is not to
overbear reason, but to assist it.

It should not be suffered to tyrannize the
imagination, to raise phantoms of horror, or to
beset life with supernumerary distresses.

-- Johnson (1709-1784)

Fear is not a lasting teacher of duty.

-- Cicero (B.C. 106-43)

Transform Your Destiny!

Panic is a sudden succumbing to our fears,
becoming swamped by a flood-tide of negativity
and darkness, extinguishing sparks of possibility.

--Robert Porter Lynch

Fear is proof of a degenerate mind. -- Vergil (B. 70-19)

There is no passion so contagious as that of fear.

-- Montaigne (1533-1592)

Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows,
but only empties today of its strength.

-- Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)

In morals what begins in fear usually ends in wickedness;
in religion what begins in fear usually ends in fanaticism.
Fear, either as a principle or a motive, is the beginning of
all evil. -- Anna Jameson (1794-1860)

Depression, gloom, pessimism, despair, discouragement,
these slay ten human beings to every one murdered by
typhoid, influenza, diabetes or pneumonia. If tuberculosis is
the great white plague, then fear is the great black plague.

-- Gilbert Murray (1866-1957)

Fear will bring out the worst in many people, but in the few
for whom character prevails, fear becomes a catalyst for courage.

DESTINY

I don't know what your destiny will be,
But I do know that those who will be really happy,
Are those who have sought and found how to serve.

--Albert Schweitzer

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On Character

Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.

You can't let praise or criticism get to you. It's a weakness to get caught up in either one.

Talent is God given. Be humble.

Fame is man-given. Be grateful.

Conceit is self-given. Be careful.

Don't measure yourself by what you have accomplished, but by what you should have accomplished with your ability.

Adversity is the state in which man mostly easily becomes acquainted with himself, being especially free of admirers then.

Success comes from knowing that you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.

Failure is not fatal, but failure to change might be.
It isn't what you do, but how you do it.

--Quotes from Coach John Wooden

Character becomes Destiny

-Heraclitus (~500 BC)

Trust becomes Identity

--Robert Porter Lynch

The Greatest Courage is to fully commit yourself to the highest purpose God has put you on the earth to fulfill; and to manifest Destiny's Dream every day of your life.

It is on destiny's pathway that the deepest and truest happiness will be found.

--Robert Porter Lynch

Central Organizing Principles of Vitality

*Character is to Destiny,
what Trust is to Humanity,
what Truth is to Reality,
what Gravity is to Stability,
what Love is to Divinity.*

Robert Porter Lynch

*A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.
Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle,
Without dimming the brilliance of the first candle.
Happiness never decreases by being shared.
Trust expands in the absence of fear.
Creativity blossoms the more frequently ideas travel.
Joy is fired by spontaneous combustion.*

-- Robert Porter Lynch

THE MEANING OF LIFE

For Centuries Philosophers have asked the Question:

"What is the Meaning of Life?"

Perhaps the Answer is actually quite Simple:

The Meaning of life is:

To Find Meaning in Life -- To Seek,
then Strive for Your Highest & Best Destiny!

Those Who Seek their *Highest and Best Destiny*
Define themselves by their Possibilities.

To Deny Your Destiny, Is To Deny Your Essence.

The journey to one's highest personal destiny
commences with knowing one's heritage.

--Robert Porter Lynch

Noble Purpose

Too often, success is little but the agglomeration of
material illusions masking our mediocrity from
settling for a dream not noble enough to be worthy of
failure.

- Robert Porter Lynch

Fulfillment

If you look to Others for Fulfillment,
You will Never truly be Fulfilled.
If your Happiness depends on Money,
You will Never be Happy with Yourself.

--adapted from the Tao Te Ching (written 500 BC)
Mitchell and Merol translations

Success and Failure

It seems we all fret about failure. For college graduates, the fear of failure is paramount, and very often debilitating, stopping people in their tracks because they fear they will not be successful.

Failure is a sense of perspective, with illusionary parameters. Instead of perceiving failure, experienced real learning, then used those learnings to create something even better. Those of us that push the edges of life will experience more failures than those who don't even try. The best way to protect against failure is to do nothing, which ironically will cause life itself, taken as a whole, to be an abject failure.

The Hallmark of a Successful Person
Is Not how they Dealt with Success,
But How they Dealt with Failure.

--Robert Porter Lynch

Mission

There are few greater gifts,
No higher purpose,
No more magnetic reward,
No blessing more magnificent,
Than to be blessed
 with a glorious mission in life
 to guide one's personal destiny!
We are all blessed with a glorious mission
 For some it is small, for others larger, but we
must seek and find it.
There is glory, dignity, and joy
in both the small and the large.

--Robert Porter Lynch

COMMITMENT

Real Power -- Glorious Power -- comes from making a commitment to something that aligns the ego and the soul.

Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness.

Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans:

That the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too.

All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred.

A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamt would have come his way.

I have learned a deep respect for one of Goethe's couplets:

*Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.*

--From The Scottish Himalayan Expedition by W.H. Murray

When you put your driving forces of ego into alignment with the guiding forces of soul -- committed to your highest and best destiny, your life flows freely. The ego is committed to a myriad of unaligned possibilities and opportunities. When one turns "desire" into an honorable "commitment", ego and soul shift into alignment. If you let the ego overwhelm the soul, you let Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, and Distrust to reign supreme - both the driving and guiding forces of your life.

Transform Your Destiny!

In the Arena

It's quite easy to stand on the sidelines and take verbal shots at those in the spotlight who are taking the risks, giving life their fullest, and often producing something less than what they envisioned:

It is not the critic who counts;

Not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena....

whose face is marred with dust and sweat and blood,
who strives valiantly;
who errs and comes short again and again;
who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotion;
who spends himself in a worthy cause;
who, at the best, knows the triumph of high
achievement, and, at the worst,
at least fails while daring greatly,
so that his place shall never be with those cold and
timid souls who know neither victory or defeat.

--Theodore Roosevelt

Far better to have dared mighty things;
To win glory 'though checkered by disaster;
Than to take rank with those poor spirits
who've made mediocrity their master.

Neither enjoying nor suffering much,
Always choosing to be discreet,
While they wallow in the fog and grey twilight,
knowing neither victory nor defeat.

--Adapting Teddy Roosevelt's words for an after-dinner toast

NOBILITY OF COURAGE

Of all human qualities, courage stands at the pinnacle. Not mere bravado, nor unbridled bravery, but uncommon valor driven by care for a commonwealth. Courage marshals might against injustice, yet carefully tempers strength with mercy.

Courage is not the absence of fear, but the rising above fear.

It is based on the French word “coeur” which means “heart.”

The brave are fools for they are fearless.

The courageous are heroic for they conquer their fears.

The courageous waste little thought on personal cost, lifting their sights to destiny's distant dreams beckoning beyond present strife. Where others stagger lost in dark caverns, the courageous see light piercing new paths as bleak nights become dawn's early light.

Cowards capitulate to fear as their dreams become dreary deeds. They fracture unity, exhausting great spirits in barrage baked in distrust, discord, disorder. Vitriol and coercion quickly replace vision's vitality. Civilization then fractures along jagged lines.

But the courageous, guided by a clear-eyed virtue, navigate through tumultuous storms and deafening chaos, holding fast to convictions proven in winter's frost and freeze. They stand secure in purpose fused with unwavering commitment to humanity's highest dignity of spirit. No breach can shake steadiness of soul, fear and doubt are destined to melt come springtime's glow.

In end, cynics prove prisoners of their darker cunning and conniving impulses; while the courageous, guided by a moral compass, find passageways through treacherous mountains and across foreboding rivers, transforming their fears into valiant deeds. The Rushmorian legacies endure as guideposts for humanity's long climb upward. Our age requires such courage to be multiplied, amplified, and organized.

Transform Your Destiny!

"Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees the others." - Aristotle

"Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities... because it is the quality which guarantees all othersCourage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen." - Winston Churchill

"Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point." - C.S. Lewis

"Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently." - Maya Angelou

"Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear - not absence of fear." - Mark Twain

Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are often stiffened." - Billy Graham

"Courage is the ladder on which all the other virtues mount." - Clare Boothe Luce

"Moral courage elevates the dignity of the human spirit to its highest."... " Without courage, other virtues are rendered impotent" – Robert Porter Lynch

"Fear defines courage, for without fear, there could be no courage" -- Taoist saying

These quotes highlight the centrality of courage as a foundational virtue, one that enables and strengthens all other positive qualities. They suggest that true courage is not merely the absence of fear, but the willingness to act rightly and justly in the face of fear. Courage is portrayed as both an individual and collective good, inspiring others to stand firm in their convictions. Importantly, several of these thinkers also tie courage to other virtues like compassion, humility, and integrity - it is a force for moral action, not just boldness alone.

Courage & Reality

It is only when we have the courage
to face things as they really are,
without any self-deception or illusion,
that a light will develop out of events
by which the path to success may be realized.

-- I Ching Hexagram 5 (~500 BC)

Courage is More Exhilarating than Fear,
and in the long run, far easier.

- Eleanor Roosevelt

Excellence

Excellence is never born from a disengaged heart.

The average person defines themselves by their limits;
Argue for your limits, and they will be yours!

It is not circumstances that determines our fate, but
our vision and courage to turn the tide. To be
courageous, be committed to a vision and values far
larger and more powerful than your fears

--Robert Porter Lynch

Faith & Courage

Be Heroic. Speak softly and firmly and frequently and
wisely about your faith. Otherwise, those of great
ignorance and unawareness will drown your silence in
fatal fear and deadly doubt.

Transform Your Destiny!

With Faith comes Spirit; with Spirit comes Hope; with Hope comes Vision; with Vision comes Dreams, and with Dreams comes Opportunity.

Take No Solace in a shield of silence about your faith. If you do, you give credence to all those who would wallow in the ice of cynicism and the misgivings of distrust.

Let your heart's courage heart sing the Song of Faith through your now limp lips. – RPL

***I offer a life not of privilege, but of service.
A man who fears nothing, loves nothing,
So if you love nothing, there is no joy to life.***

In serving each other, we become free. -- From the movie *First Knight* King Arthur to *His Knight*: (Sean Connery to Richard Gere)

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”— Edmund Burke (a letter to Thomas Mercer which continues) *“Men are linked together, they easily and speedily communicate the alarm of any evil design. They are enabled to fathom it with common counsel, and to oppose it with united strength. [However], when they lie dispersed, without concert, order, or discipline, communication is uncertain, counsel difficult, and resistance impracticable. Where men are not acquainted with each other’s principles, nor experienced in each other’s talents, nor at all practiced in their mutual [character]...; nor personal confidence [trust] by joint efforts in [neither] business nor friendship, nor common interest ...[then] it is ... impossible that they can act [in the public interest with] uniformity, perseverance, or efficacy. [With mutual connectivity, even] the most [seemingly inconsequential] man, by adding to the weight of the whole, has [amplified] his value, and his use; ..., [his] greatest talents are [now] wholly [advantageous] to the public. No man... [regardless of his flame of] enthusiasm, can flatter himself that his single --*

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unsupported, desultory, unsystematic endeavours -- are of [sufficient] power to defeat the subtle designs and united cabals of ambitious citizens. When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one-by-one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.'⁴

No one can make you feel inferior
without your consent.

You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience by which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, "I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along. You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

-- Eleanor Roosevelt

Courage enlarges, cowardice diminishes resources.

*In desperate straits the fears of the timid
aggravate the dangers that imperil the brave.*

- Christian Nevell Bovee

Security

Security is mostly a superstition.

It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it.

Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure.

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all.

--Helen Keller

EVERYDAY CHOICES

Everyday I make a choice of how I want to be:

- ...Thinking forward or backward
- ...Hero or Victim
- ...Filled with Dreams or Resentments
- ...Positive or Negative
- ...Optimistic or Angry
- ...Encouraging or Critical
- ...Collaborative or Controlling
- ...In the Moment or in the Past
- ...Joyful or Hurting
- ...Grieving or Healing
- ...Good or Bad
- ...Happy or Sad

--Robert Porter Lynch

Every day is my choice, and all of the “every days” make up my life, my memories, and my very being. When adversity strikes, how I respond depends upon the patterns created by “every day choices.” -

-Robert Porter Lynch

The Time Is Now!

Every Moment presents a Unique Opportunity:

for a precious fruit to ripen,
for an idea whose time has come,
for a river to flow,
for separate voices to unite into one song!

Let It Happen!

--Robert Porter Lynch

Greatness without Giftedness

Positioning our highest vision and values above our fears, doubts, pains, and betrayals, produces greatness in those born without giftedness.

-- Robert Porter Lynch

When life lacks meaning and purpose,
Little things loom large in life.

Meaning & Purpose requires being
courageous enough to be committed
and devoted to something greater and
more worthy than yourself.

—Robert Porter Lynch

Before “Thinking Outside the Box,”
Start Connecting the Boxes.

— Robert Porter Lynch

Filling a Heart with Joy

I truly like and cherish the opportunity to fill someone’s heart with joy. As I’ve become a little more attuned to the world beyond my own selfishness, I’ve come to realize that filling people’s heart with joy is not only one of the most fulfilling experiences in the game of life, it’s also one of the least evolved, and thus depreciated.

Ironically, "filling another's heart with joy" may be among the highest of all the forms of love, next only to the spiritual love of God.

For me, I am coming to learn that this is truly an art-form that requires mastery and practice.

So my request to those closest to me: "Would you allow me to practice and master this art on you?" I think we would both benefit enormously, and it could be the most enlivening of all the arts! I ask nothing in return -- your joy is my reward!

Two people, co-creating a child-like joy “in the moment” will generate everlasting love, trust, and regenerative energy.

For every moment we create today becomes tomorrow's yesterday. As each day becomes yesterday, we build a

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beautiful fabric of our history. A beautiful history becomes a wonderful foundation for seeing a glorious future.

In this way, each moment transcends past, present, and future. Each choice we make to experience the moment will propel itself full-strong into our future.

Joy of the Moment

Thomas Jefferson was a great and very wise man. But he did create a problem in the Declaration of Independence by referring to the ideal of the "pursuit of happiness." How can one "pursue" an inanimate object?

The "Pursuit of Happiness"
Is as fruitless as a dog chasing its tail.
Joy, however, is a State of Mind.
At the same time Everything yet Nothing;
Neither an Object nor an Event;
Joy can only be Experienced.
Joy is the Ultimate Form of Creation
--Robert Porter Lynch

While Change is Inevitable,
its Direction & Pace is by Choice.
Change is Certain,
but Learning & Growth are Voluntary.
--Robert Porter Lynch

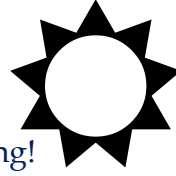
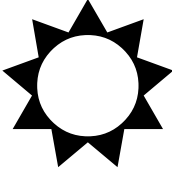
*Your life is the sum total of all the choices
you make or you let be made for you.*

*A choice starts with a thought
and ends with an action.*

Nelson Mandela, who spent years in prison,
upon his release made a *choice* to forgive his
oppressors and to unify his country; he rejected
revenge. His choices changed the course of history
for South Africa.

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Two Suns Rising



What a Day -- Today!

There are Two Suns Rising!

What a Day, Not like any other Day.

Look!

The Light is Shining in Your Heart,

The Wheel of Life has Stopped.

Oh, You who can see into your own Heart,

What a Day, Two Suns Rising!

This is Your Day!

For it in its brief course

Be all the Truths and Realities of Your Existence:

the Bliss of Growth!

the Glory of Action!

the Splendor of Beauty!

For Yesterday is but a Dream,

And Tomorrow only a Vision;

But Today, Well Lived,

Makes Every Yesterday a Dream of Happiness,

And Every Tomorrow a Vision of Hope.

Look Well to this Day!

Salute the Dawn! Two Suns Rising!

Salute the Divine Spirit in You!

--From Rumi & Sanscrit

Transform Your Destiny!

Tomorrow is Forever

Sentiment does have a role in our lives, and fond memories of the past are part of the fabric that makes up our totality of experience.

But it is all too easy to get stuck in the past, hoping we might be able to recreate it. People who are trapped in their past memories and unable to create new futures are doomed to carrying historic baggage of gloom and lamentations. They are never present in the here and now; their ball and chain of memories are their identity.

You can reach into the past,
But you will never get back what you've lost,
You'll only lose what you have now....

It's because you only want the past;

You cannot bear the present.

So you try to escape from it...

You want the gay and carefree youth
[that the past] stands for in your mind.

You yourself are not free.

You're chained to the past.

And the past, with all its good and its bad,
is beyond our reach.

It's gone. All gone.

We must learn to forget it.

You and I, and all of us ... the world.

We must live for tomorrow.

Because, tomorrow is forever.

--Said by Orson Welles to Claudette Colbert
in *Tomorrow is Forever* (1946)
Movie about a husband lost in WW I

IN PRAISE OF DANCING

Not enough has been said about the power of dancing as an expression of synergy and a means of building community. Dancing is the perfect metaphor of life and relationships.

Dance is not just entertainment; it is the alignment of differential energy, the expression of trust, the showcasing of another person. It's about motion, rhythm, harmony, tension, opposition, love, beauty, and passion, all wrapped up into one. Dancing is truly therapeutic.

I praise the dance, for it frees people
from the heaviness of matter
and binds the isolated to community.

I praise the dance, which demands everything:
health and a clear spirit and a buoyant soul.

Dance is a
transformation of space, of time, of people,
who are in constant danger of becoming
all brain, will, or feeling.

Dancing demands a whole person, one who is
firmly anchored in the center of his life, who is
not obsessed by lust for people and things
and the demon of isolation in his own ego.

Dancing demands a freed person, one who vibrates
with the balance of all his powers.

I praise the dance. O man, learn to dance,
or else the angels in heaven will not know
what to do with you.

-- St. Augustine

Transform Your Destiny!

Dancing was created by angels
To give wings to man and woman.

--Robert Porter Lynch

Go out in the world and
Work like money doesn't matter,
Sing as if no one is listening,
Love as if you have never been hurt, and
Dance as if no one is watching"

--Anonymous Irishman

Centipede

The centipede was happy quite
Until a toad in fun
Said "Pray, which leg goes after which?"
That worked her mind to such a pitch,
She lay distracted in a ditch,
Considering how to run.

--Mrs. Edward Craster, 1871

Dancer

The ballerina frolicked in her dance,
Flowing merrily and perfectly bright,
Until a friend in a trance
Asked "Just what swings your legs so light?"
Her brain then began to race,
Paralyzed, she fell flat on her face,
Analyzing how to prance.

--Robert Porter Lynch
with appreciation to Mrs. Craster

The Dance of Life

In the dance of life
spin and twirl
little boy, little girl

In the dance of life
be my moon, I'll be your sun
lost in each other, playful fun

In the dance of life
pick up the pace
step lightly the race

In the dance of life
let us judge our day
by the joy of our play
not the size of our pay

Playful Spirit

Oh Playful spirit
Lift my heart; Inspire my soul
Silly Love Notes to each we scroll,
As we create this day
full of frolic & play

Oh playful spirit
Into my childhood propel me
like a rippling river wind, let's be free

Oh playful spirit
let's run on the beach
put sunbeams in reach
build castles of sand
stroll the waves hand-in-hand

Oh playful spirit
Let's surf the sea of life
Skipping sprightly, knowing no strife
Child within, you're the maiden fair
With bouncing windblown hair

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Oh playful spirit
like a child knows no bounds
let's sing the beautiful sounds
jump with joy and pleasure
revel in happiness together
these moments of cherished treasure

Cherished Moments

Cherished Moments, Playful Spirits
How time stands still
When you are there
How bright your heart
Like a child somewhere

Cherished Moments, Playful Spirits
A rainbow splash rippling the pool
a little tug, a friendly nudge,
 you silly fool

Cherished Moments, Playful Spirits
We dance, we sing
Pick flowers, giggle and swing
Can our spirits grow old?
Joy has no death I'm told

Cherished Moments, Playful Spirits
With you I am a child reborn,
Life's again on Track!
Yes! Reborn!
my youthful bounce is back!
How the world looks so different
from this view...

I've seen it before, but now it's new!

Robert Porter Lynch
For David Burt's wedding, Sept 2006

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Dancing is the loftiest, the most moving,
the most beautiful of the arts,
because it is no mere translation or abstraction
from life; it is life itself.

--Havelock Ellis
British psychologist 1859-1939

Those who hear not the music think the
dancers mad. -- Proverb

If you are going to walk on thin ice,
you might as well dance!
I would believe only in a God
that knows how to Dance.

--Friedrich Nietzsche
German Philosopher 1844-1900

When the music changes, so does the dance
-African Proverb

It is easy to work when the soul is at play.
--Emily Dickinson

RELATIONSHIPS

No man is an island unto himself...
any man's death diminishes me, because I am
involved in mankind, therefore ask not for
whom the bells toll; It tolls for thee.

--John Donne

Relationships are the essence of human existence. We exist in a network of relationships. Relationships are the foundation of marriage, family, community, business, government, and learning.

No person is alone unto oneself, we are all a part of a greater whole, joined to the network of synergistic potential. If one person's idea be shared with another, and then enlarged by again another, the whole thus benefits.

But yet, should even one new idea be repressed or lost or buried, the whole is lessened, just as if the arm of my friend or my own were severed and cast away.

Any crushing of creativity or inspiration in the realm of my network diminishes me as well as the whole, because we are linked in multiple and mysterious facets. Therefore, upon the demise of a creative thought, the crushing of inspiration, or the destruction of synergy, never ask to know for whom the bell tolls;.....it tolls for thee.

But what exactly is a "relationship?" Webster's dictionary defines *relationship* as the state of being related. What? Is this all the dictionary can say? No wonder we have such a hard time.

The purpose of a relationship is to learn to bring out the best in yourself, and the best in others, especially when under stress and conflict. Relationships are a test of our character, our values, our commitment, and our desire to create synergies.

When relationships fail, look first to yourself for the role you may have played in its failure before blaming others.

**Relationships are the mirror
in which you discover yourself.**

--Krishnamurti

COMMUNITY

“A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm.”

— Henrik Ibsen, *An Enemy of the People*

Energies of Love

The day will come when, after harnessing the winds, the tides and gravitation, we shall harness for God the Energies of Love.

And on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, Man will have discovered fire.

-- Teilhard de Chardin

Love, Sex & Trust

A young man named Omar asked me for some advice. Omar was handsome, well sculpted, athletic, and highly intelligent. He had just turned forty. Omar was recently divorced and desperately searching for a woman to love. He had found her. She was a radiant sexual goddess named Tiara.

Omar showed me a picture of Tiara, and she was indeed one of the most alluring women put on the planet – golden eyes, a smile that could lure even a stone, and a svelte body a movie star would envy.

But Tiara was a chain smoker, an alcoholic, and didn't know why she was put on this earth, other than to allure men. To make matters worse, Tiara was gregarious, and after a few drinks, would be in bed with any stud of a man, which drove Omar crazy.

I asked Omar if he trusted Tiara, and he said absolutely not, but he loved her dearly, and she was fantastic in bed. I asked Omar how long he thought a relationship with Tiara would last if he couldn't trust her. He said not long. In fact, he was thinking of leaving her.

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I suggested something simple. Either he set strict boundaries about trust – honor, honesty, commitment, fidelity – and no more alcoholism, which he and Tiara would both have to abide, or call it quits.

Then I explained that God built man from the top down: with a brain to wisely build trust, with a heart to give love, and a groin to express trust and love. Omar was upside down: no trust just sex on the brain, no real love just sex in his heart, and emptiness everywhere else. Get his priorities straight, or lead a life of despair and disappointment. You can neither love fully nor learn deeply without trust.

WISDOM

Wisdom is deep, soulful, enlightened knowledge,
grounded in experience,
tempered by failure,
illuminated by insight,
elevated by spirit, and
offered with compassion....

.....the synergistic unity of heart, soul, mind, and
a commitment to action for the greater good.

-- Robert Porter Lynch

Knowledge is both *profane and profound* – it is worldly, available, and may represent a confusing concoction of evil mixed with good, irrelevant with relevant, correlations and causations, often confounding the mind with polarities and contradictions, which lead to “analysis paralysis.” Knowledge emphasizes *competence* as its highest goal. An active mind can exude deep knowledge. But knowledge alone is often empty of real, valuable learning, and can carry with it conceit and narrowness.

Wisdom is *sacred*—it is the quest for the greater good that unites the human with the divine, providing a pathway to go higher, wider, and deeper, nurturing the acuity that can evolve

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into Insight. Wisdom is *holistic* – selecting the relevant knowledge, combining it with deep understanding of human behavior, aiming at uplifting civilization, and judging between alternative paths to make the best choice for the good of the whole. Wisdom values *character* and *collaboration* to further civilization. While knowledge exists primarily in answers, wisdom in questions and revelations, uniting ideas/ideals with action. Knowledge is intrinsically self-fulfilling, while wisdom creates higher order purposes and new destinies. Wisdom is not dry like knowledge, but it was dynamic, engaging, vital, and soulful. The pursuit of wisdom creates the challenge to grow upward with a spiritual yearning.

Insight is *blessed* – it delves deeper into an “astute wisdom” that’s *both sacred and active*, opening new realms of meaning, growth, fulfillment, and joy, providing a sustainable richness that produces synergies, collaborations, innovation, and resolutions of paradoxes.

This sacred journey is exciting by its nature of empowerment – Knowledge, when cooked in a sauce of wisdom, spiritual transcendence, human compassion, and passionate action, becomes a holistic and glorious feast. -- Robert Porter Lynch

True wisdom is less presuming than folly.

The wise man doubteth often,
and changeth his mind;

The fool is obstinate, and doubteth not;

He knoweth all things but his own ignorance.

-- Akhenaton? (c. B.C. 1375)

If you are truly seeking wisdom, try going to the Old Testament and reading the Book of Proverbs. There you will find true salvation on this planet for it contains the ageless and profound wisdom we need.

Definition: Insanity

Doing the same thing over and over again,
expecting different results.

--Rita Mae Brown (sometimes attributed to Einstein)

A Fool may be known by Ten Things:

- 1) Anger, without just cause;
- 2) Inquiry, without object;
- 3) Change, without progress;
- 4) Speaking, without listening;
- 5) Voicing opinion, without insight;
- 6) Putting trust in a stranger,
- 7) Mistaking foes for friends;
- 8) Acting, without considering consequences;
- 9) Possessing knowledge, without wisdom;
- 10) Using force, without heart.

-- RPL adaptation from an Arabian proverb

A fool's tongue is long enough to cut his own throat.
But a fool, if he holds his tongue, may pass for wise.

-- Spanish Proverb

Wisdom is the soul's strongest shield against perverse
knowledge and pervasive fear. - Robert Porter Lynch

Wisdom & the Art of Questions

A fool is exposed by boldly voicing his opinions;
A wise man by his depth and breadth of questions.

– Robert Porter Lynch

Wisdom is the synergistic unity of heart, soul, mind, and action.

RPL

Wisdom, Without Enthusiasm, Acts like Indifference.

RPL

Great wisdom often commences with deep doubt while seeking truth, and ends in strong faith and belief. Those who begin in unquestioned trust and belief, often terminate in insurmountable doubt.

The Wise Man *asks questions*, because the questions speak to a man's quest, his vision, his depth, his breadth, his openness, his willingness to create anew. A sage is known by the quality of his questions, not his answers, because the sage probes both the depths of the unknown and the outer boundaries of possibility.

The Intelligent Man *gives answers, pronouncements, and judgments* because these speak to this man's need to show his superiority, his skills, his knowledge, his willingness to be certain. A smart person wants to impress others with the quantity of his knowledge, which is always limited, and if deep in one area, then shallow in most others.

Thomas Edison, one of the most prolific inventors of the modern era. His power lay in his ability to ask original questions – ones that no one had asked before. His questions could then be posed as hypotheses for which he could then develop a strategy that would then translate into a series of practical tests or experiments.

Edison initiated his search from doubts about traditional answers or assumptions and accepted explanations and procedures. He never took anything for granted, doubting what others thought possible or

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practical. In other words, he was his own independent thinker, rigorous, disciplined, and methodical in challenging accepted wisdom. Breakthroughs for Edison were only possible if he were to see the world from a new, fresh, and dynamic perspective.

“Sometimes the result was that he found a new way. The questions sometimes flowed from Edison as if he had no control over his thoughts but was intuitively penetrating to the essence of a complex and confusing situation. While waiting for the leading questions to form in his mind or the right experiment to present itself, Edison often passed the time ... by idly doing experiments in the general area of his concern, which kept his attention focused on the general problem. If such efforts proved fruitless, he would shift to another subject area and shift to another subject area and work on another project for a time.

Great doubts: deep wisdom...

Small doubts: little wisdom.

-- Chinese Proverb

Edison’s ability to find metaphors that allowed him to draw on what he knew and impose order on what he did not know was a gift.”¹

The Difference between Judgement & Discernment

What’s the difference?

Judgment and discernment are words commonly used interchangeably, but they actually have different meanings.

Judgment is about forming black and white perspectives and making gross generalizations something.

¹ Hughes, Thomas; Networks of Power, Johns Hopkins Press, 1983, pp 26-27

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For example, all Democrats are BAD, but all Republicans are GOOD.

Or all Blacks are worthless, but White folks are to be honored.

Condemnation about one and Glorifying the other is typical of people who are judgmental; it is reckless and perpetrates falsehoods.

Discernment, on the other hand, is one's ability to understand subtle distinctions in a world in the zone of shades of gray.

It means holding wisdom above mere facts or data.

It's the insight to see the difference between what is true and what is false, right and wrong, good and bad, and understand when these are not always clear because they can be both or neither, based on the circumstances.

Judgment ultimately must be made in order to transform dilemmas into action.

Often, we must "decide" one way or the other. Decide literally means to "kill the other side."

Often, we get trapped in a bi-polar world where we make decisions, obliterating the other side, but dangerously get trapped into believing we now know the "truth," which is not the case. It means we are no longer able to see the world holistically or change our minds, which would acknowledge we made a mistake. Our egos are too fragile to have humility.

Trust makes a big difference in how we decide. Seldom do we decide in favor of that which we cannot trust.

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It is ours to *Discover* the Truth, not *Create* the Truth,
and then *Create With* the Truth

Our peer identity group is a powerful force in influencing our view of trust and truth. If we identify with a group, we are very likely to take on the belief system of that group. That's how cults are formed. Religious wars have caused innumerable deaths because the beliefs of one group are staked into the ground of judgement against another group. Christianity, up until the 21st century had been plagued with warfare -- Catholic against Protestant, Christian against Muslim, and so forth. Racial prejudice, discrimination against women ... the list goes on. Congress is plagued with this foolishness, and it hurts everyone in America.

Discernment, on the other hand, is a more objective process. It is based on a deep understanding of the facts and a willingness to consider all sides of an issue.

Discernment embraces all sides of a narrative, places things in context, and lets us judiciously weigh contradictory data to enable wisdom to prevail.

This enables us to produce better solutions that are for mutual benefit, avoid calamities, reduce collateral damage, and keep our highest values and moral character paramount.

Here are some examples of the difference between judgment and discernment:

- **Judgment:** "John's outfit is ugly, awfully tailored, and should be thrown in the trash!"
- **Discernment:** "John is wearing clothes that aren't my not my style and he's cut his hair to grab attention, but I do understand that these are important to his identity,

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which he needs to make as a statement of his individuality. I guess I need to know John better to see if he had deeper qualities of character that I might appreciate."

- **Judgment:** "Sarah is just an awfully bad cook. Her food is atrocious."
- **Discernment:** "Sarah is a strict raw food vegetarian. Her cooking doesn't appeal to me. But I do acknowledge she is doing what she thinks is beneficial to her health. When I visit her, I bring a few things along that I like to eat to go along with her meals."
- **Judgment:** "Jake is just a bad guy, pure and simple. He deserves to spend the rest of his life in JAIL!"
- **Discernment:** "Jake is clearly a drug addict. He's stolen, lied, cheated, and wasted his life away. Unquestionably he's screwed up. But there have been times with me when he's been kind and considerate, although few and far between. He's not a murderer. I hope there will be a path for him to transform, learn, and grow, so that he can discipline himself to make better choices."

Having discernment doesn't mean we never make judgements -- both are necessary. When it comes to seeing evil, it's best we are able to discern the difference between evil intentions and bad choices. We must condemn the evil, soulless individual, but try to transform the poor decision-maker whose character is ill defined. A jail punishment should be the last resort to create a "transformational event" that enables the mixed-up person to gain a foothold and discipline in a mind-set that can discern the consequence from one's choices.

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This enables us to be fair, treat people with respect, while demanding high standards of excellence and ethics.

This is what every member of a Jury must do during a trial: exercise exquisite discernment of the evidence from both plaintiff and defendant, then make a judgement of guilty or not guilty

In the big picture, when a society lacks discernment, it lacks wisdom. Its ability to see evil is obscured. Its culture becomes a toxic cesspool of negativity.

Ask yourself the question: "Is an obsession with pessimism, negativity, and cynicism a sin?"

Christ preached: "Judge and ye shall be judged, Condemn and ye shall be condemned, forgive and ye shall be forgiven."

There are three passages in the New Testament
(in Mark 3:29, Matthew 12:31 & Luke 12:10) that state:

***"The only unforgivable sin is
blasphemy of the Holy Spirit!"***

Why? It is suicide of the soul!

For me, anyone who forever spews incessant cynicism and constant criticism along with a negative view of a class of citizens has blasphemed the Holy Spirit who, according to Christ, resides in our souls.

Toxicity is a highly contagious disease that spreads fast, can kill, and leaves horrible after-effects.

The Unanswered Questions

“You know all the answers,
but don’t understand the questions.”

Gladys George to Joan Crawford, *Flamingo Road*, 1949

Composer Charles Ives in 1908 wrote a fascinating but unresolved piece called the “*Unanswered Question*.”

It wanders through a dream-like wonderland, seeking but never finding – it is a journey with no denouement, no conclusion, no revelation. After listening to this beautiful piece, it felt like the theme to a detective or mystery movie. Then I wondered:

"What is the *Question* that has been unanswered?"

"If we don't know the *Question*, will any answer be sufficient?"

"What *Questions* should never go unanswered?"

"What beliefs or perceptions block answering the *Question*?"

"If there is no answer, was the *Question* worth asking?"

"Who else have succeeded or failed in answering the *Question*?"

"Is their answer satisfactory or do we need to explore deeper?"

"Is the *Question* really a 'Quest'?"

"Would rephrasing the *Question* lead to finding an answer?"

"Is this *Question* really superficial?"

"Must we look five levels deeper to reveal better answers?"

"Is there a 'source code' that must be discerned that makes the *Question* a 'Gordian Knot'?"

"Is the question really a riddle within a riddle?"

Oh, how I revel in exploring the questions that make life more meaningful and lovelier for me and hopefully those around us.

-Robert Porter Lynch

Transform Your Destiny!

My high school history teacher, Zenas Kevorkian, was an excellent instructor. He must have been a student of Socrates, for he was always asking questions. And when we'd answer a question, his response was invariably "Yes, but what else?" He implored us to understand several layers deeper. I learned so much, not just about history, but the Greek meaning of history – meaning: *deep inquiry*.

Truth and Doubt

Seeking truth is a noble quest; one that must not be avoided. But what is the role of doubt? A person attached to doubt without pursuing deep truth becomes a horrible cynic. And worse, deep doubt attached to relationships makes a poor friend as Buddha observed:

There is nothing more dreadful than the habit of doubt. Doubt separates people. It is a poison that disintegrates friendships and breaks up pleasant relations. It is a thorn that irritates and hurts; it is a sword that kills.

-- Buddha (B.C. 568-488)

Shall the Truth Set You Free?

"The Truth Shall Set You Free!" This classic quote from the Gospel of John (8:32) is actually an enigma.

In the hands of a *fool*: truth is *denied*; a *knave*: *twisted*; a *genius* without common sense: *unrealistic*; a *criminal*: *perverted*; and a *sage*: *enlivened through wisdom*.

Truth without wisdom is like a large marching drum, pounding out noise but hollow within.

Truth enlarges with depth, insight, expansiveness, compassion, meaning, colour, dimensionality, and discernment when it becomes a partner in the symphony of wisdom.

Truth for humans is never really absolute – it's an unfolding, a series of revelations as we continually discover its nuances, a quest that never really ends.

Those who Live by the Lie, are Crucified on the Cross of Truth

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We must never confuse Power with Truth or Trust. The Lust for Power may Attract Strange Bedfellows, but Truth & Trust attracts People of Good Character. --Robert Porter Lynch

Truth & Trust

Truth is the best persuader.
Time bears witness to real truth.
The ephemeral passes away.

Trust starts with humbleness founded on truth,
and then builds on the love of honor.

--Robert Porter Lynch

Judgment

Whoever undertakes to set himself up as a
Judge of Truth and Knowledge is shipwrecked
by the laughter of the Gods. --Albert Einstein

When all else is lost, the future still remains.

--Christian Nevell Bovee

Afraid of Life

It's the heart afraid of breaking
that never learns to dance.

It's the dream afraid of waking
that never takes the chance.

It's the one who won't be taken
who cannot seem to give.

And the soul afraid of dying
that never learns to live. -- Bette Midler
(American Singer and Actress, b.1945)

DOUBT

Great wisdom commences in doubt, transforms into curiosity, evolves into unity, and transcends into revelation.

Those who begin in unquestioned belief often terminate in insurmountable doubt.

Like Power, Doubt is, by its nature, neither positive nor negative, neither good nor bad.

That which begins in doubt can take alternate paths:

If doubt is the stream feeding cynicism and anger, then doubt spirals into destroyer of belief and possibility.

However, if doubt fuels healthy skepticism, the search for truth, deeper inquiry, analysis intertwined with synthesis, then doubt becomes the divine source of great wisdom, new levels of insight, discovery and creation.

-- Robert Porter Lynch

True wisdom is less presuming than folly.

The wise man doubteth often, and changeth his mind;

The fool is obstinate, and doubteth not;

He knoweth all things but his own ignorance.

-- Akhenaton? (c. B.C. 1375)

Can that which is the greatest virtue in philosophy: *doubt*,
be in religion what priests term: the greatest of sins?

Doubt is the opposite of *belief*. -- Bovee (1820-1904)

He that knows nothing, doubts nothing. -- Herbert (1593-1632)

Of all the sad words of tongue and pen, the saddest of these
“*It might have been.*” -- John Greenleaf Whittier

DIPLOMACY

A diplomat can tell you to go to hell
and make you look forward to the journey

A diplomat never remembers a woman's age,
but always remembers her birthday.

A diplomat can cut a cake in half
and make everyone think they got the biggest piece.

A diplomat listens when others are talking
and asks questions when others are silent. – Robert Porter Lynch

The great peacemakers always run the risk of being shot by
both sides -- Robert Porter Lynch

“The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without
fighting.” – Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

“Never hate your enemies. It affects your judgment.”
– Mario Puzo, *The Godfather*

“Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far.” “Don't
hit at all if it is honorably possible to avoid hitting; but never hit
soft!” – Theodore Roosevelt

“Truth without love is brutality,
and love without truth is hypocrisy.” – Warren Wiersbe

“Tact is the knack of making a point without making an enemy.”
– Isaac Newton

“Tact is the ability to step on a man's toes without messing up
the shine on his shoes.” – Harry S. Truman

A diplomat who says “yes” means “maybe,” a diplomat who says
“maybe,” means “no,” and a diplomat who says “no” is no
diplomat.” – Talleyrand

STRUGGLING

Too many people expect life to be a struggle against the world, often with false beliefs like “struggling ennobles the soul,” or “this is a dog-eat-dog world,” or “it’s survival of the fittest.” If you believe in these things, normal experiences will be laced with perceptions that validate your belief systems supporting the idea that life is a struggle.

The struggler appears in multiple guises. Some play the hero, seeking difficult situations to manifest their heroic image. Often the hero seeks, and finds, victims who need to be rescued. Of course, victims seek such heroes, making up stories about how they’ve been terrorized by an evil or uncaring monster, completing the victim, persecutor, rescuer triangle.

The pugilist is always in a fight. Minor disagreements quickly escalate into a winner-take all battle for supremacy. There are no shades of gray, no creative solutions, no willingness to compromise. Pugilists would rather fight than talk, rather argue than learn, rather attack than listen, rather pontificate than understand. You are either for them or against them.

The chronic complainer is never satisfied, never willing to find the high ground. Blame is the game; it’s always the other person who screws up. The complainer can find fault everyone but himself.

The cynic finds it impossible to support anything positive, to change, to evolve, to move forward, or to enable teamwork. These people garner attention by being impossible to convert or convince.

The bad mouth craves negative power; bullying people into submission, combining the worst talents of the pugilist, the complainer, and the cynic, with a tough-guy demeanor.

Each of these characters are committed to life as a struggle, as a survival game. But underneath there is an anger, a hurt, a guilt, and a failed dream. The struggler is trapped in a world where meaning, purpose, destiny, and character are missing, replaced by frustration, search for control, and defensiveness prevail.

Relationships reflect back the struggle inside. For the struggler, everything is about themselves; it’s not about serving others or making the world a better place or fulfilling a spiritual mission.

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Survival or Thrival?

	LOSERS	SURVIVORS	THRIVERS & CHAMPIONS
SAY ABOUT WINNING	"There's no way I can win"	"I'll do everything I can to win."	"If you win, I will win too."
EGO NEEDS	Seek Attention Be Ruled by Others	Seek Admiration Rule Others	Earn Respect, Empower Others
PERSPECTIVE	See a problem in every solution	Seek a solution in every problem	Help others co-create visions, alternatives, and solutions
SELF IMAGE	Fix the Blame	Fix the Situation	Fix what caused the Problem
CONTROL	Let Life Happen to them, Be the Victim of Circumstances	Make Life Happen for them	Make Life a Joyous happening for others and themselves
VISION	Live in the Past Complain about the Present	Learn from the Past, Live in the Present, Set Goals for the Future	Learn from the past and work in the present to accomplish goals that benefit everyone's future
PROMISES	Make Promises they know they won't Keep	Make Promises they seldom keep	Make Commitments to themselves and others and keep them as a sign of personal integrity
REACTIONS	React Negatively in spite of their self interest	Respond for their own self interest	Reinforce balancing the Greater Good & their own Self Interest
EMOTIONS	Gripe about their failures, Feel Angry and Resentful	Cheer about their successes	Share the glory, praise the team, & move on to the next level.
RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS	See others as a threat, Blame & manipulate others	See others with doubt/distrust, attempt to control	See others as potential co-creators of new possibilities

TRUST PRINCIPLES

**EIGHT TRUST
PRINCIPLES**

- 1. F**airness & Reciprocity
- 2. A**ccountability & Integrity
- 3. R**espect & Empathy
- 4. T**ruthfulness, Courage
- 5. H**onourable Purpose
- 6. E**thics & Excellence
- 7. S**afety & Security
- 8. T**ransparency & Openness

These Eight Trust Principles are the heart and soul of any Trust Relationship. They are Universal, have no cultural boundaries, and will be the keystone of all Love and Teamwork.

Robert Porter Lynch

TRUST IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN...

When asked what his politics were, Confucius (551–479 BC) replied:

***It is to provide people food,
protect people with armaments, and
gain trust from people.***

When asked further: “Which should we abandon first if our country is forced to abandon food, weapons, or trust?” Confucius stated:

***Abandon weapons first, then food.
But never abandon trust.
Trust is more important than life.
More people can be born,
but trust is never regained.***

My friend, mentor, and one of the wisest men I have ever met, Paul Lawrence (Harvard Business School) told me:

***Trust determines the Course of History,
the Destiny of Nations, and the Fate of People.***

To put everything in *balance* is good,
to put everything in *harmony* is better. – Victor Hugo
into *alignment* sublime;
into *synergy* divine -- Robert Porter Lynch

INTEGRITY

Integrity is often thought of as moral uprightness and steadfastness -- making "good" choices, doing "the right thing."

In fact, true integrity is not constrained by nor does it reside in rules, prescriptions or imposed demands. Integrity is far more than that.

Integrity resides in the ability to constitute yourself as your word. As such it is a home, an anchor, a self-generated and continuing commitment to honor your word -- despite contrary thoughts and feelings if need be. It is a consistency of being, speaking and acting that shapes who you are -- to yourself and to others.

In the beginning integrity is being true to your promises, that is, a match between your words and actions. Ultimately, integrity is being true to your deepest commitments -- your Self. In this way integrity frees us to create the future out of our true commitments -- our highest Self -- rather than out of our past.

– Anonymous

Stupid is doing something, knowing it will have horrible consequences, but proceeding anyway out of a warped sense of foolish duty, self-righteous indignation, or vindictiveness. -- RPL

Being True to Yourself

As soon as you trust yourself, you will know how to live

--Goethe

Integrity is more than just being honest or trustworthy. Integrity means being true to oneself, to one's deepest values; and the benefits are ultimately both a divine blessing and a liberating freedom.

Integrity becomes a divine blessing by enabling us to touch the heart of God, and moreover, to touch the souls of others around us, thus creating a new set of possibilities filled with hope, joy, and inspiration. Integrity is thus expansive, allowing us to become more than ourselves, to create with others, to empower others, to build upon a foundation of trust.

Integrity marvelously liberates us to live our lives forward into the future, enabling us to experience the present moment cleanly and without fear that our past will undermine us, corrode our vision, and erode our energy. The lack of integrity inevitably forces one to look back over one's shoulder, haunted by a past filled with historic baggage which will harbor tomorrow's illness, or threaten to destroy one's false illusions that were invented to disguise the sordid realities of a disingenuous life.

In the final analysis, integrity is our ability to trust ourselves, the ultimate assessment of character.

Trust becomes our identity.

-- Robert Porter Lynch

THE ART OF LIVING

The master in the Art of Living draws no distinction
between his work and his play,

His labor and his leisure,

His mind and his body,

His education and his recreation,

His love and his religion.

He hardly knows which is which.

He simply pursues his vision of excellence

Through whatever he is doing

And leaves it to others to determine

Whether he is working or playing.

To himself, he is always doing both.

-- Susan Fowler Woodring

Bittersweet Story of Lord Acton

Lord Acton (1834 – 1902) was an English historian and moralist.

His resistance to authoritarianism was profound; he wrote:

“Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

His 60,000-volume library was filled with books full of his own annotations. The 1911 *Encyclopædia Britannica* stated:

Lord Acton has left too little completed original work to rank among the great historians; his very learning seems to have stood in his way; he was one of the most deeply learned men of his time, he knew too much and his literary conscience was too acute for him to write easily, and his copiousness of information overloads his literary style. But and he will certainly be remembered for his influence on others.

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AGING

All of us grow old. Aging is inevitable. But how we age is not just a matter of genetics or diet or exercise. Attitude is more important than any other factor. People with positive attitudes, belief in God, and giving to others has been proven to a three to five years (or more) to a person's life.

When my grandmother died at the age of 96 I found this inscription from a yellowed newspaper clipping pasted in the inside of one of her kitchen cabinet doors (I now have this inscription inside my kitchen cupboard door too.):

Youth is not entirely a time of life;

It's a state of mind.

Nobody grows old

merely by living a number of years.

Years may wrinkle the skin,

but to give up interest wrinkles the soul.

You are as young as your faith,

as old as your doubt;

As young as your hope,

as old as your despair.

When your spirit loses its fire,

your heart shrouded

with the snow of pessimism,

and your soul harbors the ice of cynicism,

then – and only then – are you old.

Anonymous

Transform Your Destiny!

Aging with Wisdom

As days advance and youth's fancies fade,
An awakening dawns - a new sight perceived,
With clarity and vigor, our souls received,
Ego mellows, its edges soften and bend,
Trust from others, we earnestly mend.

Past folly forgiven, both yours and mine,
In merciful discernment, we find the Divine.
Along the road, with laughter as our guide,
Friends gather closer, now side by side.

With disciplined emotions, the wise count blessings, not years,
A candle is lit when curious minds explore life's unfolding spheres.
Seeking meaning not magnitude in the whispers of daily rounds,
Through each season's unfolding, fulfillment swells as love abounds.

Wisdom reveals its spirit in giving of self to the worthy,
In a life aged through storms now standing sturdy,
A sheltering harbor where enlightened souls are reborn,
Blessings plentiful for elders who rejoice lifelong.

In wisdom's blossoming, the Holy Spirit's voice resounds,
Revealing an unfolding harvest of purpose that ever astounds,
Seldom grasped in green young days where endless dreams seem true,
While death's distant whisper has never been driven into view.

Yet in autumn's grasp, life's shimmer we sense,
Insights deepen, compassion's arms commence.
Perceptions sharpen, bridges span the divide,
Where once hard lines divided mine from thine,
Unity of Spirit now resides.

Wisdom's path, with age, gently tread,
Attachments fade, a softer glow instead.
Decades climb, unveiling vistas wide,
In listening, simple joys abide.

Adventure calls to grateful souls sincere,
Where grace eternal, be ever near.
Abundant wealth, in Spirit's care,
Banishes despair, with loving flair.

— Robert Porter Lynch

READINESS FOR A SHIFT

When great intentions yield mediocre results,
When the tried-and-true ceases to work,
When every attempt to fix things

is met with frustration and failure....

Then probably your life's design
has reached its limits,

And the paradigm is ready to shift.

Opportunity is present,

Creative vision is called for,

And bold action in new dimensions

is the nature of things to come.....

Robert Porter Lynch

Inscription on a Church Wall

A task without a vision is drudgery;

A vision without a task is but a dream;

But a vision with a task is the hope of the world!

--in the County of Sussex, England

"Never allow a person to tell you 'no' who doesn't have
the power to say 'yes.'" -- Eleanor Roosevelt

Truly Great Revolutions

Truly great revolutions in world history

... have *not* been fought on the battlefield.

Foremost they have been

... *Revelations of the Mind and Heart;*

first conceived by a handful of people, who, together, see, believe, and are committed to a higher order for civilization and humankind. -- Robert Porter Lynch

This insight was epitomized by Victor Hugo, who said:

*there is nothing so powerful
as an idea whose time has come.*

My direction to anyone on my team is:

*"Default to Action" - move onward and upward,
don't stand still, time is always running out and the
competition is always gaining."* -- Robert Porter Lynch

*"There's a time for every purpose -- an opportune time, a
right time for EVERYTHING on the earth." Ecclesiastes 3:1*

Knowing *when to act, when to refrain, when to question, when others are ready for change* – and so also is the converse: knowing that there is often a wrong time for everything – these are the hallmark of a profoundly wise person, who can sense the difference. Acting forthrightly at the wrong time can backfire with pain, and even vicious counter-attack. And if the time will never be right, rather than be entrapped in an endless cycle of procrastination, the wise person will know how to reframe the issue and create circumstances to ensure some appropriate action will turn the tide. -- RPL

Civilization

Civilization is the continuous upward journey seeking to bring out the best in humanity – in Trust and Truth, in Justice and Collaboration, in Creation of Value and Mutual Benefit, and ultimately in Beauty and Wisdom.

-- Robert Porter Lynch

Not Just Protest

“We must understand the distinction between rhetoric and relevance, between charisma and character, between symbols and substance, between protest and programs. We’ve got to be serious. We’ve got to take care of business.” -- Whitney Young, Jr.

Four Shifting Forces of Destiny

The world will send a signal of an impending destiny shift when four forces manifest (each can be designed, orchestrated, and energized – don’t wait for them to happen):

1. **Focus** -- where should you concentrate your mind, soul, and skills to maximize your efforts that further your journey to your Highest & Best Destiny?
2. **Convergence** -- where are the right people coming together that create synergies?
3. **Leverage** -- where can you move the biggest thing with your capabilities and the team around you?
4. **Multiplication** -- where can your ideas, ideals, and energies be multiplied a thousand-fold unto the earth?

Robert Porter Lynch

Chapter TWO: The Spiritual Journey

INSPIRATION FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

In my study of great people, one factor was quite evident: they believed in God and that they had a purpose for their lives. In this chapter we will explore the source of that energy. The spiritual journey is about engaging with the divine; it is *not* about religion, dogma, or fear of God; it is connecting with divine energy that comes from the Holy Spirit.

Regeneration

Talitha Cumi -- Arise, Begin Anew! (Mark 5:41)

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: Old Things pass away and all things become anew" (II Corinthians 5:17)

Regeneration reveals God as Healer and Giver of Life through the Renewal of the Holy Spirit

Regeneration is not the reshaping of a life style as in information or reorientation. Regeneration is not experienced as ritual, as in water baptism. Regeneration is the work of God through the Holy Spirit, dedicated to Transformation. Regeneration results in the creation of a fundamentally new relationship between oneself and the Holy Spirit.

Regeneration is a destiny-driven, spiritual, and synergistic transformation of relationships that creates a breakthrough result.

Beliefs

"We are incredibly heedless in the formation of our beliefs, but find ourselves filled with an illicit passion for them when anyone proposes to rob us of their companionship. It is obviously not the ideas themselves that are dear to us, but our self-esteem, which is threatened."

— James Harvey Robinson, *The Mind in Making*

Wisdom Project

Education fails in one of its most important missions: the *Examination of Beliefs*. Instead of seeking the wisdom of how to frame our perceptions of our world, we choose a perilous path remaining nailed to the cross of our faulty, fuzzy beliefs. This has created unmeasurable personal angst, untolled damage to relationships, while spreading falsehoods and fallacies unto the world we influence.

Shallow beliefs become swampy identities whose flowers have neither the elegance of beauty, nor vitality of color, nor romance of fragrance, nor veracity of truth, nor vibrancy of progress. But, instead, bear ominously destructive seeds. – Robert Porter Lynch

“Make your first and chief concern not for your bodies nor for your possessions, but for the highest welfare of your souls ... It is the greatest good for a man to discuss virtue every day ... conversing and testing myself and others, for the *Unexamined Life Is Not Worth Living*” -- Socrates, Apology 30b& 38a

As a man thinketh in his heart, so shall he be. -- Proverbs 23:7

If thou can believe, all things are possible. -Mark 9:23

Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by renewing of your mind. -- Romans, 12:2

I say unto you, He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do also. -- John 11:25 & 14:12

The Power of the Holy Spirit

The Father...shall give you another Counselor, that he may abide in you forever; the Spirit of truth ... ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. The Counselor, which is the Holy Spirit, who the Father will send in my name, shall teach you all things. When the Comforter is come... even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Counselor will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you. When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come.

-- John 14:16-17, 28 & 15:27 & 16:7 & 16:13

Holy Spirit & Light Within

For where your treasure is, there will be the heart of your mind also. The light of your body is your eye, therefore if thine eye sparkles, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how deep is the darkness! -- Matthew 6:21-24

Cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. --Matthew 12:28

...a man not born of the Spirit ...cannot enter the kingdom of God. You must be born again. Divine Spirit is a wind that blows and you hear the sound, but you cannot tell from where it comes or where it goes; so is it for everyone born of the Spirit. -- John 3:5-8

God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth. -- John 4:24

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. -- Corinthians 3:16-17

Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you ... therefore glorify God in you body, and in your spirit, which are God's. Corinthians 6:19-20

Forgiveness

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned, forgive and ye shall be forgiven.

-- Luke 6:37

The forgiveness of Self is where all forgiveness starts. If I am unable to forgive myself, it is impossible for me to truly forgive others.

“The behavior we criticize most in others -- and forgave least -- is almost always a behavior we possess or fear having.” (Betty Eadie, *Embraced by the Light*)

“If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” -- Matthew (Chapter 6)

Forgiveness is a gift that has been given to you and me so we can be free. We can only be forgiven when we forgive. The Paradox: You don't get forgiveness until you give it. It's almost like giving something you don't have, but that you have as soon as you are willing to give it.

The instruction is not to go do a penance or to say we are sorry, but to go and sin no more. So this is a story of turning to our higher self and finding that we are already forgiven. Forgiveness changes the past for the one doing the forgiving. Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself.

– Minister Jack Kern, Unity Church, Naples

Forgiveness does not mean you accept a malicious act of another; it means you release the anger, hurt, and desire for revenge. The high price that we pay for holding negativity and emotional baggage is now released just like burning a mortgage. Forgiveness releases us to use our energy more productively and profitably.

FROM “THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE”²

The search for the purpose of life has puzzled people for thousands of years. That’s because we typically begin at the wrong starting point – ourselves. We ask self-centered questions like: “What do I want to be?” “What should I do with my life?” “What are *my* goals, *my* ambitions, *my* dreams for *my* future?”

But focusing on ourselves will never reveal our life’s purpose. ...You didn’t create yourself, so there is no way you can tell yourself what you were created for!...You must begin with God, your Creator. You exist only because God wills you to exist. You were made *by* God *for* God – and until you understand that, life will never make sense. It is only in God that we discover our origin, our identity, our meaning, our purpose, our significance, and our destiny. Every other path leads to a dead end.....

You may choose your career, your spouse, your hobbies, and many other parts of your life, but you don’t get to choose your purpose. The purpose of your life fits into a much larger, cosmic purpose that God has designed.... God’s motive for creating you was his love.

The Bible says, “*Long before he laid down earth’s foundations, He had settled on us as the focus of His love.*”... If there was no God, we would all be “accidents,” the result of astronomical random chance in the universe... life would have no purpose or meaning or significance. There would be no right or wrong, and no hope beyond your brief years here on earth.

Everyone’s life is driven by something. What is the driving force in your life? Here are the five most common ones:

- *Guilt*: running from regrets and hiding their shame
- *Resentment & Anger*: holding hurts, never healing

² Warren, Rick; *Purpose Driven Life, What on Earth Am I here for?*; Zondervan; 2002; excerpts from p 17-43

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- *Fear*: self-imposing a prison preventing you freedom
- *Materialism*: acquiring things in search of happiness
- *Need for Approval*: seeking group affection

These and other forces ...all lead to the same dead end: unused potential, unnecessary stress, and an unfulfilled life.

Nothing matters more than knowing God's purposes for your life, life is motion without meaning, activity without direction, and events without reason. Without a purpose, life is trivial, petty, and pointless.

There are five great benefits to living a purpose-driven life:
Knowing your Purpose;

- *Gives meaning to your life*: When life has meaning you can bear almost anything; without it, nothing is bearable. Without meaning, life has no significance or hope.
- *Simplifies your life*: It defines what you do and what you don't do. You simply ask: "Does this activity help me fulfill one of God's purposes for my life?" People who don't know their purpose try to do too much – and *that* causes stress, fatigue, and conflict.
- *Focuses your life*: It concentrates your effort and energy on what's important. You become effective by being selective.
- *Motivates your life*: Purpose always produces passion. Nothing energizes like a clear purpose. Passion dissipates when you lack purpose.
- *Prepares you for eternity*: What ultimately matters is not what others say about your life, but what *God* says.

When you live in the light of eternity, your values change. You use your time and money more wisely. You place a higher premium on relationships and character instead of fame or wealth or achievements... How you define life determines your destiny.

– Pastor Rick Warren

The Light of Thoughts

A person's words actually affect the energy field around them. The very *words* themselves -- the vibrations in the air -- attract one type of energy or another. Desires have a similar effect. There is power in our thoughts. We create our own surroundings by the thoughts we think.

Physically, this may take a period of time, but spiritually it is instantaneous.

If we understood the power of our thoughts, we would guard them more closely.

If we understood the awesome power of our words, we would prefer silence to almost anything negative.

In our thoughts and words, we create our own weaknesses and our own strengths.

Because our thoughts can affect this eternal energy, they are the source of creation. All creation begins in the mind. It must be *thought* first. There is a literal power in the creations of the mind. Thoughts are deeds.

Imagination is the key to reality. To live life abundantly, we must find joy in our own creations, whether they are new *thoughts* or *things* or *emotions* or *experiences*. --Betty Eadie *Embraced by the Light*

The Mind is the keyboard of the wonderful instrument upon which the Divine Spirit plays the symphony of life.

-- Jacquelyn Small

What your heart and soul knows is great; the soul's emphasis is always right. - Emerson

Life and livelihood ought not to be separated but to flow from the same source, which is Spirit, for both life and livelihood are about Spirit

.--Matthew Fox

To cultivate the sense of the beautiful, is one of the most effectual ways of cultivating an appreciation of the divine goodness.

-- Christian Nevell Bovee

Chapter THREE: SUCCESS & FAILURE

THE REAL TRUTH ³

By Robert Porter Lynch

There are some transcendent truths that apply to all of human nature, no matter what country or culture, or age we live in – technology may be changing dramatically, but nature of humans is not. In times of change, wisdom is more important than information, government debates, or stock market reports.

Failure is an Illusion

I grew up with Thomas Edison as a hero and mentor. One of Edison's statements regarding a constant stream of "failures" to invent the light bulb intrigues me deeply:

*Why, I've not failed 10,000 times,
I now know 10,000 ways not to make a light bulb.*

Most of us would've quit after the 10th, or maybe the 100th failure, but not Edison.⁴ Why? How did his mind work such that it propelled him forward when challenged with overwhelming rejection? For business executives and college graduates, the fear of failure is deeper and more pervasive than the fear of death or fear of heights. Franklin Roosevelt had some important insight into this issue which he proclaimed in his inaugural address:

³ from the concluding chapter of *Cooperative Entrepreneurship* I co-wrote in 2009 with Todd Welch.

⁴ Edison always measured his progress, always striving for continuous improvements. Over a 65 year period, Edison filed 1,093 patents, averaging one every three weeks, always adding to progress, going forward in spite of adversity.

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Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance...

[Greater] perils ... our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid.

Great fear is most often nothing but a phantom that haunts our egos and limits our potential. Roosevelt advised that *we conquer fear not with fearlessness, but with more powerful beliefs.*

Studies have shown that the most successful entrepreneurs have typically failed in two or three business prior to their real success.

The hallmark of a successful person is not how they dealt with success, but how they dealt with failure.

Making Commitment Larger than Fear

The truth be told, for most of us our fears remain with us much of our lives. Advising that we must be fearless seldom makes us so. Are we relegated to a life as cowards? Hell, no!

Courage is not the lack of fear, but making commitment to a vision or purpose much larger than our fears.

Listen to any Congressional Medal of Honor recipient who saved the life of a fellow soldier or sailor. They all say they were scared, but their commitment to their comrade was larger than their fear for their personal safety. These heroes put the greater good ahead of their self interest. That's Honorable Purpose in action.

Fear is a dangerous weapon in any interpersonal setting because it has a boomerang effect, often multiplying on its way back in ways we can neither predict nor control. Fear is the root of distrust, thus it will pervasively undermine the innovative spirit in each of us.

For the large part of us, our most creative time of life was as a child, when we had few pressures to perform, few fears of the real world, few worries about how we were perceived by others. Edison could accept

Transform Your Destiny!

ten thousand failures because he had transcended the fears held by most of us. He stayed in his child-like spirit, and made a purposeful commitment to something larger than himself. In this way, there were no failures, just learning and results.

Every human being has four powerful forces (or “drives”) simultaneously at play within them: the Drives to *Acquire* and *Defend* which are the “Ego Drives,” the Drives to *Bond* and *Create*, which, together, are the “Soul Drives.” How these four forces interact determines your life.

For most people, these four forces act independently and are thus misaligned, resulting in a helter-skelter life; the truly great have carefully mastered the art of alignment within.

Successful entrepreneurs use their ego drive to push for higher and higher achievement. Their competitive instinct can be used powerfully to improve and to grow continuously, and to lead as a great coach to inspire their teams to execute with great precision.

The entrepreneur’s soul-drive provides a focus on noble cause, compassion, and recognition of the achievements of others. This sets the standard and transfers rapidly to employees who can then pay close attention to the needs of customers, thus maintaining strong customer loyalty and serve. Each employee wants to be in an organization they can trust serving with fellow employees they can trust as well. When strong trust prevails throughout the organization, everyone’s joint energies align with a quantum burst of exuberance and enthusiasm. The entrepreneur that invests in building a system of trust as the foundation of the organization’s culture will reap enormous personal satisfaction as well a financial wealth.

We live in rapidly changing times that requires large quantities of innovation. When an entrepreneur taps into the collective creative intellect of all the employees, the resulting innovation engine can keep the human energy high and the produce a regenerative stream of new ideas and improvements which continually hone the competitive edge.

In this way the old idea of the entrepreneur as “emperor” shifts to “empowerer.”

True Essence of Success

I've never met an entrepreneur who wasn't interested in success. In our society, we judge money as the measure of success. The insatiable quest to accumulate cash has driven some people into jail, caused financial crises, and led others into bankruptcy.

There is nothing inherently wrong with money, and we encourage people to enjoy their wealth. But the true measure of success is not actually money. Money is just one of the measures. Einstein, a man of preeminent creative intellect and soulful explorations, advised:

*Try not to become a person of success,
but rather ... become a person of value.*

Albert Schweitzer, the great physician of the same era understood the nature of value when he stated:

*I don't know what your destiny will be,
but I do know that those who will be really happy
are those who have sought and found how to serve...
By practicing reverence for life we become good, deep,
and alive.*

Viktor Frankl, another German of that era, survived Hitler's hideous concentration camps by learning about the nature of humanity while being tortured. He later wrote in *Man's Search for Meaning*:

*Don't Aim at Success;
The more you Aim at it, and make it a Target,
The more you will Miss It.*

*For Success, like Happiness, Cannot be Pursued,
It must Ensur...
As the Unintended Side Effect Of one's Personal
Dedication to a Course Greater Than Oneself.*

These three men knew that success and failure were all illusions that can get in the way of real learning and a higher destiny.

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The Nature of Money

Often people have been twisted by the Wall Street mantra that the purpose of business is to make money. This is unfortunate because it perverts the true nature of the world of business. Yes, it is true that capitalism's investment and banking sector's purpose is to make money; but the purpose of business is different – it is to provide goods and services competitively at a profit. Making money for business is one, and only one, measure of success.

Too often, success is little but the agglomeration of material illusions that mask our settling for a dream not noble enough to be worthy of failure.

Your world shifts by replacing hope and success with commitment to purpose and never letting a torrent of fear uproot rationality. In the movie *Grumpy Old Men* the question was asked: "When looking back on your life what do you remember and what do you regret?" "I remember the relationships with people. I regret the risks I did not take."

What's more, your work is more than just a job. So too with your employees. They are inspired when their work gives them honorable purpose which provides something meaningful to their lives.

Success, character, and wealth

Shortly after Henry Ford began his auto enterprise in 1903, he said, "***A business that makes nothing but money is a poor kind of business.***"

After years of making money, Ford had time to reflect on what he observed about people and money.

Money doesn't change men, it merely unmasks them. If a man is naturally selfish or arrogant or greedy, the money brings that out, that's all.

Wealth, like happiness, is never attained when sought after directly. It comes as a by-product of providing a useful service.

The highest use of capital is not to make more money, but to make money do more for the betterment of life.

If money is your only hope for independence, you will never have it. The only real security that a person can have in this world is a reserve of knowledge, experience, and ability. Without these qualities, money is practically useless.

The Nature of Work

How does the cooperative entrepreneur regard the commitment of time and money and the risks involved when it comes to the daily grind of working intense hours? I think Susan Fowler Woodring said it well:

The master in the Art of Living

Draws no distinction between

His work and his play,

His labor and his leisure,

His mind and his body,

His education and his recreation,

His love and his religion.

He hardly knows which is which.

He simply pursues his vision of excellence through whatever he is doing and leaves it to others to determine whether he is working or playing.

To himself, he is always doing both.

If we keep in the forefront of our mind that every moment in business presents a unique opportunity for a precious fruit to ripen, for an idea whose time has come, for a river to flow, for separate voices to unite into one song, we can truly make our work a synergistic endeavor.

Professionalism

The Amateur works until he gets it right.

The Professional works until he can't get it wrong.

- Julie Andrews' first music singing coach

#1 Rule in Business

You can't put together a good deal with a bad person.

- Warren Buffet (age 90) & Charlie Munger (age 97)

Transform Your Destiny!

Purpose and Reward in Work

Thomas Edison, the man who dedicated his life to invention for the purpose of improving the fate of humans was a close friend of Henry Ford. Edison observed:

The world owes nothing to any man, but every man owes something to the world.

I pity the man without a purpose in life.

My main purpose in life is to make money so that I can afford to go on creating more inventions.⁵

One might think that the monetary value of an invention constitutes its reward to the man who loves his work.

I can honestly say this is not so. ...I continue to find my greatest pleasure, and so my reward, in the work that precedes what the world calls success.

Heroic Journey

Traveling into the future, challenging the unknown, and being willing to handle the dark side of people's personalities is not for the timid, nor for the uninspired. The journey is one of challenges, innovations, and soul-searching. Failures will occur – just fail faster, fail earlier, aim higher, learn more – and realize that failure was just an illusion your ego created.

Those destined to achieve will use wisdom and imagination to a level never experienced before on a sustained basis.

Taking the responsibility of leading an organization takes both boldness and humble dignity peppered with a good sense of humor. Brainpower alone is insufficient to drive the innovative spirit;

⁵ Edison was extremely clear that the purpose of his inventions was to improve the lives of people; he invented not for invention's sake, but for the greater good of humanity.

innovation is a discipline of both head and heart. Be the champion of your life, – believe fully, live fully.

Don't be afraid of dying. Be afraid of an "unlived life."

Great champions understand that when in doubt about action, it's better to ask forgiveness after the fact than permission before the fact. And support those champions in your organization.

Be committed to attaining extraordinary results. Reasonable people produce reasonable results; extraordinary results flow from persistent visionaries committed to unreasonably worthy goals; their spirit thrives in a perpetual state of enlightened dissatisfaction committed to the idea: "it can be done!"

Champions are a Precious Resource

My dear friend Scott Welch, a true champion himself, strongly advises

RULE #1: Never mistreat an advocate.

They're few and far between.

They make a major difference in your life

Scott has dedicated his life to a variety of missionary causes. He tells me:-

It's important that you believe that your "life's work" is important to other peoples' lives or you may as well stay home.

The Secret of Life is discovering it's not all about you

HERO OR VICTIM?

In life, you basically have two choices: You must be either the *hero* or the *victim* in life. Every individual has a choice in how you approach challenges and setbacks; adopting the victim mentality ultimately hinders personal growth and fulfillment.

The Victim Mentality

The victim mentality is a mindset characterized by a sense of helplessness, powerlessness, and external locus of control. Individuals who subscribe to this mentality often blame external factors or circumstances for their misfortunes, rather than acknowledging their own role in shaping their experiences. They may perceive themselves as perpetual victims, constantly seeking external validation and rescue.

The Hero Mentality

In contrast, the hero mentality is characterized by a sense of personal potency, responsibility, empowerment, and internal locus of control. Individuals who embody this mindset take responsibility for their actions and choices, understanding that they have the power to influence their own outcomes. They approach challenges with resilience, determination, and a belief in their ability to overcome obstacles.

The Illusion of Rescue

If you play the victim, don't expect to be rescued! Rescue is an illusion. The notion that someone else will come along and solve one's problems. While external support can undoubtedly be helpful, it is ultimately up to the individual to take the first step towards change. Waiting for a savior to arrive can lead to stagnation and missed opportunities for personal growth.

Embracing the Hero Mindset

Shifting from a victim mentality to a hero mentality requires a conscious effort to reframe one's perspective. It involves acknowledging personal responsibility, embracing challenges as opportunities for growth, and cultivating a belief in one's ability to overcome adversity.

Taking Ownership

The first step towards embracing the hero mentality is accepting ownership of one's life experiences. This involves recognizing that past experiences, while influential, do not define one's future. It requires letting go of the blame game and focusing on the present moment, where the power to change lies.

Facing Challenges Head-on

Instead of viewing challenges as insurmountable obstacles, the hero mentality sees them as opportunities for growth and self-discovery. By approaching challenges with resilience and a willingness to learn, individuals can develop their problem-solving skills, strengthen their resolve, and emerge from difficult situations with newfound confidence.

Believing in One's Ability

Cultivating a belief in one's ability to overcome adversity is essential for embracing the hero mentality. This belief system fosters a sense of self-efficacy, the conviction that one can succeed despite obstacles. It empowers individuals to take risks, persevere through setbacks, and achieve their goals.

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The Power of Personal Responsibility

The choice between the victim and hero mentality is a powerful one that shapes the course of one's life. By embracing personal responsibility and adopting the hero mindset, individuals can break free from the shackles of victimhood and embark on a journey of self-discovery, growth, and fulfillment.

Attachment to Outcomes

Buddhist philosophy views attachment to outcomes as a deep source of suffering and a massive obstacle to inner peace and enlightenment. My friend advocates I should never be attached to outcomes. Here is his reasoning:

1. Attachment is a poison which causes suffering, along with aversion and ignorance. Attachment to desires, people, possessions, or outcomes leads to suffering when things inevitably change or are lost.
2. By not clinging to expectations or being attached to specific outcomes, one can remain balanced and at peace regardless of external circumstances.
3. Rather than being consumed by hopes for the future, one learns to accept things as they are without judgment or desire.
4. This is the "middle way" which avoids the extremes, instead promoting a balanced, non-attached approach to life's experiences – the path of peace.

Not for me. That's the "peace at any price" road that any dictator or evil leader yearns to exploit. Is peace so important that one would sacrifice their essential liberties and give away their fundamental freedoms? If one is unattached to outcomes, then there can be no failure, for neither success nor failure exist in the never-never-land where there is no discernment between good and bad. This is what led to Hitler's rise. War is often the result.

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People need a sense of mission and purpose to give their lives meaning.

1. *Outcomes become Goals*, which generate the motivation to convert human energy into meaningful work.
2. *Motivation and Drive* are essential to people building a better world for themselves, thus preventing decline and decay of the social order.
3. *Focus of Attention* is a valuable quality to thrive in the world, to support a family, to have a sense of achievement, and to set an example for younger generations.
4. *Trust of Others* is a central organizing principle for communities to prosper – everyone must give something of themselves to make a family, a neighborhood, or a business be effective. When people are no longer committed to joint effort to produce results, communities decline and die.

Of course, anything can be abused when taken to extremes, and attachment to outcomes is no different.

1. *Rigidity*: Too much focus and an obsessive attachment can make someone overlook new opportunities or make one unable to adapt when circumstances change.
2. *Control*: Flexibility and Resilience is an asset of successful achievers. Uncertainty can derail the person obsessed with control.
3. *Disappointment*: Having a goal is just the first step. Many journeys are filled with obstacles that can lead to despair, frustration, a sense of failure, and overlooking the process that could have brought success, real learning, and opportunities for growth and innovation.

Ultimately, having no goals -- being unattached to outcomes -
- only leads to selfish bliss and community complacency.

You can't just *live* your life;

You must *lead* your life.

Take the High Road of Destiny and Character;

or be a Victim on the Low Road

of Blame and Disdain.

There are only two ways to live your life.

One is as though nothing is a miracle.

The other is as though everything is a miracle.

-- Albert Einstein

Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all.

-- Helen Keller

Who said it best? Einstein or Keller? You choose!

Chapter FOUR: FORMATION OF CHARACTER Who am I?

Has your character become ingrained into your identity? If not, a person becomes detached from their inner guiding forces, resulting in a tangled external façade reflects the inner turmoil that's tearing around inside.

PART I: IDENTITY AND EXPERIENCE

Answering the question: "WHO AM I?" is one of the core-questions of one's very existence because one's identity has massive impacts on one's fate. This question is central to the formation of one's identity and one's perception of self-worth in their world. (And while vital and pivotal to human existence, it is not addressed adequately by our educational system) The answers follow four typical paths based deeply on how each individual answers the question: WHO AM I?

1. MY DESTINY:

- I aim at becoming the highest and best vision of my Soul that reflects my personal purpose, mission, and vision for creating a better world.
- My Ego supports and aligns with the guidance of the Soul.
- **I am the future vision of my highest possibility** and I am the values that support that vision.
- **My Job gives me a sense of mission and purpose**

2. MY STRUGGLE:

- I am the inner struggle between my Soul and Ego.
- Inherent conflict between the four drives compels me to endure an inner battle, which is the source and the angst I reflect in my life.
- **I am my angst, my pain;** my inner turmoil is what matters most. My cynicism allows me to remain aloof from the crowd.

3. MY WANDERINGS:

- I am my meaninglessness;

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- I am pulled in many directions, confused, conflicted, unsure, often taking the safe route to reduce pain and ameliorate fear, thus I am everything and nothing;
 - **I am a jumbled confusion** masked in material meanings of life.
(in other words, I really don't know who I am and really don't care or I have given up caring or caring was so painful that I just don't want to face that hurt any more.)
4. **MY EXPERIENCE:**
- I am what I have experienced in life – good or bad. Whatever has been my history is the permanent map for my future – my past gloom will be my future doom.
 - Thus my past will mean I become victimized by whatever past pain, hurt, guilt, and disappointment has brought me.
 - **I am a projection of my Ego's interpretation of the past;** success, failure, incompetent, powerful, etc are all the words of the Ego defining my dealing with the challenges I have faced.
5. **MY SEXUALITY:**
- I am defined by my sexual preference, my passions, my partners, my plumbing.
 - My sexual identity will define how I think, feel, and relate to others
 - My Sexuality is paramount to defining who I am
 - My Sexuality is a Public Affair to be displayed Proudly
 - People who are insensitive to my sexual preferences are
6. **MY SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS:**
- My social media “friends” define who I am and what I should be to be “liked.”
 - The people I surround myself with define and guide my thinking, my deepest beliefs, my responses to the world around me, and the things I value most.
 - Without my “friends” I would be isolated and rejected.

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Let's look at the typical answers to the question WHO AM I? (try this at a social gathering and see what you get for answers) when one defines their essence from the perspective of my "Experience":

Experience - 40 years solving computer problems....
History - come from family migrating from Poland....
Success - started 3 highly profitable businesses....
Affiliation - member of black knights gang in
Highlight Event - survivor of concentration camp....
Education - graduated cum laude from....
Military - served 20 years in Marine Corps....
Neighborhood - Floridian from Miami....
Profession - doctor, lawyer, hairdresser....
Survival - cancer survivor of 5 years....
Age - 72 years old and retired....
Role or Profession - mother, doctor, plumber....
Religion - Christian, Jew, Atheist
Status - homeowner with condo in....
Sex - male, female, hetero/homo....
Physical - weightlifter, sexy....
Sensitivity - tough, gentle....
Interests - car collector, skier....
Marital Status - married, single, divorced....
Nationality or Ethnicity - African-American...
Employment Status - employed, between jobs...
Financial condition - rich, poor, up-and-coming....
Pride - inducted into the Hall of Fame....
Goals - to become a millionaire by the age of.....
Social Status - leader of my team....
Illusion - successfully accomplished

Victimization - my father raped me when I was

Struggle - I've never been able to, you are privileged, etc.

What's notable about these common responses is they have nothing to do at all with the most important trait of personal identity - CHARACTER.

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Most of these answers come from the one's ego, which needs to impress and protect. (BTW, I don't think the ego is bad or demonic, especially when guided by one's soul).

When Identity and Experience become intertwined, one can never separate what's happening in their daily life with who they believe they actually are. Thus, if their experience is happy or positive, it is reflected in their attitude (which is okay if everything is going well). But the consequences are severe should they experience a "bad" day, which results in a "bad" attitude, which in turn creates more bad experiences, and ultimately a depressed or morose or angry identity.

The Resilient person does not attach an adversity experience to their identity. This detachment enables them to bounce back, not weighed down by historic baggage of past experience.

The real potential is not just to bounce, but to use the adversity experience as propulsion to a higher level.

In other words, let the adversity become a transformational experience -- to be born again at a higher level.

Knowing the answer to "Who am I?" is essential if you are to trust yourself, and to be trusted by others. A strong, integrated character is more important than intelligence and smartness, for character is the foundation of wisdom and the path to the soul.

In the larger view, I really don't much care for people who are intelligent but lack character, for they can never be wise nor soulful, which means they lack a well-developed conscience, and thus cannot be in my inner circle of friends.

*"You'll never decide what you want
until you've decided who you are."*

- Noel Coward

*"As Soon As You Trust Yourself,
You Will Know How To Live."*

- Johann Von Goethe

Trusting oneself means alignment of personal values into an integral whole - otherwise known as "integrity," with clarity of direction -

otherwise known as “mission & purpose.”

PART II: CHARACTER-BASED IDENTITY

How do people who've had that kind of transformational experience view the world? Every once in a while you meet a totally unique person who answers the question, "WHO AM I?" very soulfully. They define themselves from a different place, from which character has defined and developed their identity. Typically these people will be disarmingly humble (soulful) in answering the question:

- Vision – the possibility that....
- Values – the most important values are....
- Destiny – God put me on this earth to....
- Purpose – devotion to this noble cause....
- Commitment – dedication to solving....
- Learning – from my failures I now see....
- Quest – seeking the understanding of....
- Giving – serving those who....
- Impact – making a measurable difference by....
- Integrity – dedication to walking the talk....
- Conscience – it's just the right thing to do
- Relationships – aim to be the best friend anyone....

These people's character is sourced not from their ego, but from their soul. They define success much like what the great sports coach John Wooden advocated:

Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming.

It is in this shift from ego and self-interest to soul and embracing the greater good, that character is formed.

Thus the formation of character involves an "identity shift," without which a human being is merely a pawn in the hands of a crafty and potentially omnipotent culture.

"Character becomes Destiny"

- Heraclitus, Greek 500BC

Be the Champion of Your Life

The ideal of character should never be diminished or dismissed.

It is the hallowed core of humanity, of dignity, of reason, of purpose, and of a trusted life lived to its fullest.

Martin Luther King's 1963 speech is one of the most moving and energizing pieces of literature ever delivered to an audience that was hanging on his every word:

I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by **the content of their character**.*

I have a dream that ...when we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last!"

* I fear that this last point about *character* has been lost, and has little meaning to our society today. Of all the MLK's points, this one makes the biggest difference for future generations

PART III: LOVE OF WORK, DEVOTION, & COMMITMENT

In the building of character, one's work and one's experience can be creatively transformed into art and then magnified into action, if our hearts and minds are conduits of a much greater and mightier purpose -- if we see ourselves as benefactors of a conscience ordained by divine order; in this way we meld love into work as we express our character -- thus manifesting our identity with our destiny.

The Love and Art of Work

Mastery of the art melding identity with work is an art that is actually not about work itself.

Work can be transformed into art, and magnified into action, if our hearts and minds are conduits of a much greater and mightier purpose -- if we see ourselves as benefactors of the flow of the two divine energies -- love and creation -- and channel these energies through us into the building of our world. Kahlil Gibran probably understood this phenomenon best as he observed in *The Prophet*:

*When you work you are a flute through
Whose heart the whispering of the hours turns to music.*

*When you work you fulfill a part of earth's furthest dream
Assigned to you when that dream was born,
And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life. And
to love life through labour is to be intimate
With life's inner most secret.*

All work is empty save when there is Love;

*And when you work with love
You bind yourself to yourself,
And to one another, and to God.*

*And what is it to work with love?
It is to weave the cloth with threads drawn from your heart;
It is to build a house with affection;
It is to sow seeds with tenderness
And reap the harvest with joy;*

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*It is to change all things you fashion
With a breath of your own spirit,*

Work is love made visible.

*And if you cannot work with love but only
With distaste, it is better that you should leave your work
For if you grudge the crushing of grapes,
Your grudge distills a poison in the wine.*

*And if you sing though as Angels, and Love not the singing,
You muffle man's ears to the
Voices of the day and the voices of the night.*

St. Francis of Assisi explained this divine process as creative energy:

*The person who works with their hands is simply a laborer;
the person with their hands and minds a craftsman; and
with their hands, mind, and heart, a true artist.*

The laborer and the craftsman “work hard,” the artists “works in wonder.” Our lives and our work can be a sacred art, one for which we need to take the time and to make the effort to become masters. Aristotle commented that:

The aim of true art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance.

In other words, life itself can be -- and the building of character is -- a sacred art.

We mold and shape and design the moments which collectively represent our day, tuning our perceptions and awareness to see and hear what others do not, then amplify and configure these small signals into a larger tapestry of meaning, upon which we become empowered to create action.

We must cherish deep wisdom and pass it on to others as our gift, as an act of our love, our caring, and our commitment to our larger purpose.

However, love and creativity alone are not enough; no work of art can be created without two other key ingredients: devotion and commitment.

Commitment

It's been said: commitment is what transforms a promise into reality; it is the words that speak boldly of our intentions, and the actions which speak louder than the words; it is making the time when there is none, coming through time after time after time, year after year after year.

Commitment is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism, of vision over fear. Commitment gives us the discipline to attain a mastery of our lives, of our own personal duty to build our character.

Devotion

Never should devotion and commitment be confused with "working hard." Devotion is sourced from the soul; a love and dedication for something higher than ourselves, an ideal, a beauty, a goodness that transcends the mundane. St. Francis knew:

"It is in forgetting oneself that one is found."

The devoted person sees themselves not as the cause of anything, but as an instrument or vehicle or conduit through which some greater power can be exerted to achieve a greater purpose. Devotion gives us the zen-like presence to be "in the moment," never to be enslaved by our discipline, but to be set free by discipline.

Devotion allows the master to see past the dogma and prescriptions of the discipline, to touch the hearts and souls of the group, to transcend the dictums and feel the pain, to touch the heart, to manifest the vision of those who seek guidance.

Thus the master is never above and never below, but always by one's side.

In building our personal character, we mold and shape and design the moments which collectively represent our day.

We, as humans, are endowed with a gift to tune our perceptions and awareness to see and hear what others do not, then amplify and configure these small signals into a larger tapestry of meaning, upon which we can be empowered to create daily action demonstrating our devotion, our caring, and our commitment to our larger purpose.

That is the formation of character, identity, and ultimately, destiny.

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Reverence

Those who show reverence for the right things – truth, divine inspiration, love of one’s family, friends, and community – are spiritually centered, reluctant to pass judgement indiscriminately, willing to listen, ask probing questions that reveal inner meanings, and respect every human for their inner soul.

Self Confidence

So much is made today about creating self-confidence in today’s youth, who are so consumed with identity, acceptance by their peers, and pressure from social media. Much of the effort to build self-confidence is misdirected.

Let’s look at the word *confidence*.⁶ It means *trust* and *resilience*. A person who wants self confidence must trust themselves, bringing their diverse interests and desires together, into an aligned, unified inner integrity -- into a strong set of core values.

All-too-often efforts to build self-confidence are terribly misguided. Some kids are given an exorbitant amount of praise and positive reinforcement, often to the point of delusion. Some are rewarded with trophies just for participating in something, regardless of their contribution. Others attempt to defeat self-loathing by fostering self-love, to the edge of narcissism.

Great people never want undeserved acclaim, and never think of loving themselves. Their emphasis is on *personal integrity, service to others, and what’s in the interest of the greater good*. In other words, self-confidence means to *trust yourself* – your values, your intentions, your integrity to do the right thing, your own sense of purpose and mission, and your inner character to stand strong under pressure and adversity.

A better way to build confidence is to build one’s own sense of trust and the discipline to be a pillar of strength. (see Rudyard Kipling’s Poem “If”). Here are a few questions to ask:

⁶ From the Latin *con* (to connect, join, unite, bring together align) and *fidere* (faith, trust, fidelity, loyalty)

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How committed am I to doing the right thing, regardless of who likes me?

When I'm wrong, am I willing to apologize and take corrective action?

Do I find peace, seek harmony, and build unity in the caldron of turmoil?

How willing am I to tell the truth, even if it makes me look bad?

How disciplined am I to travel the high road?

Am I willing to inspire, enthuse, and set a positive example?

Am I a person dedicated to good deeds, not just words?

Do I have the courage to intercede when a wrong is being done?

Am I willing to temper my adept knowledge with real wisdom?

Am I committed to being true to my word?

Am I willing to be humble in the face of glory?

Am I dedicated to a personal mission that builds a better world?

Am I willing to serve my fellow man honorably?

Is my soul and conscience my guiding spirit in my life?

Can I do the right thing without being arrogant or self-righteous?

Am I dedicated to bringing out the best in others?

Can I be skeptical enough to learn, but not succumb to cynicism?

Can I be knowledgeable without being too smart?

Can I apply the Golden Rule to all my interactions in life?

Do I give devotion and respect to a higher, soulful authority?

Peacemaking

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall inherit the earth. But also ...

Cursed are the peacemakers,
for they may-likely be shot by both sides.

Chapter FIVE: RESPONSE TO ADVERSITY

What makes the difference between a Champion and a Loser? While there are many factors, one stands out above all the rest – it's their *response to adversity, hardship, difficulty, and obstacles* in life. If you want to be the *Champion of Your Life*, mastering the capability of consciously and proactively choosing your reaction to calamity and stress will propel you to the top one percent of humans, and make life an enlightening experience.

Adversity is Normal

If anyone gave you the impression that life on planet earth was going to be a dance in the park, they were idealistic dreamers unconnected with reality. Adversity is everywhere in life -- disease, failure, poverty, war, accidents, among just a few. In fact, adversity is normal; the lack of adversity abnormal.

*Adversity is the
first path to truth.*
-Lord Byron

This doesn't mean life has to be a struggle; it only means that being prepared for adversity is just like preparing for a camping trip or a sailing expedition. With the right preparation of the mind, adversity will be a grindstone that sharpens the edges of your ability to navigate and overcome adversity.

This doesn't mean you must seek adversity, but, like the Boy Scout's motto advises: "Always be Prepared." Many men who have become President of the United States had to overcome enormous adversity. Just read the biographies of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, or his nephew Franklin Roosevelt for great inspiration.

When we transform our pains of the past into our mission and purpose for the future, we use adversity positively. Otherwise we remain trapped in the past. We can't change the past, but we can convert how we view the past and what meaning it gives us to propel us to a more honorable and enlightened forthcoming – a rebirth as in a phoenix rising.

ADVERSITY IS A GLORIOUS OPPORTUNITY

Adversity can be perceived negatively as an obstacle, impediment, and trauma, or positively as an opportunity for rising higher, for demonstrating one's highest self. The distinction: *it is your choice and your choice alone on how you see the adversity* – either positively nor negatively. Most people are never conscious of the positive/negative options, and default to a negative, unconscious, victimhood response, such as “Oh, why does this always happen to me?” or “I’ll deal with it tomorrow!” or “I’m doomed!” or “That’s not fair!”

*When faced with an Unalterable Fate,
Our Greatest Freedom is our ability to
.... Alter Our Perception of it.*

-- Victor Frankl

Discipline empowers freedom by setting the boundaries of thought and action that keep us from being enslaved in a flailing quagmire random possibilities, just as a river is distinguished from a swamp by the boundaries that enable the river to flow and become refreshed.

We are enslaved when we have no power over choice. All life is a set of choices, all of which have consequences.

We can choose consciously with discipline, or unconsciously because we lack discipline, which makes us slaves to our emotional irrationality. Either way, there are consequences. The wise person knows how to produce the best consequences by disciplined choices.

The Olympics always serve as a great storybook of people overcoming adversity. My favorites are the 1980 U.S. Olympic Hockey Team, composed of a bunch of college kids who beat the invincible Russian team composed of professionals trained to be monsters on ice (see the Disney movie *Miracle*). They accomplished the impossible against all odds.

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Or the unforgettable images of teenage gymnast Kerry Strug at the 1996 Olympics winning the gold medal while tearing the tendons irreparably in her knee, then being held in the arms of her coach, Bela Karoli because she couldn't walk.

Amy Purdy had both legs amputated at the knee when she contracted a rare disease. She was only sixteen years old, in the prime of her life. A beautiful young woman, and a very good athlete, she now had just stumps where her attractive legs used to be. Instead of wallowing in remorse, she starred in the ParaOlympics in 2014, then went on to go right to the top in Dancing with the Stars. (see her on YouTube -- a remarkable transformation of adversity into inspiration.)

It's like wrestling a gorilla. You don't quit when you get tired, you quit when the gorilla gets tired.

-Robert Strauss

New England Patriots football quarterback Tom Brady was behind 28-3 against the Atlanta Falcons in Superbowl LI. Only 22 minutes were left on the game clock. He and his team never lost faith. In what many consider the most miraculous comeback in sports history, Brady rallied his team and went on to victory.

One of my favorite stories is incredible voyage of explorer Earnest Shackleton.⁷ He battled his way through South Pole ice packs, getting his twenty seven man team stranded for 10 months in the bitter cold without supplies. He avoided starvation and death, then took a skeleton crew across 850 miles of the most grueling sea to a small island in the Antarctic Ocean. In the end, all twenty seven men survived in a heroic feat against adversity.

⁷ See Lansing, Alfred; *Endurance; Shackleton's Incredible Voyage*; Carroll & Graf; 1959

The "Flu Game"

It was the Finals of the National Basketball Association's 1997 season, and the two best teams in the league that year were the Chicago Bulls led by superstar Michael Jordan, pitted against the Utah Jazz, whose team leader, John Stockton held the record for the highest number of assists in a career. Going into game five, each team had won two games apiece. This series was a nail-biter. Utah had just won the last game.

Then adversity struck unexpectedly. Two days before the critical fifth game, Jordan woke up in the middle of the night, sweating profusely, shaking, and feeling as if he was going to die. "I was scared; I didn't know what was happening to me; I felt partially paralyzed." His head was spinning; he was nauseous; at first he thought someone had slipped him some kind of drug at dinner.

The team's medical team responded immediately. They diagnosed him with either food poisoning or an intestinal stomach virus. "There's no way you'll be able to play Game 5." No normal human being could or should play in this condition.

Both teams had the next day off from the playoff schedule. Jordan was bedridden for the next 24 hours, missing the Bulls' practices the day before and the day of Game 5. He dropped several pounds from dehydration.

Then, just three hours before the big game, Jordan, depleted and still running a fever, hauled himself to the sports center.

When he arrived, his teammate, Scottie Pippen was shocked. "The way he looked, there's no way I thought he could even put on his uniform. I'd never seen him like that. He looked bad -- I mean really bad."

Jordan then lay down in isolation in a dark room next to the Bulls' locker room. When he closed his eyes; he lifted himself into another world. He visualized himself running, shooting,

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passing, rebounding, dunking – winning despite illness, weakness and pain. This is the “heart of a warrior.”

When he emerged from the room, he staggered to the locker room, put on his uniform, and walked gingerly to the court, weak and pale.

His coach, Phil Jackson, inquired about his condition. "I can play," Jordan told his coach. "I'll let you know how I'm feeling as the game goes on."

At the opening buzzer, Jordan dragged his aching body up and down the court, running at two-thirds normal speed, despite his best efforts. His body was so dehydrated and depleted, he was sure he was ready to pass out and collapse on the floor. Halfway through the first quarter, during a time-out, he bent over, closed his eyes, and almost passed out. His body was drained of energy; he was out of steam; he had used all his reserve. By the end of the first quarter, Jordan was essentially useless to his team.

Into the second quarter, Utah had taken a commanding 16-point lead. At that point, the “heart of a warrior” took possession of Jordan’s disease-ridden body. Body, Mind, and Spirit kicked into high gear. Adversity became his ally, not his enemy. He couldn’t let his team or the fans down; the Championship was at stake.

He ran harder, faster, and started making shot after shot. Swish – into the basket; again and again. By the end of the first half, he miraculously had scored 17 points. "It was all about desire. Somehow I found the energy to stay strong," he told sports writers after the game.

During the halftime break, the medical team fed him fluids and wrapped him in cold towels to get his temperature down.

Then, in the third quarter, fatigue and nausea returned. He was down and dragging, virtually useless to his team. Later

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Jordan said, "In the third quarter, I felt like I couldn't catch my wind and get my energy level up. I don't know how I got through... I was just trying to gut myself through it."

In the fourth and final quarter, Jordan's Warrior Heart resurrected. With the Bulls down by 8 points, 77-69, Jordan went on a tear, leading a 10-0 run that put the Bulls back on top with only five minutes left in the game.

His total was 33 points at this stage with only a few minutes to go -- which would have been considered a fantastic output in any basketball game. Under the circumstances it was super-human given his illness and weak body.

Then, with only three minutes left, Utah surged ahead as John Stockton hit a long three-pointer. Jordan grabbed the ball and fed one of his teammates in the lane to go ahead by one point. Stockton then fouled Jordan, who hit his first free throw but missed the second. Still on top of his game despite the flu, Jordan grabbed the rebound and set up his offense.

The fans could see he was out of gas, his arms hanging limply like clothes on a hanger. But he alertly passed off to his teammate Scottie Pippen, whose shot was blocked. Pippen fired back to Jordan. Less than half a minute left on the game clock. Stockton was all over Jordan, who launched a long 3-point long-shot perfectly down the throat of the basket.

The Bulls won the game on Jordan's epic performance.

Jordan amassed a staggering total of 38 points, then staggered off the court. He was doubled over, collapsing from exhaustion, falling into the arms of team mate Scottie Pippen, who later said, "He's the greatest, and everyone saw why tonight."

Jordan had played all but four minutes of the game. "That was probably the most difficult thing I've ever done. I almost

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played myself into passing out just to win a basketball game. If we had lost, I would have been devastated."

His coach, Phil Jackson was nearly speechless, telling the sports media, "Because of the circumstances, with this being a critical game in the Finals, I'd have to say this is the greatest game I've seen Michael play. Just standing up was nauseating for him and caused him dizzy spells. This was a heroic effort, one to add to the collection of efforts that make up his legend."

- *I have missed more than 9,000 shots in my career.*
 - *I have lost almost 300 games.*
 - *On 26 occasions I have been entrusted to take the game winning shot, and I missed.*
 - *I have failed over and over and over again in my life.*
- And that is why I succeed.*

– Michael Jordan, basketball superstar

See the falterings in life as opportunity, experience adversity as the possibility for regeneration.

Life is not about perfection, it is all about perfecting -- losing your spirituality and gaining it back again.

The loss of something is a breakdown that creates the opportunity for a breakthrough -- the possibility of renewal, the potential to regain but at a spirituality higher level that you held it previously.

To simply never lose is to live too safely, to remain at a stagnant at a constant level.

The breakdown need not be permanent, it simply needs to be experienced as a trigger to come into being anew at a higher level – *regeneration* (which means to be reborn anew at a higher level).

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Therefore, the hero experiences adversity with a quiet smile, as a hidden treasure from which he/she can source new levels of experience, awareness, and energy.

Harbor no emotion that gives you no power, no responsibility, no pathway to *regeneration*.

Anger, fear, negativity, doubt all leave one impotent, with no capacity to engage in positive action. These are all wasted energy that result in stress, and actually create more negativity, feeding themselves -- anger generates more anger, fear generates more fear, love generates more love.

Christ said: *Condemn and ye shall be condemned, judge and ye shall be judged, forgive and ye shall be forgiven.*

OPPRESSION

Is there anyone on earth that isn't oppressed? Who are the oppressed? While it might be easier to identify those who are oppressed because they are victims, the idea of being oppressed is as much a state of mind as a fact of fate.

While certainly, as an external observer, if we see someone being oppressed by some persecutor, prosecutor, slave owner, human trafficker, mafioso, dictator, or villain, we might conclude that person was oppressed.

But what about the oppressors themselves? Are they truly in command of their fate? Or are they too oppressed by an evil spirit of malevolence? Isn't the dictator oppressed by his fear of his fellow man? Isn't the miser wallowing in wealth oppressed by his greed and gluttony?

Or what about those who care nothing for their fellow man? Are they too oppressed by their callous indifference?

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Are not all of our youth oppressed by the horrible lack of trust in the world around them?

How do are we to be released from the yoke of oppression?

When Christ said to love thy neighbor, he was lifting the yoke of oppression from all, for by caring for thy brother and sister, we are walking in the path of the Holy Spirit, lifting the dignity of the sacredness of all people. Then, and only then, are we free, and no longer oppressed, no matter our fate or circumstances.

Invictus

William Ernest Henley 1876

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

Evil Lurks wherever Corruption Reigns - Robert Porter Lynch

INTO THE HEART OF DARKNESS

We all have a “dark side” of our psyche. “Dark” means more than just negative or harmful; it also means to keep this important and powerful part of us “in the dark,” something we hide or won’t acknowledge. Christ was referring to this:

*If you do not bring forth [the light] within you,
[the darkness within you] will destroy you.*

Repressing Our Dark Side -- What Most People Do

If we are not aware of our dark side, it can eat us alive, and often bursts forth unexpectedly:

- the inexplicable suddenness of explosive anger erupting from what seems like nowhere
- the destructive side that wants to do damage to others, even if it means going down ourselves
- the part of us that embraces victimization in search for garnering the sympathy and commiseration of others
- the antagonist within us that attracts trouble and then gets an adrenaline rush from the excitement of a fight
- the devil in us that loves to find an equally devilish partner for a dance macabre
- the vindictive urge to find a revengeful means to get even, plus a little extra for good measure
- the willingness to betray others before they get a chance to betray us

When we develop our identity in our teenage years, we create an idealized view of what we really are, and try to project that onto the world. Whatever that’s within us that doesn’t fit this idealized image of ourselves gets put into the deep recesses of our mind, hidden away – our “dark side.” No one likes to explore their dark side because it’s scary and disconcerting, filled with bad memories of ugly experiences.

Warriors coming back from battle, and abused children are traumatized by their dark side. Psychologists call this Post Traumatic

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Stress Disorder (PTSD). But you don't have to be traumatized to have a dark side; everyone has it.

Entering the "heart of darkness" is a scary journey most people will avoid at all costs.

If your identity is "experience/externally-based," linked to the events that form your life or your idealized projection you wish the world to see, then the dark side is especially difficult to deal with because it's like a haunting ghost within you - we are that terrified bringing it to the surface will end in pain, destructiveness, and irreconcilable conflicts our psyche cannot handle.

Indeed, this is quite true for people whose identity is "experience-based." We accurately sense our dark side can and often does get us into destructive relationships, needless arguments at work, setting ourselves up for failure, and even violence toward others. If you've ever had road rage or screamed at your computer when it didn't function the way you wanted, you know the destructiveness of the dark side toward an inanimate object. These are all obvious symptom of your dark side, which manifest as an adult "temper tantrum."

The dark side can also occur as "passive aggressiveness," such as gossip, demeaning others, fault-finding, betrayal of trust and confidences, and withdrawal of emotional support.

However, if your identity is "character/internally-based" -- linked to your vision, your values, your purpose, and your destiny -- the dark side is much easier to wrestle with, because you know intuitively that the power of the "bright side" of your soul will prevail. It's the faith your inherent goodness will conquer the devil within. It's safer to explore darkness because your commitment to your highest and best destiny can be counted on to be more powerful than your fear of the black, uncertain, unknown dimensions of your psyche. Character-based identity is like having an ultimate weapon in the battle between the light and dark forces within.

Evil Lurks wherever Corruption Reigns - Robert Porter Lynch

THE POWER OF ONE

One act of Heroism is worth a thousand exhortations;
One Gift to a person in need is worthy of a dozen thanks;
One Step in the right direction outweighs a traffic jam;
One Ounce of love and caring can disarm a ton of fears;
One Truth can unmask a multitude of deceits and lies;
One Great Leader can enthuse and unify the torn and forlorn;
One simple idea of can sanctify a mound of garbage.
One act of Courage outclasses a mountain of complaints
-it's the Simple Power of One

Robert Porter Lynch

SERENITY PRAYER

God grant me the serenity to
accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living fully inspired today,
with the Holy Spirit to enliven my soul;
Enjoying the little gifts I receive and provide;

Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace,
While being grateful for blessings large and small.

Let me hear the morning song of your steadfast
love.

I place my trust and devotion
In all that is Sacred and Divine;
I lift up my soul for the Holy Spirit
To guide Destiny's journey.

Let me nurture and join those seeking
To create a world on earth as it is in heaven;
Those who can partake in life's grace and joy;
Bringing out the best in others
By touching the Holy Spirit within them;
Growing and harvesting an abundant garden
For all to share and reseed for eternity.

Amen.

Adapted by RPL

Case Study: Dante's Inferno

Here's a good example of how the dark side can harm us.

Dante is a senior executive, a fine, intelligent, well meaning, and highly educated man. He has a long list of accomplishments, but also has had a large number of failed relationships caused by outbursts of anger, demeaning others, and setting people up for failure. Sadly, he is oblivious to any awareness that he has these outbursts, and impervious to any friends who offer to help him transcend this problem.

As a leader, Dante is usually kind, visionary, and compassionate. He is well respected by his profession. He normally has a warm and friendly personality.

But under stress, Dante's dark side unexpectedly bursts like a balloon; he becomes an uncontrolled tyrant. To outsiders it looks like a split personality.

Dante is not mentally ill, nor is he ordinarily mean and ornery, except when someone or something doesn't meet his expectations. He thinks he articulates expectations well. But, in reality, the expectations for performance are seldom mutual and carefully clarified. He expects everyone to meet his standard, but he doesn't have to meet other's standards.

If his computer doesn't do what he commands, he throws temper tantrums, cusses like a street brawler, and acts like an irrational monster. His logic circuits in his brain shut down, and people around him hide in fear or worse, fight and argue with him. (Of course fighting and arguing does no good, because you can't win when someone is in the tyrannical mode). Anyone who tries to talk to him about getting clarification on what he expects gets raked over hot coals.

His temper tantrums were learned when he was three or four years old. Now that he's had a half century of practice, they've become deeply ingrained as a habit. The brain's neural pathways are like a river, and the longer the river flows in a pathway, the deeper the incision it cuts, the more likely the neural river will remain in that groove.

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When he's a tyrant, the organization around him is in turmoil, but Dante blames it all on others. He claims others have stressed him out; he becomes unforgiving, denying his own role in triggering the mess; and then he wants sympathy from others because his trusted associates and employees have betrayed him.

Usually in the middle of this mess, Dante goes AWOL (Absent Without Leave), either hiding in his office, or going on a trip without leaving anyone in charge. While gone, Dante throws email grenades criticizing others for their ineptitude and inadequacies; he and his judgment are superior, and everyone else is inferior to him. No one else can do anything right. His subordinates feel helpless to avoid the impending train wreck. As he demands, he closes his mind to learning.

In an uncanny way he unconsciously ferrets out people's weaknesses, and triggers their dark sides too. Now everyone is hurt, or vindictive and revengeful. They act badly, which becomes the evidence to prove Dante's presumption of ill intent. Dante threatens to fire people, and those he threatens are already to quit. Firing is the ultimate form of control and the ultimate form of denial -- once the fired employee is gone, he no longer has to confront his own inadequacies as a leader.

People polarize into camps – the pro-Dante and anti-Dante – finding safety in numbers. As Dante becomes more threatened, he calls for allegiance from his comrades and bad-mouths his adversaries (former teammates, partners, and employees), while enlisting comrades to join his side to stand by him and his self-righteousness. His comrades unwittingly become co-dependent enablers of Dante's wounded ego.

All the visionary work his team has accomplished gets thrown under the bus, trashed in favor of a convoluted loser's death-fight. You'd think it was a script for a movie about dinosaurs in a death struggle, not intelligent people.

Dante's been captured by his dark side emotions, and he's in massive meltdown. It's self-imposed, self-indulgent, self-centered, ego-centric stress. It might kill him. In its wake he leaves a trail of tears and psychic damage that he then denies having created – they deserved it. The dark side of his Ego has been severely wounded as he creates his

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own hell, which he denies was created by anything he did – he is just the victim of other’s transgressions.

The dark side of the psyche has captured him; torn him asunder. When his closest associates try to bring him to his senses, tragically, like a Greek play, Dante shoots the innocent messengers. Then he goes into complete denial, not wanting to know the truth, forever blind to his transgressions. Everyone is left helpless to turn the tide of Dante’s fate.

It’s been said that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result. From this point of view, Dante’s dark side brings him into temporary insanity.

Of course, Dante’s story is just one of many examples. People with histories of abuse, abandonment, or other forms of psychic damage are prone to other manifestations of their dark sides. Unless one travels deep into the heart of darkness to bring in light, *the darkness within you will destroy you.*

Reconciling the Dark & the Light

In an enlightening study of reconciliation and transcendence, authors Sharon Catherine Ryan and Jeffery Prinster address one of the most vexing problems of light and darkness: *Finding God in War*⁸. Warriors returning from battle have traditionally had massive post-battle trauma because killing is an unnatural act, and the darkness from those events can haunt soldiers for decades.

Interviewing battle seasoned Marines who are faced with having to kill while believing in God (a classic case of dark and light), they found that by being open to their dark side and addressing the moral discord caused the men significantly fewer problems.

⁸ Ryan, Sharon Catherine and Prinster, Lt. Col. Jeffery; *Finding God in War? U.S. Warriors Speak from the Heart*; Authorhouse, 2010

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A strong moral compass is essential for any Marine on the battle front so they don't become monsters committing illegal/immoral acts, like slaughtering innocent people. Col. P.J. McCoy, 7th Marine Regimental Commander states:

We have a duty to execute the mission and come out of it on the other side whole. My job is getting [Marines] to kill and exonerating them for that killing so they can come out of it whole, without burdens.

We asked for forgiveness [from God] before we entered Iraq. Each Marine needs to keep his faith and his relationship with his Creator on an individual level. ... I gave every Marine the Dark Side

Credo:

*Commit yourself to the unit and the mission;
Trust your brothers; make peace with your maker;
And fight with a happy heart.*

Making rapid, life or death decisions affecting an entire military unit requires each Marine achieve and balance the God-like spiritual qualities of wise/joint action: courage, compassion, love, faith, hope, discipline, wisdom, mercy, justice, truth, power, and holiness.⁹

By opening the warrior to a deep awareness of the spiritual principles and the need to take righteous action for the greater good (to prevent despots from robbing people of their God-given right to freedom), they retain their humanity, their sense of dignity, and their ability to forgive themselves in the purpose of peace.

⁹ In Greek this "equity of character" was known as *Dikaiosune*, (used in the New Testament 86 times, but "flattened" in its translation to simply *Righteousness*.) The real meaning is far richer, and also implies collaboration with others, not just self-righteousness.

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Be constantly renewed in the spirit of your mind. And put on the new nature created in God's image, in true righteousness and holiness. – Ephesians 4:23-24

Therefore, put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. – Ephesians 6:13-17

Ryan and Prinster explain that by experiencing stress in the context of a spiritual journey, we are able to...

Tap into our own religious and spiritual beliefs in our own troubling environment, to rejuvenate our spirits in the midst of tragedy, and to discipline our minds to do the right thing, no matter the circumstances.

A divinely inspired soldier is one who not only comes to terms with his duty to kill, but kills with love for his enemy in his heart.

When soldiers believe in the [justness and righteousness] of the cause they are fighting for, they see fighting as a moral imperative, a principle held in their conscience that is so right that they have no other choice but to act.

[A soldier must know] what's in his heart when he pulls the trigger: it's a deciding factor between love for the enemy versus love for killing people or between a virtue and a sin. ¹⁰

A soldier needs to know how he's accountable or the position he is in when taking someone's life... Terrorists are taught that killing is the way to make it in this life. How can I hold it against somebody if they've been taught this way? ...I fight for democracy. Democracy – or the freedom of choice – is a Godly principle and God created us all to have freedom of

¹⁰ Ryan & Prinster; Ibid, p 17, 19, 22

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choice. My job is to protect people and help them gain their freedom.

So I may have to kill an enemy soldier, but I can still love and have compassion and understanding for that enemy soldier... I'm not going over there to kill Iraqis, but to serve the people over there. It doesn't mean I wouldn't defend my soldiers and myself, but it does mean we're there to liberate, to free a people.¹¹

By reconciling the dark and light, the trauma of death and destruction is perceived in the heart of the mind in a more coherent, integrated way, thus reducing the potential of PTSD.

There's another major benefit from reconciling of the forces of internal darkness by the light of the soul: it creates a foundation for us to discern how to trust the world around us. Those who are "trustworthy" have integrity – they have integrated their dark side by the power of their bright side. Thus they trust themselves; this trust is a powerful reflection of our identity. The energies of our bright side embrace the dark, guiding it to come into flow with our destiny. The dark side is no longer destructive, but becomes empowering because every time it emerges, we can almost laugh about it, and acknowledge that it is just a manifestation of what is going on in other people as well. It's part of our humanness.

When Thomas Jefferson penned the Declaration of Independence, he stated that our Creator endowed us with the inalienable rights to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But he didn't say that true happiness comes from not from without – not from the externalities of experiences, possessions,

¹¹ Specialist Courtney Harward, Utah National Guard, cited in Ryan & Prinster, *Ibid*, p 23-25

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or awards – but from within our higher self and our ability to express it through our relationships with others.

If you have a history of crashed relationships, look to your dark side for the tragic source; don't shield yourself from the reality, turn it to advantage, dance with the dark side. Get this weight off your back so real friends can help lift you higher.

Belief is the Foundation of Faith

Belief is what we think we can TRUST.

If we don't trust, our Faith & Belief enters a dark corner of uncertainty.

You only Believe what you Trust, and Doubt what you Distrust.

Uncertainty and Doubt, bonded with Distrust and Uncertainty trigger Fears that Drive out Faith.

Either Fear or Faith one must dominate and drive out the other.

For the mind to behold fear and the soul to behold faith sets our humanity against our divinity, causing turmoil and angst within, which then churns our outside world.

Robert Porter Lynch

Learning Loop

What you...

Believe, which will determine what you

Perceive, that will guide what you

Conceive, which will direct what you

Achieve, which will result in what you

Receive -- Robert Porter Lynch

What About God and the State of the World?

Many ask the question:

If God is Good and Almighty, why is the world so screwed up?

(The answer to this question is addressed in more detail Book #3 “Dancing with the Holy Spirit.”) Here is the very abbreviated answer:

- Humans, genetically, are actually half spirit and half beast. What side emerges is highly reliant on whether you just “live” your life, (going wherever the wind may take you --see *The Set of the Soul*, page 25), or whether you “lead” your life (“Character becomes Destiny.”) What half - beast or soul -- shows up is your choice. It is our job as leaders of our lives to evoke our soul-spirit, and repress our beast.
- God is *omnipresent* but does not exercise *omnipotent control*. In other words, God is not a Divine Interventionist, but He always present if we want Him for Divine Guidance.
 - Thus, God, puts the potential into us to rise or fall, and virtually guarantees results with exquisite/explicit predictability.
 - But God does not intervene, except through the quiet voice of the Holy Spirit (if we listen), to guide us with possibility, should we so choose.
 - When the world is in turmoil and disruption, it is because Man is acting as Beast, not Soul-Spirit. To be disappointed that the world is so far astray is not God’s failure, but our failure to listen to God’s quiet voice of Divine Guidance.

SOURCES OF POSITIVE ADVERSITY RESPONSES

While not everyone will face the trauma of battlefield carnage, two things are very evident.

First, the Marines, as a fighting unit, train their men and women to have a *positive response to adversity* and not crumble, cry, or complain. It is a courageous path that focuses not just on individual character, but on teamwork, trust, and togetherness as a fighting unit. I know this from personal experience, having gone through Marine boot camp as part of my training as a Naval officer.

When faced with combat, I wondered if I would be struck numb with fear, essentially finding that under battlefield conditions I was a coward. I learned I was calm under fire. But why? Was it me? No, perhaps not. I was well trained, but more importantly, I fully trusted my crew, my fellow officers, and our values to fight as a unit, react to danger without panic, and make the right decisions in the best interests of our ship.

Second, the Marines recognize that once you train a person to have a positive response to adversity, there are two more options inside that response – a) the individual *tough guy*, will-power path, and b) the collaborative, *spiritual warrior* path. Ultimately, while the image of the Marine may be the former, in reality a great Marine is a balance between the individual *tough guy* and the team-focused *spiritual warrior*.

For the *tough guy*, response to adversity looks much like it does for Watergate operative G. Gordon Liddy, in his book: *Will*. He tied himself to a tree in a lightning storm to overcome his fears; he extolled the virtues of Hitler's Third Reich in the White House, praising the way Nazi's could move a crowd; he claimed he would protect democracy by violating the laws that protect our democracy. After being sent to prison for his lawbreaking, he congratulated himself for harassing prison guards and filing frivolous lawsuits. His narcissistic behavior belies a constant self-serving need to define himself in a superior manner, above all others. In his self-adulation, he advocates the ends justifies whatever means it takes, but ultimately he illustrates that neither his means nor ends have any real value to anyone else, except as a role model to other narcissists, ego-maniacs, professional wrestlers, and neo-Nazis.

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While there is nothing inherently wrong with building one's body and mind to endure great trials, without the development of the higher, "spiritual warrior" adversity response, one is just an uncultured, uninspired, unenlightened, under-developed, misguided, high-horsepower brute.

Chasing Down the Shadow

The initial step in the high road is to have meaning, purpose, and destiny in your life. For the Marines, they make freedom, democracy, and honor a man's purpose for living. For others, we get to choose our path. Without having a strong spiritual path, there is no internal force confident enough to bring out the dark side and wrestle it into submission. But finding meaning and purpose can be a long journey, and one may not have the luxury of waiting to find their purpose in life before wrestling their demons. So a parallel step is to "chase down the shadow:"

The shadow wears many faces: fearful, greedy, angry, vindictive, evil, selfish, manipulative, lazy, controlling, hostile, ugly, under-serving, cheap, weak, critical, judgmental....

Everything we hate, resist, or disown about ourselves takes on a life of its own, undermining our feelings or worthiness. When we come face-to-face with our dark side, our first instinct is to turn away, and our second is to bargain with it to leave us alone.

...

Ironically, it's these hidden aspects we've rejected that need the most attention. When we locked away those parts of ourselves we didn't like, unknowingly, we sealed away our most valuable treasures. These treasures are therefore hidden where we would least expect to find them. They are hidden in the dark....

By choosing not to allow parts of ourselves to exist [in the open], we are forced to expend huge amounts of psychic energy to keep them beneath the surface.

Embracing [a dark] aspect of yourself means loving it – allowing it to coexist with all your other aspects, not making it more or less than any other part of yourself.

Transform Your Destiny!

We live under the impression that in order for something to be divine it has to be perfect. We are mistaken. In fact the opposite is true. To be divine is to be whole.... the positive and the negative, the good and the bad, the holy man and the devil.

When we take time to discover our shadow and its gifts, we will understand what [psychologists Carl Gustav] Jung meant by: "the gold is in the dark." Each of us needs to find that gold in order to reunite with our sacred self.¹²

Revealing our shadow side does not mean we just let it manifest in all its ugliness any time we want. Nor does it mean because our shadow is part of the divine whole that we worship it as sacred in-and-of-itself.¹³

It means that from our shadow we learn what we need in life and aren't getting by using anger or control or victimization. It's being able to acknowledge our needs when we are in circumstances like road rage or upsets wasting time in a long line. It ultimately means aligning our Ego needs to be consistent with the higher spiritual needs of the Soul. It does not mean repressing, denying, repudiating, or denigrating those Ego needs; it does mean embracing and accepting those needs, satisfying those needs to a reasonable extent, but not being driven into moral bankruptcy by them.

Belief in the Power to Change Your Course of Fate

If you believe you are a victim, the truth is: You are. And, if, to the contrary, you believe you are the key determining factor is changing your course of fate, the truth is: You are.

Why are these seemingly contradictory statements equally true?

Over the last sixty years a considerable amount of research has been undertaken to determine why people act in certain ways. One very critical factor is *belief systems*.

¹² Ford, Debbie; *Dark Side of Light Chasers*, Riverhead, 1998, p 11-13

¹³ To use a coarse analogy: our anus is part of our sacred self, but it certainly is not the source of our sacredness.

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Earlier, I have quoted from Victor Frankl's book *Man's Search for Meaning*. Frankl, a psychologist, was a prisoner in one of Hitler's worst concentration camps during the Second World War. Most of the prisoners were gripped by a feeling of helplessness and impotence to change their fate. The guards told them they would never leave the camp. Those prisoners who accepted the guard's prophesy died quickly; those who rejected this fate lived significantly longer, including Frankl, who survived the ordeal. As soon as a prisoner lost hope, lost their belief in a positive outcome, they went into a permanent decline, ending in death.

Since Frankl's book, there have been a number of experiments in human behavior that involve prisons. The most notable was conducted by Stanford psychologist Philip Zimbardo in 1971. He turned a basement classroom into a mock prison. Then he asked for volunteers, screened them for normal behavior, and divided the volunteers randomly into "prisoners" and "guards." After issuing the prisoner and guards appropriate uniforms, he gave no further instructions, and watched what happened.

Their behavior horrified him. The guards became brutal and abusive, the prisoners passive and victimized. Zimbardo had to cancel the experiment after a couple of days to avoid causing permanent psychic damage. And it took Zimbardo thirty five years to gather his thoughts sufficiently to write a long-over-due book on the experiment. He was astounded how the power of institutional images and values of a prison, picked up superficially through television and movies, could override the personal dispositions and value structures of the highly educated students. Zimbardo's prison experiment...

Vividly reveals the extent to which ordinary, normal, healthy young men succumbed to, or were seduced by the social forces... The line between Good and Evil, once thought to be impenetrable proved instead to be quite permeable.

We were surprised that situational pressures could overcome most of these normal, healthy young men so quickly and so extensively.

Experiencing a loss of personal identity and subjected to arbitrary continual control over their behavior, as well as being

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*deprived of privacy and sleep, generated in them a syndrome of passivity, dependency, and depression that resembled what has been termed “learned helplessness” – the experience of passive resignation and depression following recurring failure and punishment.*¹⁴

Being manipulated by others is easier when one’s identity is ill-defined or poorly formed, and when one’s dark side is lurking under the surface, ready to explode like a time bomb.

I tried to coach a dear friend who was captured by her dark side. When I confronted her, she resisted, argued, and denied. I explained what that my intent was not to tear her down, but to lift her up! But I could not lift her with the overwhelming weight of darkness she carried unless she helped.

*Our greatest glory
is not in never failing,
but in rising
every time we fall.*

-Coach Vince Lombardi

¹⁴ Zimbardo, Philip; *The Lucifer Effect, Understanding How Good People Turn Evil*; Random House, 2007, p 195-6

Overcoming Learned Helplessness

The American Psychological Association considers “learned helplessness” to be the Landmark Theory of the Century because it explains why many so many people just give up or stop short of their mark. Adversity Response psychologist Paul Stoltz states:

Learned helplessness is simply internalizing the belief that what you do does not matter, sapping one’s sense of control....performance, productivity, motivation, energy, learning, improvement, risk taking, creativity, health, vitality, resilience and persistence.

Helplessness is taught to children early in life... and can be reinforced later in life. The spouse who constantly finds reasons not to be alone with her husband teaches him to stop trying. The boss who punishes new ideas soon finds that fewer and fewer ideas emerge..... Everyday, intimacy, innovation, and improvement are crushed.¹⁵

Studies show that people who *internalize* adverse events as part of their identity *see themselves as failures* when they fail; their failure becomes their identity, feeling helpless to change the events that cause the experience. They inherently become pessimists about their own power.

On the other hand, those who master adversity see events as *external* to their identity, and thus temporary and manageable; they are able to rise quickly when set back, seeking remedies for their failure.¹⁶ They are inherently optimists about themselves and their futures.

For example, optimistic sales people outsold pessimists by 88 percent, and the pessimists were three times more likely to give up, regardless of how or talented they were.¹⁷

¹⁵ Stoltz, Paul; *Adversity Quotient, Turning Obstacles into Opportunities*; Wiley, 1997, p 55, 58, 59.

¹⁶ Stoltz, Paul; *Ibid*, p 59

¹⁷ Stoltz, Paul; *Ibid*, p 61

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Studies of communities show that neighborhoods that believe in a positive vision for their future produce better people, better quality of life, and happier results.

When I returned from Vietnam, I moved to a neighborhood that was quite run down and considered a bit of a ghetto. It was the only place I could afford to own a house. Soon after the Town Council learned of my interest in revitalization of communities, I was appointed to head up a commission to revitalize the run-down part of town.

I asked people on the street what they thought of our town. They said almost universally: “What this town needs is a four alarm fire!!” Quite discouraging. I went to the high school and spoke with the Student Council. I asked them what they thought of the town. Their response was also dismal. I asked them if any of them would return after college. All said no. I asked them if they came back in ten years what the town would look like, and they all said “no change” or “worse.”

The strategy for revitalization began with building a belief in a new future for the town. Today, forty years later, trees line the streets, stores are fixed up, the bars are gone, old houses have been restored, and the community is no longer considered “the pits” —it now has a future. It all starts with belief in yourself, your future, your team, your ability and commitment to turn possibility into probability.

Today the greatest male and female sprinters in the world come from Jamaica. Does this little island the size of Connecticut with two and a half million people have some new genetic code that produces great sprinters? Of course not. But Jamaicans now believe they can be winners of track meets. The same goes for the disproportionate number of major league baseball players from the Dominican Republic. Or the world class gymnasts from Romania. Or the National Football League players from American Samoa. Culture and beliefs will mold your destiny.

What you believe is what you get.

*Turn Pain and Pessimism of the Past
Into Mission, Purpose, and Action
to Create a Bold New Future*

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The key strategy, according to Stoltz, is how one consciously processes the adversity event. He isolated several key differentiators that separate champions from losers:¹⁸

Competitiveness:

People who respond constructively to adversity are more apt to maintain their energy, focus, and vigor required to successfully compete.

Those who respond destructively tend to lose steam, or simply stop trying. Competition is largely about hope, agility, and resilience, which are highly determined by how one deals with life's setbacks and challenges.

Persistence:

Persistence is the essence of ascendance. It is the ability to keep on trying, even when faced with setbacks or failure. Few traits gain more results over time than sheer persistence, especially when combined with a little creativity.

Productivity:

People who respond destructively to adversity are less productive than people who did not. They sell less, produce less, and perform worse than people who do.

Motivation:

People with a positive response to adversity are the most motivated, both on a daily basis and over time.

Creativity:

Innovation is, in essence, an act of hope. It requires the belief that something that did not previously exist could be possible..... It, therefore, requires the essential ability to overcome the adversity of uncertainty.

¹⁸ Stoltz, Paul; Ibid, p 67-70

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Risk-Taking:

With a lack of perceived control, there is no reason to take risks. In fact, risks make no sense. Believing that what you do does not matter saps the burst of energy required to leap into unknown territory.

Embracing Change:

Those who embrace change tend to respond most constructively to adversity, using it to strengthen their resolve. Those who are crushed by change are crushed by adversity.

Response adversity, while starting within the heart of the mind of an individual, ascends to great heights when *culminating in an entire team attaining a super adversity response.*

It' been my experience that those who are "coachable," are willing to listen to helpful feedback, flexible to change their ways, and unabashed in their willingness to experiment with new ideas, behaviors, and responses: the champions of our future. Similarly, those who can consistently establish trusting relationships in their lives can consistently build synergistic results, giving them a cumulative impact, and, at the same time attracting others who want to achieve together.

People who are blindly resistant to the lessons of their own history are doomed to repeat them – doing the same thing over and over again expecting a different result. Why do they do this? They can't see their own history of failed and broken relationships objectively, and are so fearful of discovering their dark side, they are paralyzed to start the journey, preferring their angry world of image and illusion -- in reality -- delusion.

Chapter SIX: From Breakdowns to Breakthroughs

What surprises many who have not attained performance excellence is that high performance teams actually have *more* breakdowns than low performance teams. Why? Because high performance teams *experiment* more on the edge, and then a breakdown occurs, instead of engaging in the “blame game” they focus on learning from their mistakes and generating solutions. Low performance teams blame others: the coach, their team mates, the referees, Wall Street, or whomever; they never take responsibility for a failure, thus no one trusts them to own up to their reality. Adversity is a test of honour, commitment, duty, and integrity; blamers fail this crucial test.

Faced with adversity, high performance teams excel under pressure, using competition to improve their collaboration, synchronization, and synergy. They love stress because they channel the energy into learning, improvement, innovation, and performance. They build trust in their teammates under pressure. They squarely face the truth, good or bad. The role of the leader of breakthrough teams is to:

- inspire with strategy and vision,
- give clear goals and directions to achieve that vision,
- train people in the competencies needed to win,
- insist on character-based decisions
- build respectful, trusting team relationships
- ensure best practices are in place to maximize the chance of winning,
- bring out the best, in people under pressure
- align metrics and rewards to support the vision, goals, and values of the effort.

**It's not whether you Win or Lose,
Just always play the Best Game of Your Life!**

- Robert Porter Lynch

Einstein's Five Laws for Creating Breakthroughs

1. From Clutter Find Simplicity
2. From Discord Make Harmony
3. From Problems Seek Opportunity
4. Creativity is More Important than Knowledge
5. We cannot solve the problems of today with the same level of thinking that created the problem

Cracking the Paradigm

What you believe is what you will perceive, conceive, achieve, and receive.

A Paradigm is a pattern of perceiving and interpreting our world. We learn this framework quickly, especially if a group reinforces that belief. For example, for thousands of years people believed that thunder was the voice of the God of Thunder (such as Zeus or Thor). We all know that such a paradigm was an illusion based on beliefs now proven false.

WAYS TO CRACK OLD PARADIGMS

Things I've done to break out of the old paradigm paralysis:

Use "Breakthrough Thinking"

- Thinking "outside the box" of convention
- "Connecting boxes" to understand the interactions
- Seeing holistically as a system
- Seeking to understand the inner design architecture
- Thinking nonlinearly
- Thinking the unthinkable
- Suggesting the unreasonable
- Challenging one's own assumptions and prejudices
- Creating a new audacious possibility
- Being Alert not to be boxed in by Barriers
- Hearing the Big Idea in what others dismiss

Biggest Barrier to Breakthrough Thinking

It's "What You Already Know," such as:

- You know it won't work (it didn't work 15 years ago, why should it work now).
- You know what they're going to say next.
- You know how it's supposed to be done.
- You know you're right.
- What you already know is safer, less of a risk.
- What you already know is more comfortable.
- What you already know is easier than starting anew.

How to Access Breakthrough Thinking:

1. Be sure you are:
 - 100% open to new ideas
 - Not going to be defensive if your present paradigm is challenged or attacked
 - Prepared to Listen and Inquire Deeply
 - Have put your Ego into a deep freeze refrigerator
 - Willing to ask uncomfortable or even "stupid" questions
 - Willing to Tackle Big Breakdowns
 - Can Create Conversations for Possibility
2. Set a Big Goal and Don't Quit until you Reach It
 - Be sure the Goal has Value to others
 - Set key Metrics of Success
3. Get a tough coach
4. Employ "upside-down thinking"
5. Use imagination, dreams, myths
6. Become more Co-Creative (be sure you see the section on Trust before heading in this direction)
 - Explore other cultures for new ways of seeing things
 - Work with a diverse or cross-functional team on something difficult and important

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- Use a different language to express the problem and gain insights from a new perspective
- Use a combination of genesis, analysis, and synthesis
- Ask people who are wise but may not have college degrees with all the old paradigms stuck in their heads
- Ask people who have been in the field of down to earth experience what they found and learned
- Ask experts from other fields or professions how they would see or tackle or define the problem and what avenue they would take to derive a better answer, understanding or solution

Where to Look for Breakthroughs

1. Examine What's Happening at Interfaces and Interconnections
2. Examine Where, Why, and How Trust is Created or Destroyed
3. Look for Anomalies that prove the Exception (this is how Copernicus discovered the earth and planets revolved around the sun)
4. Look to Where Some have Succeeded where Others Failed, then Ask: "What Belief System Was Different?"
5. Who handled Breakdowns the Best? What did they do?
6. Use Pattern Recognition (your brain's capacity to see patterns) without interjecting judgement or traditional interpretation.
7. Learn to see patterns in what looks like chaos, uncertainty, and ambiguity.
8. Use your "sixth sense intuition" when something tells you the traditional interpretation "just isn't right."
9. Challenge every assumption about every situation.
10. See a "hidden dimension" in "tried and true" explanations.
 - See the situation through an "adversarial" dimension,
 - Then shift the insight to a "transactional" dimension,
 - Then shift the insight to a "collaborative" dimension

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11. Listen to Contrarians, but don't necessarily buy into their explanation/solution, but use their insight into the problem.
12. Seek to find the inner design architecture that enables synergy to be created or to manifest.
13. Never get caught in a "dialectic" (an either/or situation, or two supposed truths in opposition, such as *management versus labour*). Look for third alternatives, third dimension explanations, multiple forces, etc.
14. Determine where Value was Destroyed or Created, then move to the next section.....

HOW TO BE A "PERSON OF VALUE"

When Albert Einstein said:

*Try not to become a person of success,
but rather ... become a person of value...*

What did he really mean? Over the years, I have developed a number of techniques to "create value" when faced with a problem or adversity. The basic principle is always to:

*Add Value to whatever it is that you are thinking, doing,
experiencing, or feeling.*

Adding Value is the first step to excellence.

*If you are not Adding Value, you are either in mediocrity
mode or destructive mode.*

25 Ways to Add Value

Here are twenty five ways I've learned to Add Value:

1. Ask how someone else might responded to this situation (e.g. Einstein, Edison, DaVinci, Christ, Aristotle, or Lincoln, etc.)
2. Shift this paradigm to a higher/future order of thinking
3. Question all assumptions and supposed truths
4. Ask "Yes, But what else?" ten to twenty times.
Ask "Why" five levels deep.
Ask "How" does this work?" "How does this fail?" "How can we make it better/faster/more reliable?" Ask what the thinking

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- about this will be in 25 years
5. Learn something new about the core issues.
 6. Understand the problem's/opportunity's dynamics
 7. Seek at least three frameworks to analyze it and three different solutions to it
 8. Synthesize it first, then analyze it, then make it regenerative
 9. Be very challenging about what psycho-linguistics and behavioral archetypes are influencing our thinking. In particular, be skeptical about how language has formed, limited, poorly defined, or warped our thinking
 10. Relate it to my/our/your highest & best destiny
 11. See it as a milestone along a pathway, not a goal in-and-of-itself
 12. Find actionable aspects about it. Turn every complaint into a "prelude to action"
 13. Ask: "What would this situation be like if synergy was occurring, or fragmentation and dissension were resolved?"
Look for the $1+1>3$ possibility
 14. Turn passivity into a breakthrough value proposition
 15. Ask: "How could divinity or co-creation influence the way we thought or took action on this?"
 16. Relate it to something or some pattern that is very similar to or very different from a very different field of study
 17. Seek its greatest possibilities. Take it to its ultimate extreme
 18. Shift it in time (i.e. from lagging to leading). Or shift its relationship to other things.
 19. Find gaps, vacuums, and inconsistencies
 20. Apply Einstein's Breakthrough Laws to it
 21. Abhor one or two sided views of the world, black-white / either-or views of the world. Invent more dimensions. Test other hypotheses.
 22. Look for new possibilities that are created or negated
 23. Stop doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result (definition of insanity)
 24. Get your ego out of the way. Respect others who are trying to help, and cherish their differences in thinking.
 25. Have a sense of humor - failure is an opportunity to refine your humor - Don't take yourself too seriously.

Don't Aim at Success

“Don't aim at success. The more you aim at it and make it a target, the more you are going to miss it.

For success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side effect of one's personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself or as the by-product of one's surrender to a person other than oneself.

Happiness must happen, and the same holds for success: you have to let it happen by not caring about it.

I want you to listen to what your conscience commands you to do and go on to carry it out to the best of your knowledge.

Then you will live to see that in the long-run—in the long-run, I say!—success will follow you precisely because you had forgotten to think about it”

— Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*

The Champion's Evolutionary Journey

From Lost Soul to a Believer in a Purposeful Life

From Believer to a Person with Integrity of Spirit and Soul

From Integrity to Championing their Personal Mission

From Champion to Trusted Team Builder & Leader

From Trusted Team Builder to Achieving Destiny's Dream

-Robert Porter Lynch

Chapter SEVEN: THE CHAMPION WITHIN¹⁹

Champions are probably the most influential factor in creating synergistic relationships that produce powerful results. Wherever a breakthrough has been achieved, look for at least one champion whose aim was to attain a mighty purpose.

Without an accomplished champion, the chance of successfully sustaining an initiative, nurturing the teamwork required, and transforming vision to reality is virtually nil.

So many of our organizations are based more on competition than cooperation; cooperation and teamwork are often less appreciated than the hard-nosed individualist who battles, destroys, and takes no prisoners in a self-centered quest for personal aggrandizement in the guise of doing what's best for their organization.

Collaborative Leadership

“Pick a leader who will keep jobs in your country by offering companies incentives to hire only within their borders, not one who allows corporations to outsource jobs for cheaper labor when there is a national employment crisis. Choose a leader who will invest in building bridges, not walls. Books, not weapons. Morality, not corruption. Intellectualism and wisdom, not ignorance. Stability, not fear and terror. Peace, not chaos. Love, not hate. Convergence, not segregation. Tolerance, not discrimination. Fairness, not hypocrisy. Substance, not superficiality. Character, not immaturity. Transparency, not secrecy. Justice, not lawlessness. Environmental improvement and preservation, not destruction. Truth, not lies.”

— Suzy Kassem, *Rise Up and Salute the Sun: The Writings of Suzy Kassem*

¹⁹ This piece was originally written as a Chapter for Peter Drucker's *Leader of the Future* series – *Leading Beyond the Walls*, in 1999. As it appears here, the original chapter has been adapted for this book.

THE COLLABORATIVE LEADER seeks to:

- *Unite, Not Smite*
- *Guide, Not Divide*
- *Inspire, Not Open Fire*
- *Elevate, Not Denigrate*
- *Embrace, Not Disgrace*
- *Enlighten, Not Frighten*
- *Enthuse, Not Confuse*
- *Engage, Not Enrage*
- *Align, Not Malign*
- *Integrate, Not Segregate*
- *Lift, Not Rift*
- *Trust, Not Disgust*
- *Learn, Not Spurn*
- *Innovate, Not Desecrate*
- *Empower, Not Overpower*
- *Create, Not Hate*
- *Explore, Not Deplore*
- *Resolve, Not Devolve*
- *Demonstrate, Not Castigate*
- *Understand, Not Reprimand*
- *Reclaim, Not Blame*
- *Use Differences as Engines of Innovation, Not Destruction*
- place mutual interest above self interest

SYNERGISTIC LEADERSHIP is not focused strictly on the Leader -- it's about getting teams to align and create together, getting differences to become additive, to join collaboratively in an organizational "symphony" integrating harmony, melody, rhythm, beat, counter-point -- each individual's special personal nature -- their "instruments" that can make real music, not just a lot of noise.

It's about Inspiration, Vision of a Noble Cause, Innovation, and building a System of Trust that unleashes and focuses human energy.

The Revelation about Synergy is that it is, in the final analysis, about "Aligned Energy." The only way to align energy to build a powerful Architecture of Trust.

Becoming a Leader of the Future

Being a true champion of your life puts you in a unique breed of people who are at the same time: entrepreneurs, risk takers, visionaries, and results-oriented managers. (See Figure 1: Characteristics of Champions) Champions naturally gravitate to becoming leaders because they love engaging others in the energizing process of building a new world that works -- making a difference and finding meaning and purpose.

Champions exist in a perpetual state of enlightened dissatisfaction, always looking for a new idea that will improve upon the current state of affairs.

Typically, Champions have a long history of pursuing new ideas, attempting breakthroughs, and challenging the accepted.

Champions are often placed in positions where they cannot command because their authority is not positional; their authority

comes from their vision, their energy, and their ability to touch the hearts of those who believe their vision is the reality the organization must achieve for more than its future survival, that vision contains the organization's *thrival*.

To be effective the champion needs a track record of success. Yet down deep, most champions are idealists; therefore they often tend to become overly optimistic. Thus it is not ironic that the hallmark of real champions is not how many successes they have had, and they will have had many, but rather how they have dealt with failure. Failures should be the learning experiences that temper their idealism sufficiently to make them effective. Often the best champions will have at their side a seasoned realist or skeptic to provide balance and practicality to their idealistic vision.

Over time, seasoned Champions become enlightened realists, seeking the best, but prepared for the worst in humanity. They are natural trusters, but are ever-vigilant for predators that will destroy their world.

Characteristics of Champions

- Visionary
- Energetic, Confident Optimist with “Can Do” Attitude
- Results Oriented with Demonstrated Leadership & Track Record of Success
- Passionate or Charismatic Crusader with powerful belief systems
- Credibility & Knowledge in the field of endeavor
- Trust builders
- Tenacious, Perseverant
- Focuses the team on initiating things for the Greater Good,
- Team Player, Creates buy-in
- Sees adversity as opportunity, Loves Challenge -- will climb mountains, but gets bored with administrative management duties
- Entrepreneurial, Risk Taker
- Demanding works “on the edge”
- Innovative and Creative

Figure 1: Characteristics of Champions

Not surprisingly, many champions are entrepreneurial at heart, which enables them to excel with broken tools and inadequate resources, under adverse conditions, and with minimal organizational support. Their extraordinary results come from a blended potion of vision, persistence, ability to learn from mistakes, a willingness to take risks and possibly fail, and an abiding commitment to the greater good of all.

Breakthroughs are the way of life for champions, whose challenge of the status quo is often regarded as unreasonable, are interested in creating new pathways, and love to discover that which others have overlooked. In one of our large corporate clients, an alliance champion advocated:

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The champion must be very reasonable, recognize the realities of the future, and see issues and solutions from diverse perspectives.

Yet more conservative managers often will be blind to the verities of the champion's vision and new operating schema, thereby branding the champion as unrealistic, or worse.

When operating the truest sense, champions are the passionate pioneers, the discoverers, the learners, the ones who will never accept mediocrity and are even willing to destroy what they've built in order to build something greater.

Champions are omni-directional, in that they know the necessity of navigating the halls of power, and at the same time are willing to jump the chain of command or network the bowels of the organization. Although Champions think of organizations as networks, not hierarchies, they also somewhat grudgingly, but patiently acknowledge the realities of the corporate ladder, without giving it their blessing.

What is often perceived as their neglect of protocol causes Champions to be slightly off-center from corporate norms and to have offended traditional corporate sensibilities more than a few times in the pursuit of a worthy cause.

Typically the Champion is not initially anointed from above. Instead he or she seizes the high ground and then asks for support. The motto of the Champion is: " 'tis better to ask forgiveness after the fact than permission before." One Champion reflected my own experience with the comment:

I almost never have to ask for forgiveness. It just amazes me that others ever ask for permission.

Because champions operate on the organizational fringe, they are often isolated and neglected. However, wise senior executives learn to nurture their champions, and to empower them once they independently emerge. Top managers create more successful initiatives when they "recognize" champions rather than when they "select" them.

For example, career rotational cycles of Champions need to be carefully planned to diminish any destabilizing impact they might have on the newly initiated venture. Honeywell, shifted its champions'

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rotational cycles from eighteen months to five years after it found that trust levels in new initiatives, such as strategic alliance, required deeper and more prolonged relationships between key figures leading the new ventures. One Champion remarked:

There needs to be a sufficient reward for the five year plan, for without such rewards, the champion can become isolated and deprived of career advancement.

Champion Competencies

When describing their competencies, champions we have interviewed in focus groups expressed the uniqueness of their function in their organizations. (see Figure 2: Competencies of Champions)

Champion Competencies

Effective alliance champions do several things extremely well:

- *Build Great Teams that Bring out the Best in everyone*
- *Articulate a Powerful Vision Embraced by All*
- *Maintain their own Integrity and Self Discipline*
- *Relate to and Communicate Well with People*
- *Build Trust, Keep their Commitments and Treat people Justly and Fairly*
- *Have Courage of their Convictions*
- *Take Action, Don't Wallow in Platitudes and Complaints*
- *Are Great Partners in Times of Adversity*
- *Have Heart & Compassion*
- *Face then Change Reality*
- *Commit to Win-Win arrangements for both partners*

Figure 2: Competencies of Champions

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There are seven particular issues that reflect how champions become successful, which the leader of the future must understand in order to manage alliance champions effectively.

1. *Building Trust*
2. *Maintaining Resiliency*
3. *Working for Co-Creative Change*
4. *Building Alliance Teams*
5. *Problem Solving and Ongoing Negotiations*
6. *Practicing Transformational Leadership*
7. *Gaining Top Rank Support*

1. Building Trust

Trust is the foundation of all cooperative enterprise; and integrity is the basis of all trust. Alliance managers see integrity as the ability and commitment to honor one's word, especially during times of adversity and often regardless of personal cost.

For my friend and fellow Champion, Gerry Dehkes:

Integrity includes setting expectations and consistently meeting them. Doing both is important. Making sure that your counterparts will know (and be able to trust) that you will act in a certain way in a given situation. Then meet or beat that expectation consistently. This extends beyond the individual to the rest of the people in the alliance partners organizations.

Or better, in an old Minnesota expression; 'Under-promise. Over-deliver.'

View problems or barriers, especially early on, as opportunities to show your trustworthiness, meeting the expectations you've set with your partners. These have strong impact beyond the decision of the moment. They engender trust that later on you will indeed act that way, thus inviting reciprocal actions."

Champions are the principals who set the tone for building the trust that forms the foundation for the chemistry and culture of the trans-organizational and cross-border interaction.

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Wise leaders will comment on how trust is an absolutely essential ingredient of cooperation. Without it any venture will crumble, disputes will go unresolved, and passion will wane. Outsiders tend to describe trust as great *chemistry*, others see it as *honesty*, or *integrity*, or *accountability*, or *respect*. But champions tend to know that the trust they create, often internationally across wide cultural chasms, while based more on integrity than any other factor, is usually based on eight interrelated factors (see Figure 3: Eight Principles of Trust) for which we use the acronym “FARTHEST.” (see Volume 4 – *Building a World You Can Trust* for more detail)

**Eight Basic Principles --The Covenant of Trust
"FARTHEST"**

1. *Fairness & Reciprocity for the Good of All*
2. *Accountability (external)& Integrity (internal)*
3. *Respect, Empathy, & Honor of All*
4. *Truthfulness & Courage*
5. *Honorable Purpose & Shared Commitment*
6. *Ethics & Excellence of Standards*
7. *Safety (physical) & Security (social & economic)*
8. *Transparency & Openness*

Figure 3: Eight Principles of Trust

When trust collapses, communication is either halted or turns to threats, blaming, and accusations, and at the same time decision making becomes focused on protection and defense, not on innovation and creativity. Forward progress slows to a snail’s pace, or worse, reverses.

The champion who builds trust has a powerful advantage, because when analyzed in detail, that trust is shown to be simultaneously the *glue* that holds teams together during times of crisis and the *grease* that smoothes over rough interactions when cultures clash. Champions who lead cross- functional teams or cross-corporate alliances typically create strong personal bonds. One alliance champion recognized how this bonding impacted the relationship between champions:

An alliance manager and his counterpart at the partner company are often closer than each may be to many of their co-workers because of the trust it takes to form the alliance.

However, this bonding across organizational boundaries can be quite disconcerting to many insiders who see this as a serious breach of loyalty (as we shall see later.)

Building trust starts and is maintained at the highest leadership positions. If leaders do not forge the bond of trust, it is highly unlikely to be found within the middle echelons.

Coincidentally, there is a very high correlation between *trust*, *relationships*, and *control*. As trust and relationships increase, the needs for command and control diminish, replaced by coordinative interaction. This matters to leaders as they face today's compression of time and increase in speed, which force faster decision making, and today's complex interrelationships which force slower decision-making. Knowing how to manage this dilemma and balance these forces requires adroitness and a deep level of trust.

Is the creation of high trust worth the effort? Successful collaborative relationships provide very strong evidence that high trust is the catalyst of very high performance, greater innovation, creativity, synergy, expansion of possibilities, enhanced problem resolution, faster action and implementation, lower litigation costs, and lower transaction costs. These all result in dramatically improved financial performance. In today's fast moving, rapidly changing world, organizations cannot afford to forsake the champion's role in developing trust across organizational boundaries.

2. Maintaining Resiliency

But how does the champion reconcile the seeming conflict between maintaining trust and integrity and working in a world that is constantly changing and requires frequent repositioning of many organizational and interpersonal relationships? How does the champion maintain integrity when the conditions that originally triggered the birth of the new initiative are no longer valid? The answer lies in the champion's tendency to be resilient.

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Resiliency is like a spring: the more it is tensioned, the more powerful it becomes. Champions can bounce back into shape because their spring-steel inner core of values and principles is not altered by circumstances. However, this inner core is surrounded by a flexible outer core of practicality which provides them the freedom to shift with changing circumstances, to be influenced by the insight and wisdom of others, and to avoid rigid thinking and obsolete paradigms.

Tenacity and persistence are always associated with successful champions. One champion in our focus groups said it quite well:

You cannot cut out too early; you must follow your instincts. When you get knocked down, you must get back up again. It takes more than ego to get back up – it's beliefs, knowing you are right, it's an intuition that what you are doing is worthwhile. Doing this takes an innate ability to deal with uncertainty and risk.

Champions often see their falterings in life as opportunity. They experience adversity as the door opener for regeneration. They see life as not about *perfection* but about *perfecting* -- losing your spirit and gaining it back again. The losing of spirit becomes the breakdown that creates the opportunity for a breakthrough, the possibility to regain spirit at a higher level. Living in the status quo is to live too safely, without challenge and opportunity to achieve a dream.

Therefore the true champion experiences adversity with a quiet smile, as a hidden treasure from which he or she can source new levels of experience, awareness, and energy. Seasoned champions have failed enough times to know that failure is only temporary; they tend not to let their personal identity be strongly influenced by their experience.

One of our focus group champions,, when asked to what he attributed his resiliency, stated:

I never take myself too seriously, and find failures are an opportunity to refine my sense of humor.

Adds another Champion:

I find humor absolutely necessary – both as an ice breaker and bonding agent, but also as a stress reliever.

3. *Working for Co-Creative Change*

Creativity is the most effective responses to rapid change, and all breakthroughs rely heavily on creativity. However, champions are not independent, isolated creators. Instead, champions bond with their counterparts as kindred spirits in co-creation, that is, they are typically co-creative synthesizers, linking new ideas and innovations together, building bridges with other creative individuals whose voices have not previously been heard. Champions typically do not require full credit for an idea to satisfy their egos, because they know that the idea itself is less than 10 percent of the game.

Paradigm shifts come not from incremental thinking but from fundamentally new ideas, typically originating from outside of the mainstream of accepted thought. Carl Gustav Jung foresaw an alliance's greatest strategic potential when he said:

The greater the contrast, the greater the potential. Great energy only comes from a correspondingly great tension between opposites.

Diverse teams and alliances create breakthroughs as a result of differentials in thinking. Inherent in the differences between two differential partners is the champion's unique opportunity to initiate the creative tension that can generate the essential shift in perception and thinking that underpins all true innovation. Managing this synergy of compatible differences through the process of co-creation is a fundamental attitude and skill of the best champions.

Champions see that the real value in an co-creation lies in the diversity of thinking across the boundaries of different organizational cultures, perspectives, and thinking. Fundamentally, champions must honor the dignity of diverse thinking, a point of view that can often evoke strong negative emotions from conservative traditionalists bound to the status quo within the champion's parent organization.

4. *Building Teams and Alliances*

Champions play a vital role in building diversity-based teams. By their nature, cross functional teams and strategic alliances are populated with diverse perspectives. Unless the champion integrates and converges their partner's energies on a focused mission and objective,

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the diversity will turn conflictive, and the relationship will tend to crack, as divergent interests pull in non-synergistic directions.

Unfortunately, experience has shown that just putting highly creative people on a team neither generates breakthroughs nor drives convergence. All too often the creative people are too individualistic to be great team players or too competitive with each other, or their creativity escalates into generating even more creativity with no grounding in reality, or they think their cultures are too different for them to be co-creative with others.

Effective champions pull together diverse teams, developing a very healthy balance, like that of yin and yang, which enables members to experience the synergy of compatible differences, – that very elusive chemistry that characterizes powerfully successful collaborations. At many companies, the “core team” is well defined and a time honored tradition drawing from several types of people:

- *Champion* – The champion fills the critical leadership role that keeps the team focused on the ultimate, long-term objective, and maintains its spiritual center of effort. Champions will never be satisfied unless there is some connection to real action, and they may not have the patience or discipline to engage in a detailed analysis of all the operational components necessary to make a plan a raging success. Further, the champion must not fall into the trap of “ruling” the teams.
- *Facilitator-integrator* – This person coordinates the group, and brings together the key individuals who will have to buy into the plan. As facilitator this individual keeps people emotionally engaged, making the best use of team resources, maximizing each member’s potential, and monitoring their personal needs and also focusing them on the ultimate objective. As integrator this individual acts as liaison between diverse groups, often translating one corporate culture’s needs into terms understood by the other culture. Facilitator-integrators tend to have excellent listening skills and are highly tuned to the personal needs and sensitivities of team members, thus contributing enormously to the building of a consensus. Often they will search for resources and ideas from outside their team by accessing, leveraging, and building other external networks.

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- *Creative introverts and creative synthesizers* – The creative introverts are those inward, reflective thinkers who often seem withdrawn and distant, almost to the extent of being considered antisocial. The creative synthesizers are far more interactive and do most of their creating in teams, bouncing ideas off others, playing a friendly tug of war to see whether an idea is sound enough to fly. The synthesizers will pick up on ideas from very diverse sources, sometimes adapting, sometimes splicing, and sometimes being very original themselves. Both these roles are essential for innovators seeking to break new ground.
- *Helpful skeptics and analyzers* – The skeptics and analyzers are constantly evaluating, judging, and testing to be sure what may seem like harebrained ideas from the creative types and the champions can really be implemented and address the problems at hand. They will confront new ideas with such questions as: Can you show me where this has been done before? Do we have the resources? Who will actually make the sales calls? and so on. They will invariably focus on the details overlooked by most champions. A senior manager with extensive experience who commands respect in the corporate hierarchy is usually most effective in this role of prudent oversight. Do not confuse the helpful skeptic with the critical cynic or contrarian whose negative attitude and unhealthy analysis will destroy the energy of the team and contradict the champion's positive energy.
- *Process and task managers* – These highly organized and procedurally disciplined individuals turn visions into corporate goals and are necessary to carry out the details of the plan, determining roles, responsibilities, decision-making procedures, functional interactions, contingency plans, measures, and rewards. These individuals direct the manner in which the alliance team's effort is applied, focusing on objectives, structure, and task completion. Often they have good project management experience.

It typically falls into the champion's hands to build this team, this mix of players in which no is more or less important. Moreover, too many or too few of one type will defeat the chemistry of the mix. Gerry Dehkes, a visionary and champion notes:

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Each of these roles are critical to a high performance team. Team members may and often do play multiple roles. They also may play different roles at different times and on different teams. Champions must recognize these roles and ensure that each role is filled by team members.

However, one of my alliance partners, Richard Marrs, cautions:

A problem can occur when the champion has to wear multiple hats, playing the roles of process manager and facilitator along with the champion role, which are often quite different. It can become too much, stretching the champion's capabilities to perform to the limit.

The champion must be acutely aware of the shifting nature of the team roles. Jerry Dehkes observes:

Leadership roles and individual enthusiasm shift depending on where in the alliance process or project lifecycle you are. In the beginning brainstorming phase, the creative, flexible minded person energetically takes the lead.

As the need for a clear vision becomes important, the big picture, decisive person moves to the fore. Then the detail-oriented organizer puts the action plan flesh on the vision bones. Finally, the flexible, but task-oriented implementers adapt the plan to reality.

Champions recognize this process along with the differing strengths and interests of team members, helping each to make their strongest contribution at the appropriate time. Alliance leaders know how to quickly move their teams through the lifecycle to the high performing stage, and know when to end a team, too.

This is the type of team that is capable of designing breakthroughs and operating at a high level of performance. However, because high-performance teams are likely to have a higher incidence of breakdowns, than other teams, and because alliance teams are particularly vulnerable with their high level of cross-corporate, cross cultural, and cross functional diversity, the role of the champion becomes increasingly

important, and his or her co-creative problem solving and negotiation skills are essential.

5. Problem Solving and Negotiating

Because the driving forces that underpin our world today are constantly changing, organizations are always in the state of flux, all cooperative ventures between companies must be continually repositioned in the strategic environment to retain competitive advantage. This is the work of the champion. Therefore champions must be excellent negotiators.

One of our focus group champions was clear that:

Great champions drive to create plans that reflect win-win scenarios. Champions must put themselves in the place of both their own companies, as well as in the place of their partners. Without a win-win situation that involves reciprocal commitments from both parties, the relationship will fail.

Another champion in a German owned company believed:

Champions should always be on the look-out for the 'win-win' and 'break-through value propositions', because these are the right bait to attract the attention and support of senior management.

Yet this approach is not shared by less experienced transactional negotiators, as Gerry Dehkes comments:

"I know some people who think a win-win relationship means 'we kick their butts twice!' They are not successful champions however, just challenges for the rest of us."

Another stated:

The difficulty regarding win-win negotiations is often because organizations (companies or teams) are generally not truly 'equal.' Some are bureaucratic and their partner entrepreneurial, some rich and some poor. This imbalance can make negotiations quite difficult.

Champions will seldom engage in win-lose negotiations because they know these efforts may quickly degenerate to lose-lose games. It's

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more than likely that they will chose a synergistic style of negotiating (which to the hard-nosed win-lose negotiator may look soft, overly trusting, and prone to giving away too much too fast).

Champions, when entering into cross-boundary negotiations don't see the process as a tug-of-war between "sides" but rather as an interactive visionary process of designing that future, then reverse engineering the future back to the present. This synergistic negotiation style focuses on co-creation and expansion of possibilities, rather than win-lose bargaining or a win-win solution in which the parties simply accommodate each other's interests.

Champions know that win-lose situations freeze people in their positions, thus freezing both time and thinking. Once time and thinking freezes on both sides, the result is all too often a lose-lose game, which will blow the alliance apart and bring a tragic end to everyone's dream. One champion observed that:

Many uninitiated champions are not so 'enlightened', do not care about win-win, do see the tug of war, and, therefore, this becomes a central issue that must be addressed and overcome.

Synergistic, co-creative negotiations enable a rapid building of trust and avoid the unproductive behaviors that come from meaningless conflict.

Nevertheless there will be conflict. Conflict is the inevitable by-product of all change, and any proposition of new ideas will generate some amount of conflict. The objective is to prevent the conflict from degenerating into blind fear and inflexible rigidity. As one champion in our focus groups articulated it:

Without conflict there will probably be no buy-in. I just have to be careful I do not take conflict personally as an attack on myself. Conflict is just a tool to get people talking and debating an issue from one side or another. It promotes the kind of understanding necessary to be successful in this business.

Here again, the power of the champion's vision, credibility, trust, and integrity plays a preeminent role in transforming conflict into a productive commitment to the future.

The champion will not be a great compromiser between the diverse elements, however, unless every other avenue has been explored. A compromise is usually seen as a poor second choice, the forsaking of a dream. Forging a new unity from seemingly diverse values and thinking will be the champion's first choice. This unity becomes a new order of interaction, better than the original, thereby creating a *super-ordinate* culture for the joint initiative.

6. Practicing Transformational Leadership

It is quite common to find champions functioning as transformational leaders, attempting to use a joint initiative as a mechanism to introduce new ideas, new values, and a new culture into their parent organizations.

In a survey of several hundred champions, they reported that 85 to 90 percent of all organizational change is driven by a crisis or some outside force, such as a competitive maneuver, a market shift, or government regulation.

Champions will often try to shift that proportion, making *vision* a far larger causal factor for change. Gerry Dehkes, when playing the role of champion, states:

The way to cause change and to help an organization reach for a vision is to raise the perception of dissatisfaction with the present and simultaneously lower the perceived "cost" of changing toward the desired vision. People don't jump the fence for greener pastures unless they are unhappy enough with the side of the fence they're on and the fence isn't too high to jump!"

Transformational champions are trying to change the order of the future; therefore the process of change itself triggers deep fears and insecurities and consequently resistance in their parent companies.

The daring champion, unknowingly, is likely to polarize an organization, often evoking both love and hate, but seldom neglect and apathy.

7. Gaining Top Rank Support

In any organizational effort to shift things to a new order, top-rank support is critical. Champions must often confront other top executives

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strongly, yet diplomatically, when the corporate castle walls seem impenetrable and resistance to new ideas becomes overwhelming. Therefore, to be properly anointed, the champion must have the support of the organization's high priests. Top level sponsorship is often referred to as the "godfather" role.

When the venture has widespread organizational impact, established power structures and political relationships will be disrupted. The presence of the godfather validates the strategic value of the venture and helps shield it from the onslaught of nay-saying cynics and those threatened by the alliance's very existence. One champion noted that the godfather role requires far more than just support, seeing it as a "protector to provide air cover!" Another champion from our focus groups commented:

We need a godfather to protect us. But often the godfathers get clobbered themselves by the empire builders and fiefdom creators, who we threaten because they perceive the alliance as diminishing their power.

The seemingly innocent activity of getting autonomous business units to work together is fraught with danger. Business unit executives with profit and loss responsibility often see the joint initiatives, such as a strategic alliance, as a threat to their power and authority, and even a drain on their resources, thereby diminishing their business unit's profitability -- all fodder for political infighting. According to one champion who had suffered this pain:

Champions are usually unpopular within their organizations and are challenged by the powerful 'empire builders' who believe they can do it better than the alliance partner, or those who view the alliance partner as the enemy, merely because they are visible.

In fact, many champions report it is easier to form an alliance with a competitor than with another division of their own company.

The godfather's support of the champion becomes increasingly evident once an alliance begins operations. In one champion's view:

One can have an excellent executive relationship, a terrific engineering relationship and even a great marketing cooperative

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effort, but the rubber hits the road in the local field engagement process. Unfortunately, it is here that the champion, who can be little more than a cheerleader and/or educator, requires the support of the sales VPs and the salespeople to engage with the partner.

Without a strong godfather to influence the corporate rewards system, the real benefits of the alliance may be lost. Understanding how champions must use their leverage on the organization's leadership is essential according to Gerry Dehkes:

Champions need to understand the difference between targets (people that must change behavior), sponsors (people who can cause targets to change behavior) and advocates (like themselves who have a vision, but little power to change targets directly). Champions, in their advocacy role, must spend their time working the sponsors, not the targets. Finally, sponsors need to care as much about the alliance as the alliance champion!

The godfather must have access to the other side of the alliance as well as one champion added:

Senior executives also need to make themselves available to their partner's alliance champions, something many don't think about or do.

Paradoxical Qualities

Champions are not superheroes; they suffer the pains of defeat and the quandaries of leadership just like other leaders. Many are torn between two worlds, thus living a paradox:

- Between the patient need to nurture relationships and the impatient, compelling desire for achievement; knowing that personal relationships, trust, and sensitivity to people's personal needs and feelings are essential to building a successful team, but being driven by the desire to see results, to make a difference, to translate ideas into action. One side of the dilemma makes the champion want to lead by consensus, the other by command.
- Between forcing the trauma of disruptive change and enduring the pain of inertial stability. Champions know people are not happy

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about change, but they can't understand why everyone needs so much coddling and why resistance to a glorious future is so heavy. They see a new future as inevitable, like an unstoppable railroad train barreling down the tracks.

- Between the visionary's denial of reality and the realist's acceptance of reality. This seemingly profane balancing act acknowledges that we must pursue a dream if we are to reach the holy land (because it will mean the renewal of our organization -- a true new beginning), yet we must accept the reality that the dream is very difficult to achieve and quite risky (the organization might fail, individuals might be hurt, the champion might get fired).

Such paradoxes often leave the champion mired in dilemmas, sometimes seemingly paralyzed in procrastination. Ultimately, however, the champion awakens from being a prisoner of paradox, with a passionately bold move toward the real vision.

Achilles' Heels

Champions have several other traits that can create difficulties. In addition to being over-optimistic, the typical champion is over-committed, unable to say "no" to another request even if it requires them to sometimes step aside from the pathway of their perceived highest and best destiny. Only after seasoning do champions begin to learn their limits.

Administrative duties and routines are boring, and the details of project management are usually sacrificed by the champion for the larger strategic and visionary tasks. Comments one champion at a chemical company:

I'm no good with the details. It's the idea, the presentation, that's what I'm good at. People often think that I'm going to be a detail person because I have a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering. However, my Ph.D. for me was only a mountain to climb that made me focus on details to succeed. I hate details; it takes great focus from me to work on details.

If the champion has not already acknowledged these weaknesses, it is wise to be sure the he or she is matched with a good administrative team to balance these weaknesses.

Qualities and Characteristics that Evoke Resistance

The insecure and the egocentric often confuse the champion's passion and enthusiasm with egocentric behavior. However, *enthusiasm*, in its most noble definition in ancient Greece, signified the *god within*; similarly, a champion's missionary zeal is born of the commitment to a greater good. Excellence is never born from a disengaged heart.

In essence, the true champion begins to live the vision he or she beholds. Among those who have never embraced this type of life, becoming a vision is anathema to many and misunderstood by more. It looks like ego-drive, but it is not. The champion's courage is sourced from a commitment to a vision far larger than his or her fears. The champion's willingness to make powerful commitments is based on belief, not evidence, which, to many, looks like the behavior of an unbridled zealot.

The champion's ability to navigate the halls of power makes him or her look like politicians, which the champion is not. Champions often remark that they dislike the lobbying role, but acknowledge how they have to do it if they are to compete for executive air time.

And the champion's frequent disregard for the organizational hierarchy gives credence to the criticism that champions are sacrilegious, which they are not. In fact many alliance champions have referred to the art and architecture of cooperation as a somewhat spiritual experience, fulfilling an inner personal need to do something valuable for their organization, which the champion regards as their own community.

Most people see organizations as they are drawn on organizational charts, as hierarchical structures, with functional silos composed of somewhat isolated departments. Champions never describe organizations that way. Instead they see organizations as networks, and navigate the networks like a honey bee on a summer's day: in a zigzag pattern.

Naturally, this drives the traditional organization man absolutely insane. Champions see the other management team as extensions of themselves, as an integral part of the alliance itself. In this way the borders of the organizations become transparent to the champion.

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Champions march to the tune of a different drumbeat – faster, more futuristic.

Their high tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty is far greater than most logical linear managers like to handle.

Slightly off-center from corporate norms, champions are often regarded as somewhat eccentric, but not defiantly deviant or rebellious. Because champions are often trying to address problems that are frequently not recognized by others as a problem at all, champions are often unfairly perceived as unreasonable, undisciplined, and unrealistic, as outside the mainstream, agitators, trouble-makers, and professional irritants.

Understand & Support Unique Role of the Champion

Many champions comment that they are deeply misunderstood and often rejected by members of their own organization. Ironically, the more successful the champion, often, the deeper the rejection. To fulfill the commitment to a win-win position across boundaries, (and sometimes to avoid isolation) the champion oftentimes bonds tightly with his or her counterpart in the other organization. States one champion in the computer industry:

Your partner must see you as his company's advocate – never having any doubt you're helping forward their cause --- this also helps keep the inevitable conflicts from escalation.

However such a powerful commitment to the other company's cause often simply serves as evidence to confirm the suspicion that the champion is disloyal.

Not only do champions have a tendency to bond powerfully with the champions of the other partner, they also bond with their mission and with the cooperative venture itself, thus evoking scorn and often rejection from traditional organizationalists. Cautions a computer industry champion:

A champion cannot succeed in an environment where they are rejected or not supported by the executing members in their own organization. A champion must bond with both the partner and their own company and, they must coordinate compromises with

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their own organization in order for the better good of the bigger picture relationship.

Having a deep understanding of the personalities and roles of the champion can help organizations ensure their champion's success and prevent champions from having to fight needless rear-guard battles with their own troops, enabling them to focus their energies and spirit more rightfully on their mission.

Give champions the support and resources they need to be successful. Tolerate them even when they don't play by the rules. Give them clear boundaries, but let them range broadly within these boundaries. Make them catalysts for change. Push them to behold a breakthrough value proposition powerful enough to break the stranglehold of the inertial resistance that stifles most organizations. And always remember: they will ask forgiveness after the fact rather than ask permission before the fact.

When venturing beyond the hallowed walls of the corporate castle, consider --

A true champion without a cause is entrapped energy.

A great cause without a champion is but an elusive dream.

But a great cause with a true champion is the realization of a vision!

Character and Perseverance

After studying Greek astronomical theories in the mid 1400s, Polish scientist Copernicus then spent the better part of his life committed to proving whether the sun or earth was the center of the solar system.

With no one to guide him and no one to reward him for his findings, it was his perseverance and quest that led to his great revelation.

Following in his footsteps was German astronomer, astrologist, and mathematician Johannes Kepler, who worked out the complex mathematics that proved Copernicus. Here's what famed twentieth century scientist Albert Einstein admired about Kepler's character as a champion:

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Kepler was passionately devoted to the quest for deeper insight in to the character of natural processes – a man who reached the exalted goal he set in spite of all internal and external difficulties....

We learn from his letters under what hardships Kepler accomplished this gigantic work.

He refused to be paralyzed or discouraged either by poverty or by the lack of comprehension among those of his contemporaries who had the power to shape his life and work.

He was dealing with a subject that offered immediate danger to him who professed the truth.

But Kepler was one of the few who are simply incapable of doing anything but stand up openly for their convictions in every field.

Kepler had many inner difficulties to overcome...freeing himself ...of the intellectual traditions into which he was born...the authority of the Church...[existing] concepts on the nature and limits of the universe.

Kepler's inner struggle ...with astrology...shows he vanquished the inner foe and rendered it harmless²⁰.

Einstein was equally enamored of Polish born Marie Curie's courage and commitment to exploring the field of radiation:

Her strength, her purity of will, her austerity toward herself, her objectivity, her incorruptible judgment – all these were a kind seldom found in a single individual.

She felt herself at every moment to be a servant of society and her profound modesty never left any room for complacency....

Once she recognized a certain way as the right one, she pursued it without compromise and with extreme tenacity.²¹

²⁰ Einstein, Albert; *Out of My Later Years*; Random House, 1956, p 225-226

²¹ Einstein, Albert, *Ibid*, p 227

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She died from complications from the radiation she studied so diligently.

Courage & Commitment

*Courage enlarges, cowardice diminishes resources.
In dangerous straits, the fears of the timid
aggravate the dangers that imperil the brave.*

– Christian Neville Bouvee (1820-1904)

“Courage” is quite different from “bravery.”

Courage (from the French "coeur" meaning "heart") is the belief or commitment in something larger than your fear.

Bravery is the absence of fear or just overcoming fear.

This is an important distinction, because if you are committed to nothing, you can have no courage, regardless of your bravery.

Bravery is the lack of fear. Anyone who lacks fear is a fool. Anyone who spouts phony platitudes like: “Be fearless!” should be spurned as a callous and unobservant deadhead.

Fear is natural in humans. Every combat warrior knows the power of fear when bombs are crashing and cannons blasting. (As a Vietnam Veteran, I know this first-hand.)

We are only born with two “natural” fears – fear of falling and fear of loud noises – every other fear is “learned.”

Lack of courage implies a lack of commitment, and this is the crux of our problem today.

For example, if I know you are committed to your highest destiny, then for me that means: I trust you more because commitment means you are more likely to stand for that commitment rather than buckle under pressure. So trust is closely connected to courage.

Courage is not expendable, like a tank of gasoline, rather it’s “expandable” like love, trust, and creativity. One never runs out of courage; one can only become “discouraged” when the world around them is filled with negativity and when courage is punished again and again by those who want to diminish those who champion causes.

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Courage bestows its own rewards back to those who manifest it, inspiring others; expanding, becoming regenerative.

I offer a life not of privilege, but of service.
A man who fears nothing, loves nothing,
So if you love nothing, there is no joy to your life.

In serving each other, we become free.

From the movie *First Knight* King Arthur to His Knight:
(Sean Connery to Richard Gere)

To Be or Not to Be

The Six Senses: To see, to hear, to taste, to smell, to feel... to be. And the most important is the last. The six sense is to be able to enjoy the five senses properly. To be, that's what really matters, it's like a world inside of us, and it's up to us what we make of it. We see others, we hear others, we know others with our five senses, but how do we ever know ourselves? Through Common Sense. Common Sense is an internal sense, whose function it is to differentiate between the various reports of the senses or to reduce these reports to the unity of a common perception.

Two great words: To Be. Other words grow out of it. I am, you are, he is, we are, they are. That sort of takes in everybody. As Shakespeare said: "And to thine own self be true. And it shall follow as the night to day, thou canst be false to anyone," and he was so right, sister, he was just talking about the sixth sense... "to be or not to be, that is the question."

- from the 1945 movie *The Bells of St. Mary*.

Chapter EIGHT: Splendored Love

The Ten Great Loves of Lasting Relationships

Ancient Wisdom Seen Through a Modern Lens

Of all the words in the English language, the word “love” may be the most confounding and confusing. The reason is because English converged the meaning of at least a half dozen words from the



“Love is a many splendored thing” is the song title of a romantic favorite from the 1950s.

Splendor means: an *extraordinary brilliance*, a *lustrous glow*, a *glorious magnificence*.

Splendored Love refers to the multitude of types of love in relationships experienced over a broad range of people, including marriage partners, friends, family, strangers, community, and even with ourselves. Splendored Love is multi-dimensional and kaleidoscopic in nature, something

Greek into one word. It’s like mixing many colors of paint into a bucket – the result is a muddy brown.

In the 21st century, love seems to focus

typically on a single form of *romantic* relationship, which makes love difficult to attain and sustain. It might be unrealistic to find a mate that understands the real richness of love.

Rather than try to resurrect the ancient Greek words (see endnotes) which, while often deeply inspiring, seem to have little meaning for us in our modern, digital age, I have referred to more contemporary expressions to illustrate the many facets of love.

By refining our desire to experience the diverse richness of the ten loves, by building a strong multidimensional construct for splended love, we have a heightened chance of attaining its glory.

Let's explore how to grow love as a "splended thing:"

Why should I bother reading this?

Because understanding the *multi-dimensional beauty* of **Splended Love**, you will have a gained a whole new, vibrant, and wondrous perspective on love and life itself:

- How you experience your world will shift.
- Your relationships with others will become elevated.
- You will have an "artist's palette" to design a vibrant life.
- You will more readily experience the Divine Spirit in others, and in yourself.
- You will learn to "love thyself" in a healthy and exquisite way.

Think of what you will experience as the "Architecture of Love."

You can gain the benefits of Splended Love immediately and they will provide both a pathway to great abundance, spiritual health, trusting relationships, and self-improvement.

WHAT DOES THE WORD “LOVE” REALLY MEAN?

Love and Friendship are two essential elements of the fabric of civilization – ancient and modern. Culture has a massive impact on language, and vice versa. How a culture thinks, envisions, and chooses to express its deepest meanings is reflected in the options its people have to express distinctions.

Love in different languages can have very different meanings, sometimes the variety is enormous. Of all the words in the English language, “love” is perhaps both the richest in meaning and the most confounding because the highly nuanced meanings of many Latin and Greek words are lumped and dumped, helter-skelter in one massive centrifugal basket called “love.”

Those who speak English as their native language are hindered in their height, breadth, and depth of how they love because our language constrains our ability of the heart, mind, and soul from entering a wider galaxy of experience, interpretation, and envisioning of grand possibilities.

Greek, the original language of the New Testament was an exquisite tongue to express the kaleidoscopic dynamics of love. In the next chapter we will explore how the Greeks thought of love, and how learning their patterns of thinking can truly change the way we perceive love in today’s 21st century world of computers, smart phones, and artificial intelligence.

And, no! you don’t have to learn Greek to have a wonderful grasp on what love meant to the Greeks when St. Paul was preaching to the Corinthians, Ephesians, or Thessalonians.

Learning to love like an early Christian will not only create more sustainable friendships, but fulfill our realization of Christ’s commandment to *Love Thy Neighbor*.

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How can we experience the rich variety of ways we can live in a garden filled with the sweet smells, visual arrays of the flowers and fruits of love? My favorite Love Poem is a classic by Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861)

*How Shall I Love Thee?*²²

*How shall I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of being and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for right.
I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints. I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life; and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.*

In this poem, we quickly get the sense that love is multi-dimensional, dynamic, spontaneous, and filled with harmony, peace, and an ever-evolving sense of spiritual energy.

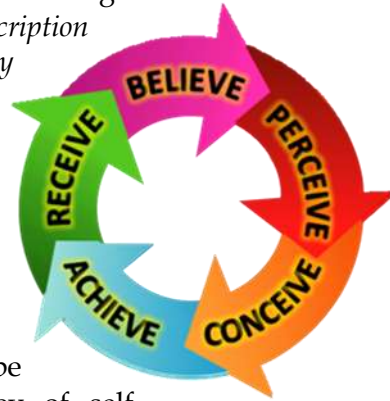
Most people never really consider the magnitude of the meaning of this poem, nor do they think about how to energize

²² (Author's Note: I changed the title from "How Do I Love Thee" to "How Shall I Love Thee" to emphasize we get to choose how we love)

its glory. It is, in all its right, a description of **Splendored Love**. Elizabeth Barrett Browning has conveyed the *description* of a grand form of love, but how do we *actualize it* in our everyday lives.

The first step in actualization is to *understand the inner design architecture* of **Splendored Love**, then, as the change in title implies, *turn the poem from a sublime description of a set of momentous feelings that have already happened, into a set of conscious choices in building a splendid relationship with others in your life in the immediate future*. This also applies to *transforming failing relationships*.

Not only will learning how to engage in **Splendored Love** transform your relationships with God, the world around you, and improve your friendships, but you will also be transformed as you embark on a journey of self-discovery for the *real meaning of your life*. You will experience a deeper and more stable wisdom about what you *Believe*, which then opens your heart to what you can more perfectly *Perceive*, that empowers you to better *Conceive* a higher realm of possibility, catalyzing your mind and heart to strive to *Achieve*, resulting in better things you will *Receive* in return.



Let's start on this Spiritual Journey:

SPIRITUAL LOVE

This is best described as “soulful” or “sacred” love; it has a powerful “holy” or “blessed” quality to it.

Spiritual love is the very deepest and exalting of all the forms of love, for it is the “thread of the Holy Spirit” that connects two lovers to their highest and most beloved selves and to unity with the divine – the Holy Spirit & the Great Designer.



Spiritual love is both very “ethereal” and very practical, for it flows from above, transcending transgressions of the moment. It’s based on the strongest of foundations: belief and faith in a partner’s inherent goodness. Often mates refer to each other as “soul mates” who are embraced by the light of such a strong experience of love.

From this foundation, a wellspring of wonderful sustaining waters flow – such as graciousness, forgiveness, mercy, and joy (which are based not on the circumstances of the moment, but upon a soulful reverence and devotion to life itself).

Spiritual Love is fully enveloped by the Four “Quadractive” Divine Energies of the Holy Spirit: 1) Love, 2) Wisdom, 3) Creation, and 4) Joy. These know no limits or bounds, these energies are “self-regenerative.” When we unify and delight in the Four Divine Energies of the Holy Spirit, we experience a synergistic and transcendent wholeness and completeness that alleviates the invisible pain and yearning we sense but often cannot identify. The Holy Spirit’s Quadractive energies, when flourishing, will produce both spiritual and physical

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abundance through the activation of community – a common unity of friends and partners.

A society that aligns the divine quadrative energies prospers in this world and strives to create an abundance “on earth as it is in heaven,” as the Lord’s Prayer pledges. It is through these four divine energies that humanity – both as a society and as individuals – attain happiness and well-being. This is why Christ states in John 15 that He is leaving this world so that the Great Counselor -- the Holy Spirit – can come enable humans to do greater works than He; and to bring great joy to all humanity.

ROMANTIC LOVE

Often this is the dimension where a love between a man and a woman begins. The romance has many hues and flavors, combining the sensual with the imaginary. It can range widely in breadth of scope:



- physical (erotic such as sexual or erogenous interaction)
- fantasy (illusionary or imaginary delights, ethereal)
- passion (heightened emotions, elevated esteem, glorified feelings)
- enchantment (smitten, spell-bound, charmed, magical)
- euphoria (mesmerizing, spinning fascination, rapture)
- poetic and tender (such as lovely words and symbols)
- beauty (such as form, figure, proportion, and color)
- harmony (singing, music, a walk on the beach)
- stimulation (dancing, laughter, wittiness, humor, fun)
- excitement (river rafting, risky feats, sky diving)
- adventure (traveling, discovering, exploring)
- surprise (unexpected, display of power or courage, unpredicted twists)

Eros - named after the Greek god of fertility, represents the idea of sexual passion and desire. But the Greeks didn't always think of it as something positive (as we tend to do today.) In the ancient context, *eros* was viewed as a dangerous, fiery, and irrational form of love that could take hold of you and possess you. *Eros* involved a loss of control - falling madly in love - which frightened the Greeks.

The problem occurs especially when there is a lack of balance between the 6 loves. When Erotic love overwhelms the others, sex becomes preeminent, diminishing the others. The result is nearly invariable - a failure to establish a foundation of trust, which will collapse any semblance of real, sustainable love.]

Eros is obviously the root word for "erotic," but it does not describe sexual love only, it actually describes all emotional love; the feeling of love. *Eros* love is that insatiable desire to be near the target of this love. The exciting, passionate, nervous feelings that sweep over people in the appropriate circumstances. This is the love that says "I love how you make me feel."

As an emotion, *Eros* changes, sometimes suddenly. Remember that it is entirely based on circumstances and on the target of its emotion. As an emotion, *eros* alone it is morally neutral, however, it can just as easily lead to lust (sinful desire) as it can attractive passion. It's a good picture to think of *Eros* as the fruit and flowers of a new relationship. *Eros* is not a bad thing, but it can be degenerative if one is not careful.

JOYOUS LOVE

The art of bringing joy to a relationship is perhaps the most overlooked part of the "love paradigm."



My mother had perfected this form of love - nearly everyone who was in her presence felt "happier," "more appreciated," "uplifted," or in a "higher state of well-being." While she did it so naturally, she had such intention in her heart. She made it a habit, and a practice. She was always looking out for the best interests of others. She never gossiped and always advised me "If you can't say something nice about someone, don't say anything at all."

Most people knew my mom as one of the most "gracious" people they had ever met. That grace came from the enlightened grace of the Holy Spirit flowing through her. She was just happy to bring joy to others. She once said "Just be easy to love; don't judge, condemn, scold, or be cynical - try to bring out the best in everyone you meet."

I noticed that it was always a lot easier to create joy with those who meld into the joyful experience, and revel in its Zen-like moments. Their expectations are not grandiose - they embrace a reverie with little things and multiply those moments into a whole world of wonder. I see it in the little things people do, their playfulness of spirit, the joy we create with a side-wise glance, a sparkle in our smile, a glint in our eye.

The Greek word Ludus was used to refer to "fun-loving" or "playful" qualities. The Greek idea of playful love referred to the affection between children or young lovers. Innocent fun,

such as flirting and teasing in the early stages of a relationship are good examples. It can be as simple as sitting around in a bar bantering and laughing with friends, or when we go out dancing. Dancing with strangers may be the ultimate ludic activity, almost a playful substitute for sex itself. Social norms may frown on this kind of adult frivolity, but a little more *ludus* might be just what we need to spice up our love lives. There is certainly no reason for playfulness to end with adolescence.

Most people are seemingly unaware of such things -- it's their natural self: a Magical Reverie -- a rare and precious fragrance that comes from a unique dimension of their essence -- hearkening to a life lived in the embrace of spirit. Joyous love can be serene or highly energized. Some of Joyous Love is ephemeral, spontaneous, quick and serendipitous. And another part of Joyous Love is "designed," conscious choices on how to perceive, interact, react, co-create, and make choices selecting among consequences Joyous Love can be whimsical, playful, humorous, self-deprecating. Singing, story-telling, honouring others, celebrating, embracing, memorializing, clean comedy, are all different dimensions of joyous love.

HONORABLE LOVE

While most love affairs may start with Romantic Love, for the relationship to sustain itself, it must be built on something far more firm, stable, and consistent. Honorable Love is Trustworthy Love. Relationships that last are sustained on a rock-solid foundation of trust.

To love fully, partners must *first trust fully*. Without trust, all romance will eventually crash on the rocks of fear, run aground on the shoals of anger, or have its undercarriage torn out on the reefs of instability.

Just ask any marriage counselor: “what percentage of couples going through a divorce have lack of trust as a central theme causing the breakup?” They will tell you without hesitation: “100% of breakups involve a loss of trust.”

Trust is a word so bandied about, but so little understood. It’s not a single thing, it is *multifaceted* and *prismatic*, like a diamond. The facets can best be symbolized by key principles that engender trust. (Acronym: FARTHEST)



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- **Fairness** -- which insures equitability and reciprocity
- **Accountability** -- which is the external display of internal integrity
- **Respect for others** -- which, in advanced form, becomes empathy
- **Truthfulness** -- which requires solid commitment to be honest in your word
- **Honourable Purpose** -- which entails devotion to doing the best thing for the right reasons
- **Ethics & Excellence** -- which promises doing the morally right thing with the highest standard
- **Safety & Security** -- which ensures your partner is physically safe and financially secure
- **Transparency & Openness** -- which empowers your motives to be clear, noble, and obvious to others

Without trust, the other loves are hard to be sustained.

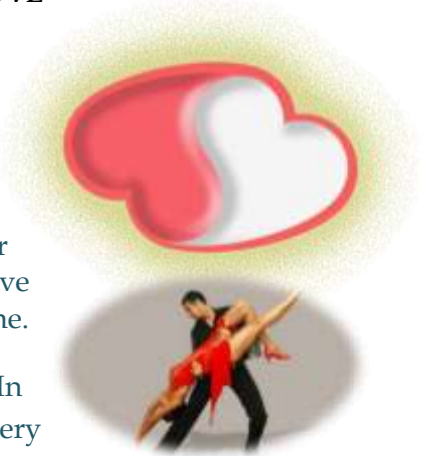
FRIENDSHIP & PARTNERING LOVE

Honorable Love sets the foundation for Partnering Love, which is the embodiment of both great *friendship* and great *partnership* – two very different types of love flowing together interactively, making this form of love both *stable* and *dynamic* at the same time.

Let's first look at *friendship*. In Splendored Love, your mate is your very best, most trusted friend. We choose our friends because they are *like* us. A friend shares common experiences, has compatible values, and holds similar points of view. True Friendship is expansive, holding both deep affiliation and broad dimensions.

On the other hand, *partnership* is based not on similarities, but on *differences* – qualities we honor in our mate that we do not have in ourselves. Like magnets, the different polarities can be highly attractive, drawing people together. However, without trust, these differences, rather than being synergistic, can become conflicted, adversarial, and destructive, often ending in fighting, polarization, and divorce.

In a healthy relationship, it is both the *similarities* that draw each other together at first *and the differences* each holds dear in the other that energize their relationship – each capable of thinking, seeing, and doing something that the other is not skilled at. In this way, their differences enable their relationship to become a “whole” where the whole is greater than the sum of the



individual parts. It's called the "synergy of compatible differences."

Mates become "partners" when they cherish the differences between them, using each other's strengths and weaknesses to mutual advantage (not disadvantage!). They never manipulate each other to get what they want, nor do they become co-dependent upon each other.

Their level of trust is extraordinarily high; each knows the other will try to be fair, be accountable for their actions, respect each other, tell the truth, elevate their personal "mission" for honourable purpose, be ethical and set high standards of excellence, keep each other safe and secure, and be open and transparent. With trust as a consistent underpinning to Partnering Love, love can grow and sustain itself.

Partnering Love empowers mates to work together as a team, one for all, all for one; they realize that they are better together than separate; they build on each other's ideas, creating and performing as one. They engage in a "dance" where both are in tune to the music of life, but each dances with different movements, while keeping in rhythm with the other. Inherently this means each partner is dedicated and devoted to bringing out the very best in each other, thus it is, at its core, *synergistic love*.

PARENTAL LOVE

Parental love could just as easily be called Motherly and Fatherly Love. (Storge in Greek.) Mates don't have to be raising children to fully express their motherly and fatherly instincts.



For example, my mother often said to me in her later years "once a mother, always a mother." She cared for me not as a doting mother to a child, but by checking in regularly and unobtrusively to be sure I was fine. Also, she was always looking out for my father's well-being, happiness, health, stress reduction, and nutrition. She hugged him several times a day to reinforce her commitment. Mom always had a smile.

Similarly, my father always looked out for my mom's personal safety, her financial security, improving our home, and protecting her honorable name. His caring extended to his personal integrity (Honorable/Trustworthy Love) to help create a positive emotional and familial environment. He was forever faithful to her.

Paternal love is one of the stronger loves, because it is a devotional dedication to the well-being of another person, regardless of their level of dependency. As parents enter their last years, Parental Love does a reverse flip when children are called upon to care for elderly parents.

Parental Love involves *guidance and direction* of any member of the family (young or old). Managing emotions is a key element -- when one gets frustrated, falls into depression or discord, or gets out of balance with life. Effective Parental Love provides

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values that engender family as solid community; building character, fostering learning, displaying respect, adhering to ethics and supporting personal maturation.

When the child is no longer dependent, this love remains only in its emotional memories. If motherly love becomes obsessive in later years it becomes unhealthy, and should be shifted to “Partnering Love.”

A true commitment to parental love also means each parent is working together to help their children build character, realize how to find mission and purpose in their lives, and, importantly, learn how to be great parents for the next generation.

The way children feel about their parents is one of respect, not friendship. Parents are authority figures, not equals to children. Intimate relationships are appropriate between parents, not between parents and children. Discipline is one-way directed, but in friendships it is interactive and reciprocal. The joy of friendship is given freely, but in parenting joy comes from commitment, obligation, and a love transmitted by authority – a good form of aristocracy from the higher to the lesser.

PHILOSOPHIC LOVE

The word “Philosophy” literally means “Love of Wisdom.” (Greek *Philo*: Love + *Sophia*: Wisdom). Philosophic Love is not an academic abstraction; rather it’s a pragmatic application of deep understandings of interpersonal realities. It aims at propelling the evolutionary journey of the mind and the soul throughout life.



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Philosophic Love is the crown jewel of all the loves for it is the ultimate *guidance system* that balances, aligns, integrates and rotates (like a kaleidoscope) the other five loves -- knowing when you or your partner needs which one of the ten loves at what moment. It also prevents love from becoming perverted.

Pragma is the Greek term for long-standing, practical, mature love. This was the deep understanding that developed between long-married couples. *Pragma* is about showing patience and tolerance, along with making compromises to help the relationship work over time.

The psychoanalyst Erich Fromm said we expend too much energy in "falling in love" and need to learn how to "stand in love." *Pragma* is precisely about standing in love—making an effort to give love rather than just receive it. With about a third of first marriages in the U.S. ending through divorce or separation in the first 10 years, the Greeks would advise bringing a serious dose of *pragma* into our relationships.

Wisdom, as described in the previous section, combines emotional maturity, stability in a storm, courageous action, deep insight, empathy, sound judgment, prudent trust, use of truthful knowledge, and weighing facts/evidence with equanimity. It embraces the willingness to learn, inquire, thus being aware of changing conditions, prudence to control one's emotions under stress, the ability to see through a paradox, and accept new frames of reference.

When those angry moments arise (or in the early stages of a brewing argument), Wise Love lets us see what boils under the surface, embrace the other's fear or anxiety (real or imagined), feel their hurt (physical or emotional), appreciate one's sense of guilt (conscience), understand conflicting messages or values (standards), clarify confusion (uncertainty), rebuild broken trust (doubt, divisiveness, insecurity), realign expectations (broken

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promises), respond appropriately to the confusions of loss or death, relieve frustrations/stress/anxiety, and soothe feelings of depression/helplessness/victimization.

Philosophic Love is often long to develop, and forms the deepest foundations for love everlasting. It doesn't appear as dramatically as Romantic Love, and to the outside observer may seem unimportant.

LABOUR OF LOVE & THE ART OF WORK

Mastery of the art melding identity with work is an art that is actually not about work itself.

Work can be transformed into art, and magnified into action, if our hearts and minds are conduits of a much greater and mightier purpose -- if we see ourselves as benefactors of the flow of the two divine energies – love and creation – and channel these energies through us into the building of our world. Kahlil Gibran probably understood this phenomenon best as he observed in *The Prophet*:



When you work you are a flute through whose heart the whispering of the hours turns to music.

*When you work you fulfill a part of earth's furthest dream assigned to you when that dream was born,
And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life.
And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inner most secret.*

All work is empty save when there is Love;

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And when you work with love, you bind yourself to yourself, and to one another, and to God.

And what is it to work with love?

It is to weave the cloth with threads drawn from your heart; it is to build a house with affection;

It is to sow seeds with tenderness sad reap the harvest with joy;

It is to change all things you fashion with a breath of your own spirit,

Work is love made visible.

*And if you cannot work with love but only with distaste,
it is better that you should leave your work*

*For if you grudge the crushing of grapes,
your grudge distills a poison in the wine.*

*And if you sing though as Angels,
and Love not the singing,*

*You muffle man's ears to the voices of the day
and the voices of the night.*

St. Francis of Assisi explained this divine process as creative energy:

The person who works with their hands is simply a laborer;

*the person with their hands and minds a craftsman; and
with their hands, mind, and heart, a true artist.*

In this passage, the laborer “works hard,” the craftsman “works with refinement,” the artist or architect “works in wonder.” Our lives and our work can be a sacred art, one for which we need to take the time and to make the effort to become masters. Aristotle commented that:

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*The aim of true art is to represent not the outward
appearance of things,
but their inward significance.*

In other words, life itself can be -- and the building of character is -- a sacred art. We mold and shape and design the moments which collectively represent our day, tuning our perceptions and awareness to see and hear what others do not, then amplify and configure these small signals into a larger tapestry of meaning, upon which we become empowered to create action.

However, love and creativity alone are not enough; no work of art can be created without two other key ingredients: devotion and commitment.

In the building of character, one's work and one's experience can be creatively transformed into art and then magnified into action, if our hearts and minds are conduits of a much greater and mightier purpose -- if we see ourselves as benefactors of a conscience ordained by divine order; in this way we meld love into work as we express our character -- thus manifesting our identity with our destiny.

Devotion

Never should devotion and commitment be confused with "working hard." Devotion is sourced from the soul; a love and dedication for something higher than ourselves, an ideal, a beauty, a goodness that transcends the mundane. St. Francis knew:

"It is in forgetting oneself that one is found."

The devoted person sees themselves not as the cause of anything, but as an instrument or vehicle or conduit through

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which some greater power can be exerted to achieve a greater purpose. Devotion gives us the zen-like presence to be “in the moment,” never to be enslaved by our discipline, but to be set free by discipline.

Devotion allows the master to see past the dogma and prescriptions of the discipline, to touch the hearts and souls of the group, to transcend the dictums and feel the pain, to touch the heart, to manifest the vision of those who seek guidance. Thus, the master is never above and never below, but always by one’s side.

In building our personal character, we mold and shape and design the moments which collectively represent our day.

We, as humans, are endowed with a gift to tune our perceptions and awareness to see and hear what others do not, then amplify and configure these small signals into a larger tapestry of meaning, upon which we can be empowered to create daily action demonstrating our devotion, our caring, and our commitment to our larger purpose. That is the formation of character, identity, and ultimately, destiny.

Commitment

It’s been said: commitment is what transforms a promise into reality; it is the words that speak boldly of our intentions, and the actions which speak louder than the words; it is making the time when there is none, coming through time after time after time, year after year after year.

Commitment is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism, of vision over fear. Commitment gives us the discipline to attain a mastery of our lives, of our own personal duty to build our character.

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If we keep in the forefront of our mind that every moment in life presents a unique opportunity for a precious fruit to ripen, for an idea whose time has come, for a river to flow, for separate voices to burst united in one song, we can truly make our work a synergistic endeavor.

Being a "Person of Value"

When Albert Einstein said: Try not to become a person of success, but rather ... become a person of value... What did he really mean?

It means, when faced with a problem or adversity, the basic principle is always to:

Add Value to whatever it is that you are thinking, doing, experiencing, or feeling.

*Adding Value is the first step to excellence.
It engages your imagination and your spirit.*

If you are not Adding Value, you are either in mediocrity mode or destructive mode.

COURAGEOUS LOVE

*Greater Love hath no man
than to lay down his life for
his friend.*

-- Jesus Christ, John 15



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The deepest of love brings forth courage. It's based on the French word "Coeur" which means "Heart."

The brave are fools for they are fearless; the courageous are

I offer a life not of privilege, but of service.

A man who fears nothing, loves nothing,

So if you love nothing, there is no joy to your life.

In serving each other, we become free.

King Arthur (Sean Connery) to His Knight: (Richard Gere)

From the movie *First Knight*

heroic for they conquer their fears.

"Courage" is quite different from "bravery."

Courage is the belief or commitment in something larger than your fear.

Bravery is the absence of fear or just overcoming fear.

This is an important distinction, because if you are committed to nothing, you can have no courage, regardless of your bravery. Anyone who lacks fear is a fool. Anyone who spouts phony platitudes like: "Be fearless!" should be spurned as a callous and unobservant deadhead.

Fear is natural in humans. We are only born with two "natural" fears - fear of falling and fear of loud noises - every other fear is "learned" from either our culture or our peers or media broadcasts.

Fear will bring out the worst in many people. But in the few for whom character prevails, fear becomes a catalyst for courage. Courage is not the absence of fear, but the rising above fear by embracing a more powerful commitment and love for friends, family, and principle. Fear is the root of distrust, thus it will

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pervasively undermine the innovative spirit in each of us. Panic is a sudden succumbing to our fears, becoming swamped by a flood-tide of negativity and darkness, extinguishing the glow of possibility. Fear is a dangerous weapon because it has a boomerang effect, often multiplying on its way back in ways we can neither predict nor control.

Courage is never born from a disengaged heart. Courage is not expendable, like a tank of gasoline, rather it's "expandable" like love, trust, and creativity. One never runs out of courage, unless they run out of something powerful to be committed to; one can only become "dis-couraged" when the world around them is filled with negativity and when courage is punished again and again by those who want to diminish those who champion causes. Courage is like a match that ignites abundance:

Courage enlarges, cowardice diminishes resources.
In dangerous straits, the fears of the timid
aggravate the dangers that imperil the brave.

– Christian Neville Bouvee (1820-1904)

Courage is regenerative, bestowing its rewards back onto those who manifest it, inspiring others; expanding, becoming larger the more it is activated and reused.

Making Commitment Larger than Fear

There can be no courage without the love, devotion, and commitment to something larger than oneself.

Lack of courage implies a lack of commitment, and this is the crux of our problem today. As a society, we are suffering from a collapse of trust because people lack character, commitment, and courage. Where there is no trust, there can be no solid foundation for love.

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It is not circumstances that determines our fate, but our vision and courage to turn the tide. For anyone to love courageously, it only takes being committed to a vision and values far larger and more powerful than our fears.

The Greatest Courage is to fully commit yourself to the highest purpose God has put you on the earth to fulfill; and to manifest Destiny's Dream every day of your life. It is on destiny's pathway that the deepest and truest happiness will be found.

Listen to any Congressional Medal of Honor recipient who saved the life of a fellow soldier or sailor. They all say they were scared, but their commitment to their comrade was larger than their fear for their personal safety. These heroes put the greater good ahead of their self-interest. That's Honorable Purpose in action.



NEIGHBORLY LOVE

The Golden Rule - *Do unto others as you want done unto you* - is the core of civilization. The Bible filled with commands to *Love Thy Neighbor* as the means of wiring our circuitry to our connection with the divine.

Being a good neighbor means we are kindly, considerate, and exhibit mutual friendliness. Koinonia is the Greek term creates a brethren bond which builds trust and overcomes two of humanity's deepest fears and insecurities: being betrayed and being demeaned.

Humans are creatures of community. We live in neighborhoods. We work in organizations which are, when

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functioning well, a collaborative (co-labor = working together) community.

Community is a forum for group action. Today's idea of teamwork had a deep meaning for the Greeks and early Christians, because it enables a group of people to produce something unique and potent. For this, the idea of *synergy* came into being. The word synergy means:

The joint alignment or interaction of two or more energies, agents, or forces so that their combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual effects.

Cooperative interaction among groups, that creates an enhanced combined effect.

The ancients understood working together would produce an effect far greater than the sum of each individual. This is a critical meaning, because it transcends issues of conflict, dissention, polarization and factionalism.

When a group adopts the values of honor, virtue, and wisdom, and embraces the divine energies of God, a synergistic effect occurs. This is what Christ means in promising a world of abundance.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly and overflowing." -- John 10:10:

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to abundantly." -- Matthew 6:33

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"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap." -- Luke 6:38

"And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." --2 Corinthians 9:8

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." -- Ephesians 3:20

These verses demonstrate Jesus' *promises* of abundance to his followers in all areas of their lives, for their material needs, and also promises with spiritual abundance as well.

However, many who have not embraced the Wisdom Texts often take these promises as a *guarantee* of material wealth or success. Rather, it is a *promise* that God will provide for his followers' needs by blessing them with the *resources* they need to live a life of abundance. It is our responsibility and freedom of choice how we develop and channel these resources to achieve abundance.

Koinonia

This Greek word has such a multitude of meanings that no single English word is adequate to express its depth and richness. *Koinonia*, is a complex, rich, and thoroughly fascinating Greek approach to building community or teamwork – an *inner* goodness toward individual virtue, and an *outer* goodness toward positive social relationships.

There are many connotations because the word is used in a variety of related contexts:

Generous Sharing: As in to share with one another in a possession held in common, implying the spirit of generous sharing or the act of giving as contrasted with selfish getting. The spirit of sharing and giving is not an abstract ideal, but a demonstrable action resulting in a tangible and realistic expression of giving. It can mean "going shares" with others, thereby having "business dealings," such as joint ownership of a ship. It can also imply "sharing an opinion" with someone, and therefore agreeing with him, or disagreeing in a congenial way. Participation is vital because as the members are sharing in what others have. What is shared, received or given becomes the common ground through which *Koinonia* becomes real.

*The Greeks seemed to have known what we know now:
"Sharing Expands, Hoarding Contracts."*

Partnership: A companion, a partner or a joint-owner. *Koinonia* implies an association, common effort, or a

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partnership. The common ground by which the two parties are joined together creates aligned relationship.²³

Marriage: Two people may enter into marriage in order to have "koinonia of life", that is to say, to live together in which everything is shared, suggesting a powerful common interest that could hold two or more persons together.

Spiritual Relationship: Meaning something that is held and shared jointly with others for God; one's "personal relationship with God". The Ancients often regarded this as a relationship with the Holy Spirit -- a higher purpose or mission that benefits the greater good of the members as a whole. The term *enthusiasm* is connected to this meaning of koinonia for it signifies "God in Us,"²⁴ or *one's participation in the Divine*.

Fellowship²⁵: To create a bond between comrades is the meaning of koinonia when people are recognized, share their joy and pains together, and are united because of their

²³ such as a 'fellowship' or 'partnership.' In the New Testament, (Luke 5:10) James, John, and Simon are called "partners" (**koinonia**). The joint participation was a shared fishing business.

²⁴ Definition: The source of the word is the Greek *enthusiasmos*, which ultimately comes from the adjective *entheos*, "having the god within," formed from *en*, "in, within," and *theos*, "god." **Word History:** "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm," said the very quotable Ralph Waldo Emerson.

²⁵ Definition: Fellow is from the Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse 'felagi', comrade or partner.. 'Ship' is a suffix indicating state or condition. Fellowship is a state in which we share as fellows, that is as partners or peers. Fellowship addresses the relationship between people, not between material objects. One doesn't have a fellowship with a house, a companionship with a tree, or a comradeship with a bed. It relates to a state or condition in which such persons interact, thus we speak of friendship, partnership, and fellowship.

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common experiences, interests and goals. Fellowship creates a mutual bond making it easier for sharing and generosity to flow -- which overrides each individual's pride, vanity, and individualism -- fulfilling the human yearning with fraternity, belonging, and companionship. When combined with the spiritual implications of koinonia, fellowship provides a joint participation in the Divine's graces and denotes that common possession of spiritual values. Fellowship is never passive in the meaning of koinonia, it is always linked to action, not just *being* together, but also *doing* together.

With fellowship comes a close and intimate relationship embracing ideas, communication, and frankness, as in a true, blessed interdependent friendship among multiple group members.

Community²⁶: The idea of community denotes a "common unity" of purpose and interests. By engaging in this united relationship, a new level of consciousness and conscience emerges that spurs the group to higher order thinking and action, thus empowering and encouraging its members to exist in a mutually beneficial relationship.

Thus, community and family become closely intertwined, because aiming at a common unity strives to overcome brokenness, divisiveness, and, ultimately gaining wholeness: with each of the members, with their environment, and with their God. *By giving mutual support, fellowship, friendship and*

²⁶ Definition: from Latin *communitas*, *fellowship*, from *communis*, *common*; **a.** A group of people having common interests. **b.** A group viewed as forming a distinct segment of society. **c.** Similarity or identity: a community of interests. **d.** Sharing, participation, and fellowship.

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family merge. Both fellowship and community imply an inner and outer unity. Nowhere in the framework of community is their implied a hierarchy of command and control. The leader's task²⁷ is focusing energy, aligning interests, to propel their community forward, to share their understanding with others so that "all ships would rise on a rising tide."

Thus, loftier goals and dreams are more easily manifested in the mind and achieved in reality. The team's sense of Purpose became manifest.

To build a community of friendships and neighborly love, use this statement as a framework:

Covenant* of Cooperation and Community Spirit

We hereby pledge to:

1. **Build a Spirit of Cooperation among our Community**
 - Work for the Greater Good: "All for One, One for All"
 - From Chaos Seek Unity, From Discord Find Harmony
 - Tolerate No Divisiveness, No Polarization, No Back-Biting
2. **Engage & Embrace all Members with Respect**
 - Respect Everyone's Need for Solitude, Peace, and Tranquility
 - Respect and Listen to those with a Different View
 - Seek Always to Bring Out the Best in Others

²⁷ The leader imposes control first by holding a clear vision and a strong set of values. In a well-functioning, trustworthy community, these are more powerful than draconian rules and regulations. Strong control only becomes necessary when there are threats and actions are needed to prevent destruction of the community's highest interests -- the greater good of the whole.

3. **Build Relationships based on Trust, Integrity, and Ethics**
 - Speak only the Truth, Otherwise be Silent
 - Give People the Benefit of the Doubt
 - When wrong Acknowledge, Apologize, then take Corrective Action
4. **Speak Only the Language of Cooperation:**
 - Seek Solutions, Not Blame
 - Neither Speak nor Spread any Gossip
 - Forgive those who Apologize for their Transgressions
5. **Disagree without being Disagreeable**
 - Be Critical without Criticizing; Be Respectful of others.
 - Never Threaten, Attack Issues but not People
 - Do whatever Can Be Done, and Gracefully Accept what Can't
6. **Try to Bring a Spirit of Joy to All**
 - Dwell Not in Negativity
 - Complain Not about Petty Things
 - Receive Everyone with a Cheerful Face and Open Arms
7. **Keep a Positive and Caring Attitude**
 - Listen with Empathy and Compassion
 - Hold our Responsibilities as Dearly as our Rights
 - Respect the Minority's Needs, even though the Majority Rule
8. **Live by the Spirit, not just the Letter, of Just Rules & Laws**
 - Live with the Intention of Peace & Harmony
 - Live to Create Advantage for Everyone, not to take advantage just for yourself
 - Respect the Community's Rules the Guidance they gives, not for loopholes that may create an advantage for one over others

*An agreement of spirit made between people to uphold standards and values



KALEIDOSCOPIC LOVE

Those who know the wonder of being enraptured in a ball-room dancing – synergy with the music and your partner – realize they have entered into another ethereal dimension of time and space where all the Ten Dimensions of Splendored Love merge into one synergistic spiral.

This is Kaleidoscopic Love, we feel whole, dynamic, and complete, as though the deepest yearning of the soul has been fulfilled – that seemingly missing part of our psyche has been given to us from our loved one – life itself is being sourced from an energy greater than ourselves.

This sense of synergy and transcendence is enervating, uplifting, and extraordinarily empowering, leading us into

an ever-expanding and rising spiral of higher and higher forms of love -- each level opening a pathway to the next as the Kaleidoscope blossoms.

Mastery is a Journey

Mastering all Ten Dimensions is a journey -- not an event -- that will continue through one's end of days. It also takes a discipline to stop and assess every circumstance in life and determine how to apply the artist's palate of the Ten Loves to each circumstance. The return on the investment of time and critical evaluation of reality is truly how to create true abundance in life itself. It is in the alignment, balance, and integration of the ten dimensions that makes self-control natural, not imposed or debilitating.

Combating Narcissism

Today, depression, along with suicide and drug addiction (the ultimate escapes), are major concerns for civilization. Psychologists call upon people to learn to love themselves; similarly, revulsion and self-hate are cited as the cause of people traversing into their own dark abyss.

However, we also know that the process of self-love can result in selfish narcissism that implodes destructively on every relationship. One counselor told me that he is finding young people, in particular, have grown so numb to the possibility of loving relationships that there is no longer a desire nor dream to connect with the intimacy that might bring them joy, limiting them shallow transactional relationships on social media.

While the Ten Loves are marvelously full and rich, a person whose world is narrowly conceived in their own narcissistic reflection is as absurd, superficial, and inept as telling a hungry person they should eat.

Understanding the Ten Loves gives us guidance on how to begin “loving oneself” in a way that does not border on narcissism. The foundation of loving oneself starts with loving life, loving God, loving others, and seeing oneself as an expression of the divine energies of the Holy Spirit.

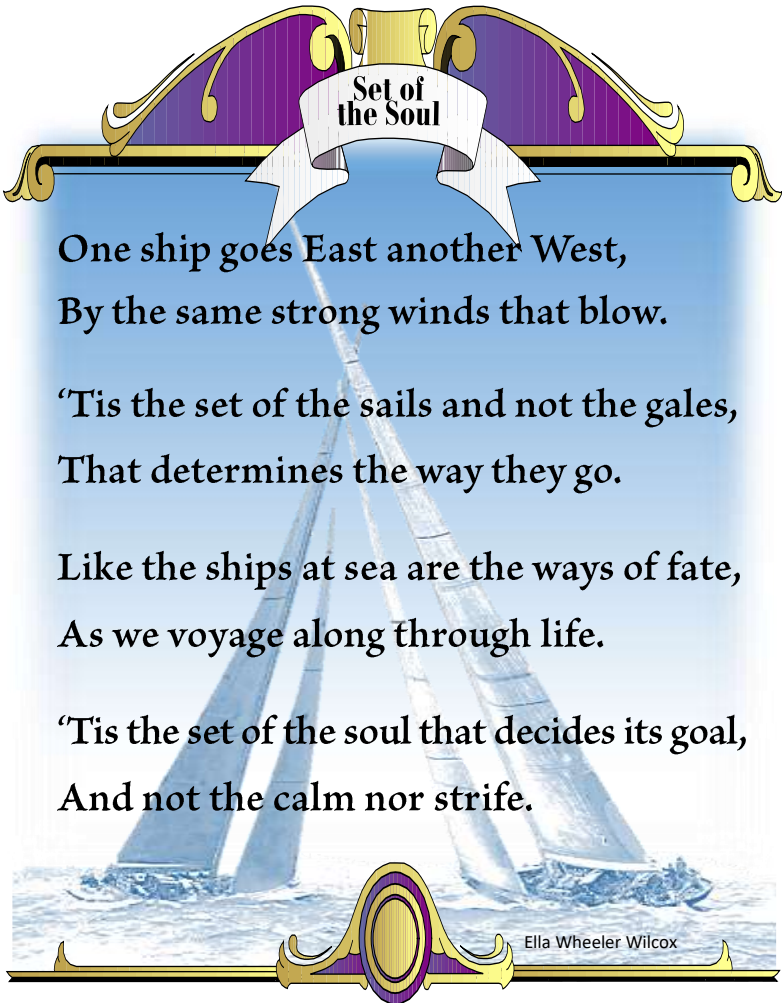
A Note of Caution. However, all the ten loves can be perverted in several ways:

1. By *obsessive emphasis on one love*, to the exclusion of the other loves.
2. By *twisting a love into a something deceitful*, overbearing, or even evil, such as how cult leaders or con artists twist meanings and intentions.
3. By *turning love into Mania* – Manic love is almost not a love at all. It is more like “obsession.”

This is the love of possession and obsessive desire to own, limit, or control. It is generally seen as taking over the “lover” like insanity – thus the connection to modern concepts of madness (kleptomania, pyromania). “Mania” is “madness” and “beside yourself.” Manic love is based on fear, obsession, or lack of empathy. It can be an expression of excessive (too much) self-love (narcissism) or the opposite – too little self-love, which creates an empty hole in one’s psyche. It is this empty hole that becomes filled, in a misguided way, with excessive, passionate obsession.

4. By the absence of balance – love of self with love of others – is all-too-often the result of lack of trust of oneself. Self-trust comes from personal integrity and accountability for *one’s thoughts, values/principles, words, and actions.*

SET OF THE SOUL



**Set of
the Soul**

One ship goes East another West,
By the same strong winds that blow.

‘Tis the set of the sails and not the gales,
That determines the way they go.

Like the ships at sea are the ways of fate,
As we voyage along through life.

‘Tis the set of the soul that decides its goal,
And not the calm nor strife.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Chapter NINE: Guiding Principles

One great place to lay down the foundation for becoming a champion is designing one's personal set of Guiding Principles, articulating vision, ideals, and actions you are personally committed attaining in your life.

Great people are inspired by great principles – guidelines that form the framework for their thoughts and actions. Over the years I have studied great people – a principled person is a disciplined person, having trained their mind to respond in highly effective ways; and thus they can act in a consistent and integrated manner that produces powerful results.

One's parents are probably the biggest influence on our lives. I was very fortunate to have had two of the greatest parents blessed upon a child. Both mom and dad were truly fine people; giving the job parenting their primary attention.

When mom became terminally ill, I realized the finest tribute was to codify her Guiding Principles, (then later my father's) (see Figure 4 & Figure 5) which were distributed at each of their funerals. Many people commented how well the Guiding Principles characterized their very essence.

Ten years before mom died, I went through a crisis in my life that put me on the verge of bankruptcy and the loss of a marriage. My life was in a wild tailspin without a "guiding star." What led me out of the chaos was a dedicated, daily search for eternal and essential truths that could form my own personal guiding principles. That made me realize that there'd been something deeply missing in my life -- something clearly missing in our educational system that Robert Ulich had highlighted in *Crisis and Hope in American Education*: "If our schools fail to help a person discover his or her purpose [in life], they fail in almost everything that really matters." Developing one's Guiding Principles grasps the essence of meaning and purpose. While this isn't done in high school or college, it but should be; it's never too late to start.

Guiding Principles of Viola B. Lynch

1. Community

- Always Work for the Greater Good of the Community: then Everyone Benefits.
- Always Give more than you Receive; it makes the world a Richer Place.
- Leave the World a Better Place than you found it.

2. Leadership

- Don't be Afraid of Tackling a Big Project you truly Believe in.
- People will always Work Hard for something they Believe in.
- Don't Give Up just because times are tough and obstacles rough.

3. Responsibility

- Do whatever Can Be Done, and Gracefully Accept what Can't.
- Hold your Responsibilities as Dearly as your Rights.
- Keep the Highest Standards and Ethics Paramount in your life.

4. Love

- Seek Always to Bring Out the Best in Others.
- See Beauty in Every Person, no matter how hard they make it to see.
- Treat Everyone like Royalty, because everyone deserves respect.
- Keep a Positive and Caring Attitude, especially when others around you aren't.

5. Happiness

- Bring a Spirit of Joy to All.
- A Warm Hug is worth a thousand platitudes.
- Always Greet People with a Cheerful Smile and Open Arms; most often it's contagious.

6. Friendship

- Always be there to support your friends and family, especially in the tough times
- To a friend's house, the way is never long.

7. Graciousness

- Always say "Please" and "Thank You." It's a sign of Respect
- Graciousness begets Graciousness; Anger begets Anger.

8. Compassion

- Listen with Empathy and Compassion.
- Speak only the Truth; Otherwise be Silent.
- Neither Speak nor Spread any Gossip or Rumors.

9. Forgiveness

- Forgive People; Don't Hold a Grudge: it just creates negative energy.
- Always Give People the Benefit of the Doubt.
- When Wrong, Acknowledge, Apologize, then take Corrective Action.

10. Complaining

- Don't Complain, unless you intend to take action on the complaint.
- Dwell Not in Negativity; Complain Not about Petty Things.

Figure 4: Guiding Principles -- Viola Bak Lynch (my mom)

Guiding Principles of Robert B. Lynch

- 1. Wisdom & Learning**
 - Seek the Wisdom of the Ages, Honor the Values of Our Forefathers
 - Learn From History, Make It Come Alive
 - Learn All Your Life: Develop Others by Passing Your Learning Along
- 2. Responsibility & Standards**
 - Hold Your Responsibilities As Dearly As Your Rights.
 - Set Your Sights High If You Want To Be Successful
 - Keep The Highest Standards & Ethics Paramount In Your Life
- 3. Goodness & Beauty**
 - Strive To Bring Goodness & Loveliness Into The World;
 - Be Patient with Others; Always Say “Please” And “Thank You.”
 - Demonstrate Your Belief In The Inherent Goodness Of People
- 4. Fairness & Integrity**
 - Earn People’s Respect by Treating Them with the Highest Respect
 - Be Fair To All, Always Give Everyone the Benefit of the Doubt
 - Be Sure Your Words are Your Bond, and Reflective in your Deeds
- 5. Values & Character**
 - Values and Ideals are Necessary to Shape a Better World
 - Always Do The Right Thing, Even Though Circumstance May Give You an Advantage By Doing Something Less Than Honorable
 - One’s Character & Values Are More Important Than Anything Else
- 6. Tenacity & Perseverance**
 - Don’t Give Up Even When Times Are Tough And Obstacles Rough
 - Stand Up For Your Values: Don’t Be Afraid To Voice Your Opinion, Even if Others Don’t Agree; Protect the Interests of the Minority
 - Perseverance Often Makes the Difference between Success & Failure
- 7. Leadership & Vision**
 - Rally People Around a Good Cause
 - Inspire People To Work Together As A Team;
Combining Honor& Caring to Bring Out the Best in Others
 - Understand People’s Unique Psychological & Personal Needs
- 8. Community & Country**
 - Always Give More Than You Receive
 - Everyone Benefits When Working for the Community’s Greater Good
 - Leave The World A Better Place Than You Found It.
- 9. Navigation In Storms & Crises**
 - Always Keep Your Wits About You
 - Don’t Burn Your Bridges Behind You
 - Always Stay Focused, Keeping The Ultimate Objective in the Forefront

Figure 5: Guiding Principles of Robert Barrows Lynch (my father)

Wisdom Project

12 Truths for Creating Miracles-- Robert Porter Lynch, 1992

- 1. Seek Your Destiny; Everything Serves a Reason & Purpose.**
 - Find Meaning in Every Event, in Every Moment.
 - Let your Destiny be guided by the Brightest Star in the Universe.
- 2. Create the Flow, Do Whatever Can Be Done, Gracefully Accept what Can't.**
 - Be like Water -- Fluid, Resilient, Willing to Bend and Flex, Conforming to the Laws of the Universe.
- 3. Joy Births Creation, Diversity Sparks Creativity & Breakthroughs.**
 - Keep a Sense of Humor. Treat Work like Play!
 - Experience Happiness (don't "pursue" it);
 - Fully Live Every Moment.
- 4. Realities are Created by our Thoughts, Visions & Inner Spirit.**
 - Possibility's Realm Extends Far beyond Logic.
 - Seek Continuous Breakthroughs, however small.
 - Transform Prophecy into Reality.
- 5. Whatever Happens, Take Responsibility, Empower Yourself.**
 - Responsibility Begins with each of Your Thoughts.
 - (But Don't Confuse "Responsibility" for "Blame.")
- 6. People are the Greatest Resource, Choose Friends Carefully.**
 - Salute the Divine Spirit in Everyone, including Yourself!
 - Empower Others to Learn their Highest Destiny.
- 7. There's No Such Thing as Failure; Only Results.**
 - Success & Failure, Hope & Fear, are Illusive Phantoms arising from the Ego's false belief you are the Center of the Universe.
- 8. Great Results Require Great Commitment.**
 - To be Happy, Be Committed to Something Greater than Yourself.
 - Aim High, Avoiding Mediocrity's Grey Twilight.
- 9. Be the Hero of your Life; Don't let your Experience become your Identity.**
 - You are Not Your Circumstances,
 - Don't Play the Role of the Victim.
 - Anger, Hatred & Depression are All Wasted Passions.
- 10. Transform Adversity into Triumph; Awful Conditions Create Heroes.**
 - When down, & miracles aren't happening, it's only temporary.
 - Get back in the Ring, then Aim for Small Breakthroughs!
- 11. Stay in the stream, avoid the eddy currents & undertows of life.**
 - Don't be Sidetracked if the Truth you've spoken is bent and turned against you -- It's only a Test of your Commitment.
- 12. Never Forget: "I am Master of My Fate, Captain of My Soul!"**
 - Ask not the meaning of your life, But Answer for your life
 - Answer for the calling of Your Greater Meaning & Purpose.

Figure 6: Guiding Principles RPL 1992

PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE WAY TO HAPPINESS

Don't seek happiness; live it.

Find mission and purpose in your life.

Hold dear trusted friendships with those who make you better, stronger, and more enlightened.

Keep positive attitudes in the face of adversity.

Keep your heart free from hate, your mind from unnecessary worry.

Live simply, expect little, give much, celebrate small victories.

Fill your life with love, spread good cheer, think of others, do unto others as you want them to do unto you.

Don't be overly critical, and never cynical.

Build an empowering belief system and an uplifting philosophy of life.

Elevate wisdom above knowledge, patience above anxiety, humility above arrogance.

You are as young as your trust and faith,
as old as your distrust and doubt;
as young as your hope or old as your despair.

Chapter TEN: Friendship

What makes friendship so priceless? It's been said that the best things in life are free, and true friends are some of the best things in life that money can't buy.

Friends come in all shapes and sizes. A true friend **really gets you**. They like you **flaws and all**. They know what to say, and more importantly, when to say nothing at all.

When you flip through the collage of people in your life, you may have some **people in your corner** that you can count on ... you may have a band of merry men ... you may even have the benefit of a best friend, who is there **with you to the end**.

Choose your friends wisely, and that's one of the best ways to level up in life. The opposite is also true.

Of all the lessons in friendship, there are two lessons that I think are especially important:

1. Be your own best friend. After all, no matter where you go, you take you with you.
2. Be the friend you want to be. Life tends to mirror you back.

Enjoy these quotes on friendship and may they bring a twinkle to your eye as you remember the people in your life that believed in you, lifted you up when you needed it most, or simply lent you a shoulder to weather the storm ...

ARE YOU A FOUNTAIN OR A DRAIN?

You can be either positive and uplifting, bringing out the best in others, making them a real priority, helping them be their best selves. Or a drag and drain the energy out of a relationship. This is a conscious choice, one of intent, not something that you leave to chance.

"A fountain is constantly giving, constantly flowing, constantly providing constantly supporting, constantly encouraging, constantly uplifting, thriving.

"And a drain is just taking, sucking, complaining, criticizing, being negative and draining., Or we can be a drain, taking, sucking, draining.. And I think it's a choice we make every day."

-- David Griffin, a former NBA executive

The choice is up to us. We can either be a source of life and inspiration, or we can be a source of negativity and despair. Let's choose to be fountains in our relationships and make the world a better place.

GREAT QUOTES ON FRIENDSHIP

"Who is the best friend for you? Somebody who brings out the best in you.

They don't try to change you. They simply bring out your best."

— Salil Dave

"A friend can tell you things you don't want to tell yourself."

— Frances Ward Weller

"A friend in need is a friend indeed."

Wisdom Project

– Proverb

“A friend is one of the nicest things you can have, and one of the best things you can be.”

– Douglas Pagels

“A friend is one who knows you and loves you just the same.”

– Elbert Hubbard

“A friend is the one who comes in when the whole world has gone out.”

– Grace Pulpit

“A friend knows the song in my heart and sings it to me when my memory fails.”

– Donna Roberts

“A friendship founded on business is better than a business founded on friendship.”

– John D. Rockefeller

“A good friend is a connection to life – a tie to the past, a road to the future, the key to sanity in a totally insane world.”

– Lois Wyse

Transform Your Destiny!

"A hug is like a boomerang – you get it back right away."

– **Bil Keane**

"A joy shared is a joy doubled."

– **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**

"A loyal friend laughs at your jokes when they're not so good, and sympathizes with your problems when they're not so bad."

– **Arnold H. Glasgow**

"A single rose can be my garden ... a single friend, my world."

– **Leo Buscaglia**

"A true friend is someone who thinks that you are a good egg even though he knows that you are slightly cracked"

– **Bernard Meltzer**

"A true friend reaches for your hand and touches your heart."

– **Heather Pryor**

Wisdom Project

“A true friend unbosoms freely, advises justly, assists readily, adventures boldly, takes all patiently, defends courageously, and continues a friend unchangeably.”

– **William Penn**

“Ah, how good it feels! The hand of an old friend.”

– **Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

“Am I not destroying my enemies when I make friends of them?”

– **Abraham Lincoln**

“An insincere and evil friend is more to be feared than a wild beast; a wild beast may wound your body, but an evil friend will wound your mind.”

– **Buddha**

“Be courteous to all, but intimate with few, and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence.”

– **George Washington**

“But friendship is precious, not only in the shade, but in the sunshine of life, and thanks to a benevolent arrangement the greater part of life is sunshine.”

– **Thomas Jefferson**

Transform Your Destiny!

"But friendship is the breathing rose, with sweets in every fold."

– **Oliver Wendell Holmes**

"Cherish the friend who tells you a harsh truth, wanting ten times more to tell you a loving lie."

– **Robert Brault**

"Constant use will not wear ragged the fabric of friendship."

– **Dorothy Parker**

"Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another, 'What! You too? I thought I was the only one.'"

– **C.S. Lewis**

"Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend."

– **Albert Camus**

"Fear makes strangers of people who would be friends."

– **Shirley MacLaine**

Wisdom Project

“Friends and good manners will carry you where money won’t go.”

– **Margaret Walker**

“Friends are born, not made.”

– **Henry B. Adams**

“Friends are relatives you make for yourself.”

– **Eustache Deschamps**

“Friends can be said to “fall in like” with as profound a thud as romantic partners fall in love.”

– **Letty Cottin Pogrebin**

“Friendship and money: oil and water.”

– **Mario Puzo**

“Friendship improves happiness, and abates misery, by doubling our joys, and dividing our grief.”

– **Joseph Addison**

“Friendship is a sheltering tree.”

– **Samuel Taylor Coleridge**

"Friendship is a single soul dwelling in two bodies."

– Aristotle

"Friendship is held to be the severest test of character. It is easy, we think, to be loyal to a family and clan, whose blood is in your own veins."

– Charles Alexander Eastman

"Friendship is one mind in two bodies."

– Mencius

"What is a friend? A single soul dwelling in two bodies."

– Aristotle

"Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art... It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival."

– C. S. Lewis

"Friendship needs no words – it is solitude delivered from the anguish of loneliness."

– Dag Hammarskjöld

“Friendship is not something you learn in school. But if you haven’t learned the meaning of friendship, you really haven’t learned anything.”

– **Muhammad Ali**

“Friendship makes prosperity more brilliant, and lightens adversity by dividing and sharing it”.

– **Cicero**

“Friendship with oneself is all important because without it one cannot be friends with anybody else in the world.”

– **Eleanor Roosevelt**

“Friendship’s the wine of life.”

– **Edward Young**

“He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends.”

– **Oscar Wilde**

“He who has a thousand friends has not a friend to spare, and he who has one enemy will meet him everywhere.”

Transform Your Destiny!

“A man’s growth is seen in the successive choirs of his friends.”

“It is one of the blessings of old friends that you can afford to be stupid with them.”

“The only way to have a friend is to be one.”

“The ornament of a house is the friends who frequent it.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

“How often we find ourselves turning our backs on our actual friends, that we might go and meet their ideal cousins.”

“The language of friendship is not words but meanings.”

“The most I can do for my friend is simply be his friend.”

– Henry David Thoreau

“I always felt that the great high privilege, relief and comfort of friendship was that one had to explain nothing.”

– Katherine Mansfield

“I don’t need a friend who changes when I change and who nods when I nod; my shadow does that much better.”

– Plutarch

Wisdom Project

“I have friends in overalls whose friendship I would not swap for the favor of the kings of the world.”

— **Thomas A. Edison**

“I value the friend who for me finds time on his calendar, but I cherish the friend who for me does not consult his calendar.”

— **Robert Brault**

“If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone. A man should keep his friendships in constant repair.”

— **Samuel Johnson**

“If ever there is tomorrow when we’re not together.. there is something you must always remember. you are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think. but the most important thing is, even if we’re apart.. I’ll always be with you.”

— **Winnie the Pooh**

“If instead of a gem, or even a flower, we should cast the gift of a loving thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels give.”

— **George MacDonald**

Transform Your Destiny!

“If it’s very painful for you to criticize your friends – you’re safe in doing it. But if you take the slightest pleasure in it, that’s the time to hold your tongue.”

– **Alice Duer Miller**

“If one is estranged from oneself, then one is estranged from others too. If one is out of touch with oneself, then one cannot touch others.”

– **Anne Morrow Lindbergh**

“In everyone’s life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit.”

– **Albert Schweitzer**

“In my friend, I find a second self.”

– **Isabel Norton**

“It is easier to forgive an enemy than to forgive a friend.”

– **William Blake**

“In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.”

– **Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Wisdom Project

“It is difficult to say who do you the most mischief: enemies with the worst intentions or friends with the best.”

– **Edward Bulwer-Lytton**

“It is important to our friends to believe that we are unreservedly frank with them, and important to friendship that we are not.”

– **Mignon McLaughlin**

“It is not so much our friends’ help that helps us, as the confidence of their help.”

– **Epicurus**

“It is the friends you can call up at 4 a.m. that matter.”

– **Marlene Dietrich**

“It is virtue, virtue, which both creates and preserves friendship. On it depends harmony of interest, permanence, fidelity.”

– **Cicero**

“It takes a long time to grow an old friend.”

– **John Leonard**

Transform Your Destiny!

“Keep away from those who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you believe that you too can become great.”

– **Mark Twain**

“Let us be grateful to people who make us happy, they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.”

– **Marcel Proust**

“Life is nothing without friendship.”

– **Cicero**

“Life is partly what we make it, and partly what it is made by the friends we choose.”

– **Tennessee Williams**

“Life is slippery. Here, take my hand.”

– **H. Jackson Brown, Jr.**

“Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listen to us are the ones we move toward. When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand.”

– **Karl Menninge**

“Live life fully while you’re here. Experience everything. Take care of yourself and your friends. Have fun, be crazy, be weird. Go out and screw up! You’re going to anyway, so you might as well enjoy the process. Take the opportunity to learn from your mistakes: find the cause of your problem and eliminate it. Don’t try to be perfect; just be an excellent example of being human.”

– **Anthony Robbins**

“Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down.”

– **Oprah Winfrey**

“Many a person has held close, throughout their entire lives, two friends that always remained strange to one another, because one of them attracted by virtue of similarity, the other by difference.”

– **Emil Ludwig**

“Men kick friendship around like a football, but it doesn’t seem to crack. Women treat it like glass and it goes to pieces.”

– **Anne Morrow Lindbergh**

*“Mighty proud I am that I am able to have a spare bed
for my friends.”*

– **Samuel Pepys**

*“Most of us don’t need a psychiatric therapist as much
as a friend to be silly with.”*

– **Robert Brault**

*“Never explain – your friends do not need it and your
enemies will not believe you anyway.”*

– **Elbert Hubbard**

*“Nothing but heaven itself is better than a friend who
is really a friend.”*

– **Plautus**

“Never have a companion that casts you in the shade.”

– **Baltasar Gracian**

*Nothing so fortifies a friendship as an admiration that
honors and cherishes the wisdom, experiences and
insights of his friend.*

-- **Robert Porter Lynch**

Wisdom Project

“One doesn’t know, till one is a bit at odds with the world, how much one’s friends who believe in one rather generously, mean to one.”

– **D.H. Lawrence**

“One of the oldest human needs is having someone to wonder where you are when you don’t come home at night.”

– **Margaret Mead**

“One measure of friendship consists not in the number of things friends can discuss, but in the number of things they need no longer mention.”

– **Clifton Fadiman**

“One must be fond of people and trust them if one is not to make a mess of life.”

– **E. M. Forster**

“One’s friends are that part of the human race with which one can be human.”

– *George Santayana*

“Only a life lived for others is worth living.”

– **Albert Einstein**

Transform Your Destiny!

“Our most difficult task as a friend is to offer understanding when we don’t understand.”

“Say what you want about aging, it’s still the only way to have old friends.”

– Robert Brault

“She is a friend of mind. She gather me, man. The pieces I am, she gather them and give them back to me in all the right order. It’s good, you know, when you got a woman who is a friend of your mind.”

– Toni Morrison

“Silence is the true friend that never betrays.”

– Confucius

“Silences make the real conversations between friends. Not the saying but the never needing to say is what counts.”

– Margaret Lee Runbeck

“Since there is nothing so well worth having as friends, never lose a chance to make them.”

– Francesco Guicciardini

“Some people go to priests; others to poetry; I to my friends.”

– **Virginia Woolf**

“Strangers are just friends waiting to happen.”

– **Rod McKuen**

“The antidote for fifty enemies is one friend.”

– **Aristotle**

“The best mirror in the world is an old friend.”

– **Unknown**

“The best time to make friends is before you need them.”

– **Ethel Barrymore**

“The bird a nest, the spider a web, man friendship.”

– **William Blake**

“The difference between friendship and love is how much you can hurt each other.”

– **Ashleigh Brilliant**

Transform Your Destiny!

“The essence of true friendship is to make allowance for another’s little lapses.”

– **David Storey**

“The friend is the man who knows all about you, and still likes you.”

– **Elbert Hubbard**

“The love of our neighbor in all its fullness simply means being able to say, ‘What are you going through?’”

– **Simone Weil**

“The most beautiful discovery true friends make is that they can grow separately without growing apart.”

– **Elisabeth Foley**

“The real test of friendship is: can you literally do nothing with the other person? Can you enjoy those moments of life that are utterly simple?”

– **Eugene Kennedy**

“The sincere friends of this world are as ship lights in the stormiest of nights.”

– **Giotto di Bondone**

“The tender friendships one gives up, on parting, leave their bite on the heart, but also a curious feeling of a treasure somewhere buried.”

– **Antoine de Saint-Exupéry**

“The worst solitude is to be destitute of sincere friendship.”

– **Francis Bacon**

“There’s nothing more precious in this world than the feeling of being wanted.”

– **Diana Dors**

“There is nothing on this earth more to be prized than true friendship.”

– **Thomas Aquinas**

“Think where man’s glory most begins and ends, and say my glory was I had such friends.”

– **William Butler Yeats**

“Those truly linked don’t need correspondence. When they meet again after many years apart, Their friendship is as true as ever.”

– **Deng Ming-Dao**

Transform Your Destiny!

“’Tis a great confidence in a friend to tell him your faults; greater to tell him his.”

— **Benjamin Franklin**

“To the world you may be just one person, but to one person you may be the world.”

— **Brandi Snyder**

“True friends stab you in the front.”

— **Oscar Wilde**

“True friendship comes when the silence between two people is comfortable.”

— **David Tyson Gentry**

“True friendship is like sound health; the value of it is seldom known until it be lost.”

— **Charles Caleb Colton**

“True friendship isn’t about being there when it’s convenient; it’s about being there when it’s not.”

— **Anonymous**

“We are all travelers in the wilderness of this world, and the best we can find in our travels is an honest friend.”

— **Robert Louis Stevenson**

“We are friends and I do like to pass the day with you in serious and inconsequential chatter. I wouldn’t mind washing up beside you, dusting beside you, reading the back half of the paper while you read the front. We are friends and I would miss you, do miss you and think of you very often.”

— **Jeanette Winterson**

“We are keenly aware of the faults of our friends, but if they like us enough it doesn’t matter.”

— **Mignon McLaughlin**

“We are the captains of our own ships sailing the sea of life, but in times of a stormy weather, you will discover true friends when they don’t hesitate to be a lighthouse.”

— **Dodinsky**

“We call that person who has lost his father, an orphan; and a widower that man who has lost his wife. But that man who has known the immense unhappiness of losing a friend, by what name do we call him? Here every language is silent and holds its peace in impotence.”

— **Joseph Roux**

Transform Your Destiny!

"We need old friends to help us grow old and new friends to help us stay young."

— **Letty Cottin Pogrebin**

"What do we ask of friendship except to be taken for what we pretend to be – and without having to pretend."

— **Robert Brault**

"What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult for each other?"

— **George Eliot**

"What is uttered from the heart alone, Will win the hearts of others to your own."

— **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**

"When a friend is in trouble, don't annoy him by asking if there is anything you can do. Think up something appropriate and do it."

— **Edward W. Howe**

"When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand."

– **Henri Nouwen**

“When you choose your friends, don’t be short-changed by choosing personality over character.”

– **W. Somerset Maugham**

“Wishing to be friends is quick work, but friendship is a slow ripening fruit.”

– **Aristotle**

“Truth springs from argument amongst friends.”

– **David Hume**

“Without wearing any mask, we are conscious of, we have a special face for each friend.”

– **Oliver Wendell Holmes**

“You can always tell a real friend: when you’ve made a fool of yourself, he doesn’t feel you’ve done a permanent job.”

– **Laurence J. Peter**

“If you consider any man a friend whom you do not trust as you trust yourself, you are mightily mistaken and you do not sufficiently understand what true friendship means... When friendship is settled, you must trust; before

friendship is formed, you must pass judgment...Ponder for a long time whether you shall admit a given person to your friendship; but when you have decided to admit him, welcome him with all your heart and soul. Speak as boldly with him as with yourself... Regard him as loyal and you will make him loyal."

— Seneca, Letters from a Stoic c 50AD

Those who seek the solace of hollow friendships that falsely promise:

*Safe Harbour in times of Uncertainty,
Anger in the guise of Bravery to Confront Fear,
Self-righteous Fellowship as a salve for Moral Turpitude,
Faith in Demagogues to fill vacuums of Doubt,
Tribal Solidarity to pit divided factions against each other,
and
Heat rather than Light to confront Darkness,*

will be poisoned by delusionary discord.

- Robert Porter Lynch

Final Thoughts

Do not go where the path may lead.

Instead, go where there is no path and blaze a trail.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The World Steps Aside

to Let Anyone Pass

Who Knows Where They are Going

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN IN A SNOWY WOOD

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both.*

*And being one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;*

*Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:*

How the woods are lovely, dark, and deep.

*But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep.*

*Two roads diverged in an open wood,
And I -- I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

ROBERT FROST

(melding two of Frost's great poems into a meaningful story for me)

And this is where I shall end this story..... for this moment

This is the FIRST Volume in a Six Volume Set of

Cracking the Synergy Source Code

This series of books is a result of my personal quest to find the “truth,” and to act from an integrated belief system that’s:

“coherent and consistent, spiritually strong, scientifically sound,
morally uplifting & builds a better world.”

Most people have such a conflicted belief system that they waste their lives “chasing fireflies in the night,” darting and charging in every direction, with no star to guide them to a worthy destiny. The other volumes in this set contain the deep wisdom – the “source codes” – that creates order in a chaotic world and helps you find that star to guide you through life.

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| Volume ONE | Be the Champion of Your Life
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Volumes ONE through FIVE are designed to stand alone; you don’t need to read the prior volume to understand the next, with the exception of Volume SIX, which integrates the themes of the prior books and moves on to strike new thoughts for a new world. I have purposely designed a small amount of overlap between the volumes to ensure connectivity and continuity of thought. --Robert Porter Lynch

4 -Edmund Burke, Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents 82-83 (1770) in: Select Works of Edmund Burke, vol. 1, p. 146 (Liberty Fund ed. 1999).