

Self-Discovery

Finding yourself in the Age of the Lost

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I

The Truth Heals

The hardest thing to face, for most, is the truth. We always hear that the truth hurts. You can't handle the truth! Why does it hurt? Why can't we handle it? When the truth takes hold of you, everything in your life that was built upon non-truth; life-style, behaviours, beliefs, relationships – must conform to meet the newly adjusted self. It is most unfortunate that many are living in the shadow of their own lives. They are not willing to take responsibility for who they are, which is symptomatic of an underlying complex, such as victim hood, shame, inferiority, insecurity, etc. The person who shuts off the bulk of who they are because they fear being judged or shamed, becomes

a counterfeit version of who they really are. The parts of our life that we edit, censor and repress are designed by nature for expression. The sooner we can accept and embrace our apparent flaws, the more of life opens up to us – because life comes to those that banish the tyrant within.

The truth is the truth whether we accept it or not. The truth alone stands the test of time. But Truth has the power to heal. The moment we settle our inward conflicts in the here and now, we become whole. There can be no deathbed regrets if we resolve our quarrels along the way. We should each practice stepping outside of our daily routines every now and then in order to peacefully touch base with ourselves. When

peaceful, we are more receptive to our true thoughts and feelings.

It is not uncommon to feel afraid of self-discovery. You may feel like a stranger in a strange land; the land of inward nature. This simply implies a need for regular self-connection. Start slow. You may have spent many years imposing false limitations upon yourselves; it may likewise take many years to unravel who you really are. Once you get to know yourself beyond the reactionary ego, your real-self starts to shine.

Self-knowledge

We are each three different people. There's the person others think we are, the person that we believe we are, and there's the person we really are. The secret to happiness is the discovery and cultivation of who we really are by nature – not who we are by definition, opinion and impression.

If we exile our authentic nature to the back of our minds, then a false, inauthentic version of self must consequently rise in its place. If we can accept ourselves and be at one with the inevitable changes that follow, we will thus re-align with our authentic destiny. I call this natural path, the golden thread.

The Golden Thread

The golden-thread is the path that is most in harmony with who we really are. There is an inward-impulse within each organism that propels it to unfold according to its intrinsic destiny; its unique finger-print of expression.

We live in a time where most of the planet is trying to live up to someone else's blueprint. You will always feel out of balance if you're trying to be the echo of someone else's life.

When we surrender to the flow of the golden thread, our inner and outer natures become coherent. We can thus start turning

our awareness away from self-importance and towards that which is greater than ourselves, cultivating humility in the realization that everything is going the way it's going to go. Life is just.

Living our Destiny

It is within the realms of normalcy, that we are to fulfil our destiny. Our life's purpose is not some distant abstraction – but an immediate reality. We each have an individual mission in this life, just as we each have a unique finger-print.

Nature does not bring forth life without a plan. We are each equipped right now with capacities, potentials, and powers that we can summon into action, and claim the life we want to live. Every person is different and unique. Thus, inherent within us, is our own unique gifts and talents. Nature does not repeat herself. Nor does she bring forth the unnecessary. She wants all life to grow, contribute, and live well and wise whilst we are here.

The purpose of our life cannot be found by denying it. Neither can we explain life by escaping it. There are many people in the world today seeking remedy for daily life, unable to handle the pressures that inevitably follow the engagement of such a face-paced world. The demanding nature of our society can indeed exhaust the vitality of the average person, but this is merely a symptom of inward strength and conviction.

The average person cannot handle the honest truth about themselves. What tends to happen is that the person will deny, neglect and suppress the deeper aspects of themselves, and fashion a sub-reality in which to reside. All that we run from is forever chasing us. The ego can only direct its power for so long, until we need to rest.

It is during this stage in which our active ego-centric mind is rendered inert.

Dreams will display to the receptive mind, in the language of symbolism what we are running from, and why. The laws governing the human organism are so intelligent, that they will adjust our entire being to any chosen way of life. But there is one thing that does not seem to change: Truth.

If we are forever running from things that we know we must address and resolve, the mind will develop a defence pattern against the need for resolution, the cost of which is a semi-conscious life. That is, until we've resolved our issues.

Millennia ago, our philosophical and intellectual lives, were locked within the

sphere of survival. *How do we survive?* Gradually, the threats and dangers and uncertainties outside of our immediate environment, proved to be a matter of life or death. There was no time to sit and reflect, and contemplate what mysteries lie outside of the immediate experience, because the possibility of death overrode anything else. The threats and dangers of the unknown necessarily required us to stay within the scope of our limited lower nature.

Today, we do not have to face these extremes if we want to take the leap outside our comfort zones. But unfortunately, the brain will still attempt to protect us from dangers that may or may not be real. Anxiety, for most, is the overwhelming sense of imminent danger. If we are to

control, or rid our anxiety as it relates to reaching for our greatness, we need to resort to the two tools that we have, which the animals do not have: Faith and reason.

It is faith and reason that takes us above the lower nature, thus we may transcend the level of self that fears the idea of moving beyond the immediate experience. By using our higher capacities, we can re-program the lower-nature, by reaffirming those dominant belief patterns.

As a collective, we have become ensnare by our own capacities to produce and consume. We are living life half-awake in a kind of waking coma; holding the faintest recognition of higher values, and an all-dominating desire for material fulfilment.

Before the species can evolve further, we must become progressively more conscious of the consequences of how we choose to live. This all starts with the individual making the right choices in daily life. This is the call for each individual. The collective is nothing more than a mass of individuals on their own journey.

Once we have each connected with that common spark of good and understanding inside of us, and express it every single day, then the collective mass we call the human race will initiate its true coming of age.

The human race has been in a deep slumber. We're born into this world with its prescribed way of life, and gradually we terminate our ability to question this

accepted sequence of events, and accept what we see as the sum and fact of reality.

There are many degrees of influence around us, but the greatest form of influence and directive, is the paradigm we have built around ourselves.

The mind is not comfortable with uncertainty. So the moment we start thinking outside of the box, the mind fires off a million different reasons why we should not commit to stepping beyond our familiar and comfortable pattern of living.

The mind, when undisciplined, would rather have us stay within the confines of our dominant habit patterns and restrictions.

Personal freedom can only be found when our inward convictions are in direct correspondence with our outward conduct. We are here as human beings to reach a level of self-refinement by the harmonizing of our character with the will of Nature.

The good and life is endowed upon the one who is most at peace with life. It is essential for each of us that we understand the basic operations of our character. We must seek out the common processes that invigorate, and disintegrate our well-being.

Self-Discovery

The journey of self-discovery is essentially the unfoldment of the greatness we house inside us. It is not so much that we must become overly exuberant and too much for ourselves, it is simply unlocking the greatness that makes us wise, moderate and just.

All purpose in nature is constructive. The moment we fall into the depths of intemperance and unrestraint, we sever the golden-thread of destiny.

It is not impossible for the average person to align with their true calling. But until the individual has opened themselves to the possibility of a life's purpose, his life will

remain a perplexing flow of irreverence, and a confusing drift from life to death.

From morning to evening, we have the most incredible opportunities available to us; the chance to direct our powers toward something of value. If we have already found that golden thread in our lives, and we dedication our lives to follow that thread, then the choices we make shall further our personal evolution, as we are following a pattern of consequences provide by the deepest parts of our own nature.

Every aspect of nature follows its own golden thread: the bee, the bird, the flower, the wind, and the moon, and the sun— each is following an inherent and purposed impulse toward the fulfilment of its natural

destiny. Man is no different; he just has to revive this sense of destiny within himself.

If every human being followed that golden thread, the total collective pattern of humanity would align to a profound destiny that we cannot even begin fathom in our present predicament.

Question Everything

It is right, healthy, and necessary for an individual to question their own existence, to speculate as to the origin and destiny of his species. It is true, that many questions cannot be answered to the satisfaction of the mind, nor does questioning always lead to Truth, but it's not so much the *answering* that's of great importance, more-so the stimulation of thought, reason, and insight. Actually, there are no answers in the universe; there are only questions and insights.

A question, if it's a worthwhile one, should not lead to a sterile, factual encounter, but rather lead us to a greater degree of personal mentation, heightened questioning, and personal revelation. We

typically ask questions with the desire to get, in effect, a yes-or-no answer – we want the straight forward fact of the matter. But this line of thinking, this level of questioning, does not lead to knowledge, but leads to the accumulation of facts, a questioning that has its place, but as sole means of enquiry, does not allow space for true comprehension of any given matter.

That which is *truly* reasonable, that which holds an aura of justice around it, we must assume it to be true. Anything that bears this quality of reasonableness and can stand the test of time – must be regarded as true. On the contrary, that which is unjust, causing more error than success, and does not satisfy basic reason – cannot be regarded as Truth.

The circumference of man is the limits of his understanding. If we seek answers alone, straight forward facts without further inquiry, we are doing ourselves a huge disservice; which eventually leads to a lack of appreciation for the knowledge held. We must dig deeper than mere answers and facts, and cultivate the higher intellect, thinking things through, weighing our questions against our own reasoning, contemplating and self-enquiring, and when all that is ourselves fails to satisfy the question – then reach out; but do not depend upon doing so. The mind must be kept active in order to be strengthened; a passive mind is an unconscious mind.

If we wish to grow mentally, intellectual, and reach greater strength of mind, we must begin to cultivate thoughtfulness. It is

by thoughtfulness that a person may weigh a question against his present understandings, his reasoning capacities, and his own personal experiences. None of these aspects can be cultivated solely by seeking facts in one form or another. If we learn something, we must appropriate it to our own sense of reality, because all that we know about life, as a species, is tainted by man's imperfect nature to desperately reckon the bigger picture of life. We have made great leaps of progress as an intellectual being, and have used the power of mind to forward every conceivable aspect of our human lives. But in spite of all advancement, every person that has ever been, and will ever be still has their own unique perspective on what life really is.

Every human on the planet has a burning impulse within them that either moves them toward a certain perception of life, or forces them away from it, and toward different view-points and areas of exploration. There will never be a time in the story of life when all individual accept life as being A, or B, or even C. Life is far more diverse and subjective than we tend to accept.

Finding Yourself

We live in the age of complexity. It has become increasingly more difficult for the average person to find their way through the cloud of opinionism on how we should spend our energy resources, time, will power— the very currency of our lives.

The modern world has great potential and opportunity, but few ever find themselves without losing themselves in the process. Being the age of complexity, it is also the age of the lost.

There are many forces of influence around us away from ourselves: schools, mass media; news, politics, advertisements, etc. Our family and friends, tradition, cultural programming, and the habits, beliefs, and

self-talk we carry around with ourselves on a daily basis. That's a lot of force to work against! But it does not need to be a matter of resistance to change; simply a shift in priority.

So, how can we begin to find ourselves, even though everything around us is pressuring us to become something other than ourselves? Only the innermost part of our being has the key to our truest destiny; all else is but an invitation to step away from ourselves. We first need to learn the art of listening.

We need to listen for the authentic voice inside of us which resides behind the constant chatter and noise of the mind. Whether we need to meditate, take a nature walk, or sit quietly someone pleasant. We

can all connect with that inner knowing behind and beyond the chaos of the mind. Wait for the insight, and then follow it!

There's a time during our listening where we become receptive to whatever nudges we need at that time. If we are willing to be still, and surrender to the processes of listening, we will receive the inner directive on what we need to do next, whether that's a decision to make, or whether that's a complete change in the direction of our life.

That voice is there to guide us if we are willing to give it the time it needs to reach us. It may not be a crystal clear and lucid message (at first) but a subtle nudge that will bring us back to ourselves and re-align our purposes and priorities in life.

The more we listen and follow these nudges, the more vivid and potent the inner directive becomes. By cultivating this inner knowing, we allow our true destiny (which is stored up inside of us) to flower forth and bring our lives into harmony and balance with that destiny; the unfoldment of our truest self.

Begin to listen beyond the clutter of the mind. There you will find your truest destiny and directive for this life that is totally independent and free from all worldly pressure and imposition.

We must continuously shed who we were yesterday, and be reborn and renewed into greater levels of expression. When we find ourselves, we must work diligently on what we find.

Honesty

The first step toward self-discovery is honesty. It is impossible to take that first step if one foot is trapped in the past, and the other is trying to ground itself in a future we know nothing about. We cannot correct the unwanted effects of our lives if we're unwilling to fix ourselves in the present moment, and examine the roots of our situation with an honesty eye. The circumstances of our lives, whether positive or negative, are well rooted in causes which may remain in darkness unless brought into the light.

We must open wide the eyes of honesty; seeing ourselves as we really are— incomplete. We're born incomplete, we leave incomplete. For those brave enough

to peak behind the curtain of insecurity, behind the veil of denial— will find the treasures that we so desperately seek. What we need is not to be found in man's accomplishments. Nor can the spark of security be found in Science or Religion alone. The quest toward Truth, and the unfoldment of Virtue, is forever an inward journey. It always has been, and always will be.

No technology can replace the human struggle towards its inherent destiny.

Wisdom over Intellect

It does not matter what we use, the only thing that matters is what's being channelled through what we use. If we are a writer— we use language. Are we using language to channel love, or hate? If we use modern technology, are we using it to improve, or to breakdown? Most often we are unconsciously causing more harm than good. Everything has its potentials in both positive and negative application. Einstein was a genius. He revolutionized science. But he was also foolish enough to conceive, and make possible the use of the atomic bomb; which was used in an act of pure insanity.

We can see then, that Intelligence has its limits. The mind cannot love. It is wisdom

that recognizes the consequences of an action. Not just the immediate effects of an action, but the long-term repercussions. It is wisdom that brings us in to harmony with a greater sense of justice and righteousness.

Knowledge is relative.

Wisdom is timeless.

Serving the Greater Good

At the end of each lifetime, the only questions that matter are: “How did I treat my fellow brothers and sisters, and all other sentient life on Earth?”, “Did I leave the world a better place by my being here? Or did I sacrifice most of my time contributing to my own pleasure?”

We do not have to face death in order to ask these questions. They only surface around death because the ego is losing its power, and the barriers of pride fall away. We are each here to use our gifts and capacities for the unfoldment of the greater good. There can be no higher purpose to fulfil.

Gifts and Talents

An important question we can ask ourselves is: What are my natural gifts? We all have them. So many people are led away from their true greatness due to the demanding nature of our society. Typically, people would rather go along to get along, and make a mere living than spend the time necessary to uncover the true potentials that lie within them. Why? We are afraid.

We've been brought up in a world that so heavily stresses upon making a living, that we miss out on building a life. This pressure forces people to conform to a set-way of living and functioning in the world, thus our authenticity and innate potentials are compromised; lowering our infinite greatness to meet the common trend.

These are times of great unfoldment. People are beginning to wake up to their own uniqueness, taking hold of their own powers and capabilities. As a species, we are shifting direction toward a greater vision of existence.

Whatever your gifts may be - they are your voice. Your gifts are your contribution to the unfoldment of a new way of life. Nature gave each of us a chance to make it in this life, and to make a positive impact through the use of our gifts. We just need enough courage to dig deep into the roots of our being; wherein lies the hidden genius that is to be unfolded into the light of day.

We possess the power of creation. We each have the capacities and potentials to bring

into existence great works that can extend into the greater good. There are tremendous benefits that result from creativity. A person, who can write a story, a poem, a song, or paint a picture, is unknowingly releasing much built up pressure and tension which is gained through daily living.

The power of creativity is an important factor in healing our minds and emotions, and is thus well worth regular stimulation and cultivation.

Happiness

The pursuit of happiness requires one thing: we must first be unhappy. Happiness is not an effect; it's a cause—founded by the incentive to serve that which is greater than ourselves.

When we tune into our power to serve, happiness will flower. Living for the greater good is the key to happiness; all else brings but a fleeting glimpse into happiness.

Authenticity

We are either avoiding situations because they do not serve us, or we're avoiding or remaining in situations because we are too weak or afraid to grow into, or out of them. Our denial of individual experience and growth arises from blind spots in our psyche. Our expansion toward growth or contraction into safety is the constant polarity in our quest to figure out why we do what we do in relation to the happenings in life.

We so often run from situations and think, "Phew, that was a close call!" When in fact the majority of these experiences are self-generated and necessary for growth. It is in the participation of these events that contributes to the release of the deepest

aspects of ourselves. Retreat only provides the illusion of safety as we build up more inner-tension the further we deny ourselves of essential life experience that we know we should be facing head on.

The person that we are determines what we bring to the table in all areas of life, whether that's in our relationships, creativity, business, life-style, etc. Self-discovery is essential for the correct estimation of our true desires and needs that are screaming for release.

Only by knowing who we really are, and what we really want will we ever know what is right for us. We must forward ourselves into grow, and renounce all that is preventing us from doing so. We do not

need to seek approval from others in order to validate our actions.

Every choice we make is absolutely valid in the eyes of the universe; no matter how crazy others might find it. We were each born authentic, a unique expression of creation. Why then settle for the norm? Or what is considered fashionable?

Every individual is unique. Yet that individual spark is weakened due to the demanding nature of our society, in which everyone is coerced into a system that uses humans like batteries. Authenticity suffocates in such a system, as is evident to those who have spent most of their time entrenched in it.

You were born to express yourself in every way that's possible in being a human. If that were not the case, you would not have freewill. You would be no more than an automaton incapable of expression.

We must express our potential in all ways; a tree does not branch in one direction.

Our daily actions are but a fraction of what we're capable of. So much of our potential has been locked-down due to the fear of what others might think, and the expectations of society. Both of which are deceptive, and illusive. All power resides within the individual; nothing outside of them can interfere with their natural and inevitable destiny.

In reclaiming your power, you're bound to meet resistance. But let this be an indication that you're on the right path. Do not become discouraged!

So, in exercising your potential, you begin to feel freer, lighter, and less rigid, not having to hide behind masks, or feeling the need to sugar coat everything or justify your existence. You can express your will in whichever direction you know to be true to you, and harmless to those around you. This is what you were born for, to be without fear or compromise in the fulfilment of destiny.

Personal Transformation

There are two ways we can facilitate personal change: there's the active rebellion against set patterns, beliefs, and habits; such as routines, belief systems that may have exhausted their purpose, mental attitudes, unconscious reactions to various circumstances, etc. There's a lot of work that goes into this department for sure.

The next thing we can do (before we implement the change) is to idealize a better way of life, a greater vision for ourselves that is built upon integrity, constructive values, positivity and personal power; especially if we feel powerless in our current predicament.

When this ideal self is tested, consciously guided and cultivated, it will gradually leave the old self obsolete.

Self-Control

He who cannot control his desires cannot in fact control anything. The improvement of our lives first requires us to accept self-discipline, without which, we are but machines reacting to every impulse and desire that passes through us.

Self-mastery is the gradual process of harmonizing the lower and higher natures within ourselves; the result being a total inward sufficiency that is incorruptible by any outside force or internal weakness.

How to Develop Will Power

Will power is essential in the cultivation of a virtuous life. The power to construct positive habits, behaviours and attitudes is a pre-requisite for an enlightened life. Will power is not only essential in building virtue, but is equally important in the resistance and elimination of unfavourable patterns of living.

Anything that is fixed must be overcome with the power of will, and all that we wish to see in our lives must be established by the will. Any fixed habit we wish to erase from our life will cause a degree of inward conflict to remove. Likewise, any desired habit we wish to see in our lives must be enforced with a certain intensity otherwise it will not become a part of us.

Will power is weakened when we unconsciously react to every impulse that arises in us. When we crave something, we seek to gratify that craving. Whether that's junk food, anger in a given moment, impatience, lust, all these things are impulses that for most of us are taken to be who we are; when in reality they're a paradigm of repeated reactions.

Will power is cultivated when these feelings arise, but we consciously choose to do something else, we choose to do something contrary, something more conscious and constructive. When we begin to live more consciously, questioning our reactions to life which are so often blind, we begin to develop a more enlightened

discretion; redirecting our lower impulses toward their higher potential.

Will power is an active resistance against what we don't want, and the active enforcement of what we do want, and depending on how much will power we have to resist old ways, and to implement the new, determines how far we can go into the greatest potential of ourselves, which is impossible without will power.

We need to see ourselves as more than our impulses, our habits, and our limiting beliefs. All of these things have become a part of us, and depending on our will power and our desire to transform, determines whether they stay fixed, or are removed by conscious effort.

Will power is strengthened by inward struggle. It is not easy to stop a long held habit or general life-style. But without the struggle we will not grow into our greatest.

We give away our will power very time we partake in negative conversation and commotion. Most of the people, who seek this kind of emotional atmosphere, are not solution orientated. They're happy to point the finger at who's to blame, but they have no interest outside their own sphere of influence to offer any constructive means of correction.

The greatest investment we can make as individuals is to cultivate a positive attitude. Positivity builds, negativity breaks down. If we nourish our mind, it will remain useful, if we abuse it and feed it all kinds of junk,

then it will lead us to our own destruction. We are as free as our thoughts permit us to be. It's that simple.

We need to have a clear vision of what it is we want to experience in this life. If our mental barriers are not strong enough, and we allow negativity to creep into our greater vision, it will never become anything more than a vision.

In realizing the power of the mind, and the importance of what I allow into it, I have been able to pull back from the miasma, and identify a greater truth that is to be found outside of the consensus reality. The further from negativity you get, the more healthy and beautiful your mind and emotions become.

An effective exercise to begin cultivating will power is to set mundane tasks around the clock with the intention of fulfilling every one of them on time. An example would be: at 10.00 I will turn the light on, and then turn it off again. At 11.00pm I will pour a glass of water, and then empty it. These tasks are deceptively simple, but are profound on how the mind will take action when we set the intention to do something.

It's not the size of the task that's important here-- it's the commitment to do so without fail that strengthens our will power. In order for this exercise to work, we must be totally committed to fulfilling these simple tasks without delay. That is the challenge.

The real challenge is our commitment. Begin with three tasks of your choosing, and disperse throughout out the day.

When the time approaches to do these tasks, we must be ready to exert the will. Set the exact time for each, and no matter where you are, how you are feeling--fulfil them without escape.

Your will power becomes enlightened, and the ability to fulfil the necessary in daily life closely follows.

Freedom

Freedom can never be found outside of ourselves. Our outer circumstances are a direct reflection of the thoughts that put us there. Freedom to do what we want is not true freedom; we quickly become slaves to circumstance. If it's raining outside, but we really want to bathe in the sun, are we free to do so? You could travel afar to some other place to bathe, but that's not freedom; that's compromise.

We see then that freedom can only come from within. We must discipline the internal environment so that happiness is no longer rooted in the external, but is a state of being that comes from within.

All the power in the universe lies in the individual. The collective is a mass of individuals. It is only when each cell of the whole, each piece of the puzzle adjusts itself accordingly, that the overall image can change. As a species, we are at the crossroads. It is hard to discern what the puzzle picture is right now, but the fragments are hinting toward an expansion of human potential; even though it will seem to get more and more ambiguous and chaotic as we approach the zenith, the apex, the tipping point of human awakening.

I must stress, that this progression is not of technological significance. It is a radical shift in consciousness--not technology. The technology is already here, so is the knowledge, always in greater and greater abundance. If these aspects of the human

dynamic could change the world, they would have already done so. The change that I'm speaking of is in fact, a spiritual renaissance. This unfoldment is occurring, and has been occurring for some time now, and will continue to unfold until we reach out grow the old world, a ripening process that will occur from the inside out, not through external pressure and force, but by spiritual necessity. Whether it be the foods that we eat, the books that we read, the thoughts that we think--the individual is reclaiming their personal power and determining the sum and substance of their reality.

No longer is it necessary for the individual to conform to institutionalized values, ideals, and dogmas, nor to follow prescribed pathways.

Within personal transformation, we must redefine freedom. Our general sense of freedom is artificial, and limited to how the individual believes the world should be. A freedom based upon the conformity to an ideal, is not freedom. It is essential for the individual to cultivate an orientation on life that is truly valuable to them, and live accordingly without imposing such a perspective upon others.

Freedom to do what we want is not freedom, as this relies on outward circumstances. If the circumstance is not desired, are we free? If we must go out of our way to establish the circumstance, this is compromise, not freedom.

Freedom is wildness. Civilisation is domestication. You cannot attain freedom solely within the limited parameters of self-belief, environment and desires. What we believe to be freedom is most usually disorder, a freedom devoid of intelligent conduct; a freedom that leads to darkness, not light.

We must therefore define what it is to be free.

Freedom is an inward experience of virtue of vice; of spirit over matter. Until we reach consistency between inward and outward action, we may never know freedom.

When we live from our inner truth, and we truly love what we do, letting our life's purpose flood our entire being--there's no

space left in us for anxieties, fears, and insecurities to take refuge.

Our earthly condition is free from the grip of negativity so long as we realize that what we are doing is within our destiny, and that we are unfolding according to a higher purpose. There can be no higher purpose in life than to shine our truth, and serve the greater good.

Personal Aim in Life

The greatest question one can ask on their life's journey is "What is my life's purpose?" It's a great question. Nature does not bring forth anything that is purposeless. Nature did not intend for some of us to live and some of us to suffer. Everything has meaning, everything has purpose. Our challenge in this day and age, is to recognize that purpose, and respond to our calling.

The balance of nature is so profound, that without purpose, it would not thrive. We as a species often forget that we too are a part of this equilibrium. The earth's diverse life-supporting abundance allows all life on the planet to flourish and fulfil its purpose with tremendous grace. And we have all things

under the sun to facilitate our growth and development.

Most people nowadays never find their true purpose or experience what they're really capable of. Thus they can end up living a very rigid and restricted life, with no hope of self-expansion. Many species have their purpose hard-wired into them, thus they fulfil their intentions without doubt, second-thought or confusion. We have become distracted as a species, diverted away from the natural course of things. We've been convinced to live a life based on artificial significance, a life that can halt our progression as individuals if we let it.

Our individual purpose is not predetermined or written in stone. In this modern age, our purpose is something that we can determine as individuals, and

choose to follow and fulfil. (Although I would suggest this does not count for the species as a whole, there are much greater intentions for man in the higher scheme of things.)

Many dreams and desires gets pushed aside time and time again as we progress in life, by following the expectations of society, listening to naysayers, developing destructive habit patterns, and conforming to mundane ways of living. One can start to forget who they are, and what their intentions in life where in the first place. We are not encouraged by society to fulfil our utmost desires and dreams – rather we are coerced into a line of work that supports the system and its functionality, yet fails to serve the fulfilment of the ones assuming those roles.

We were not designed to settle down or arrive at some satisfactory destination. We must be happy with what we have, but never satisfied for where we are. We are dynamic beings; we are expanding or contracting– evolving or decaying. Growth and expansion should always be strived for – not economic advancement. If we are operating under this particular paradigm, we can live our entire lives doing the same thing day in day out with no hope of any real progress, thus we settle for far less than what we're capable of.

One's purpose does not have to be some grand venture such as climbing the highest mountain, or diving the deepest waters, or saving the planet. Our purpose is seeded through experiences and associations that are subconsciously weaved together and

eventually manifest to us as our purpose in life. These associations are made when we are children, but are slowly broken down through the years of schooling, which rewires our brains and makes it very difficult to near impossible to re-build the neuro-nets we original made that housed our purpose in life. Put simply, purpose is a meaningful pursuit that brings continuous satisfaction – and does not hinder one's progression in life, in fact it elevates us.

Imagine a world in which every being on the planet dug into the deepest parts of their heart's desires, and lived according to those desires. We would live in a very different world – the transformation would be overwhelming.

The question then arises, “Why are so many people living unfulfilled lives?” It’s because we’ve become too preoccupied with artificial responsibilities, which have delayed the progression of the species. We have become domesticated and enclosed within a system that demands that the people create a living rather than life.

The logic of becoming someone based on economic fulfilment is a fraud, and an insult to that which created us. Yes we need sufficient funds if we are to thrive in the modern world, but money should always be a means to an end, not the end itself. If one is to believe that there is a divine plan for all things, then common sense would tell us that it’s nothing to do with economics, politics, religion, sciences, or any other man-made institution. We need to wake up

and tell apart that which is reality, and that which is falsity.

Our individual purpose is usually right in front of us – we just need the awareness to hear our calling. For some it may be playing an instrument, writing, acting, speaking, service, – anything that brings us joy and meaning. It's that thing we fall asleep thinking about, and stare out the window day-dreaming about.

A simple and effective exercise we can do to help explore who we are and what our own purpose may be, involves a piece of paper, a pen, and a mind.

1. Take a piece of paper, and write your name in the centre, and circle it.

2. Draw various lines stemming out from the circle and with each stem write something at the end of it that is important to you. Some examples would be; "drawing", "travelling", "family", "communication", "writing", "cycling", etc. In doing this, you're putting the important components of your life into perspective.

3. Keep creating new stems for the meaningful ingredients of your life. This way you'll see exactly what you consider important, and the parts of your life that you believe to be unimportant, which you will not need write down. Continue doing this exercise until everything you consider significant is down on paper.

4. The most important part now is to examine what you've written down! This

should lead to personal insight, and the realization of your potential purpose, and may provide a clear perspective on one's life.

This exercise is a template, or a model to work with. The rest is down to you. You should return to this exercise now and then, to help re-align yourself, and bring back any lost perspective. It's a great way of bringing balance and integrity back into one's life when you can see in black and white the things that are most important to you.

Self-reflection

The source of all wisdom, understanding, compassion, and happiness – is within us right now. It always has been, and always will be. Whatever we're seeking outside of ourselves can only be recognized because it is inherent within us, a reflection of what's already known. That's how you are able to get it when something dawns on you – it is the innate wisdom surfacing from the deep reservoirs that resides within each and every one of us. Through practice, one can tap into this sea of knowledge with greater precision and degree.

All understanding is self-derived, no one can give you understanding – it must be brought forth. When you're reading a book, in a way, you're reading yourself – because

it's you that give meaning to the words on the page. The most profound truth may be spoken to you, but unless you've become acquainted with that inner-wisdom, and have cultivated a foundation for understanding, you will have no ground in which to interpret wisdom when it is apparent; we see but a starless sky.

Our daily lives are constantly presenting us with opportunities to transmute ignorance into wisdom, to enhance our connection with this deep part of ourselves. There are always lessons to be learnt and higher levels of insight to be reached. No happening in life is devoid of potential wisdom. So how can we get to know this deep part of ourselves? And why are we not entirely in touch with it?

Well, the truth is, we are in touch with it – every single moment. We have built a vast reference system in our minds of how to relate to the world, and due to the demanding nature of our society, this reference manual has become pre-occupied with various themes of daily living, and responsibilities.

We therefore perceive the world through the lens of whatever we've spent most of our life doing. For most, this reference system does not contain a roadmap for acute observation, self-reflection, nor contemplation for the happenings of life; rather we have trained ourselves to keep moving with this thing we call progress, rarely letting ourselves take a moment to sit back and take in the riddle of life.

The subtle cues of the world are overlooked and even invisible to us, as our direct conscious state of mind is always laser-focused on getting the next thing done.

Self-reflection is the greatest means to extract wisdom from our lives. The ability to revise our daily experience is a valuable habit to strengthen, as it will endow great perspective and clarity on us and the happenings in our lives.

Spend at least 10 minutes each night, before going to sleep, in a meditative state (sitting, or lying) to visually skim-review the day from the moment you got up, to the moment you just got into bed, honing-in on the highlights of the day, really detailing as much as you can of that day;

visuals, sounds, people, feelings, conversations, places, etc. You'll find that as you do this, that you'll not only remember the things that you forgot about completely, but also many things you never even noticed, or paid little attention to when you were in that moment. And will often enlighten you to how much goes unnoticed, yet is still retained in your mind.

In these visualizations, we should search for those things in the day that we feel went well, and have allowed us express the goodness within us – and strive to carry this goodness into the next day. We must also seek out those key points of the day that did not go so well, and may have even taken us out of our inherent good – these things may have manifested as anger, disappointment, jealousy, impatience,

unfairness, bitterness, unworthiness, etc. These are not failures, they are by valuable learning experiences, and should be treated as such, we can correct them in our review, transmuting them into the greater good by cultivating their opposing positives, and bring these lessons with us into the next day.

This simple, yet almost unknown method of self-correction is profound if used every night as a fundamental part of our lives. It will train us to bring our highest values and ideals to each and every situation that arises in life. I personally cannot sleep unless I've gone through the review and course-corrected myself in relation to the day I've just experienced. You become very conscious of who you are, and the world around you when you start this as regular

exercise, and should become a life-long practice.

Just about everyone gets into bed at night, and falls straight into oblivion, thus leaving behind priceless lessons and potential wisdom that could have been gained from this valuable practice. This recalling of the day has incredible potential for memory enhancement, and overall recall.

You can even enhance dreaming, and potentiate vivid and lucid dreams by performing reality checks throughout the day to such as "am I dreaming?" "Are these my hands?" "Where am I right now?" etc. These reality checks will re-surface during our visual review at night, which will massively enhance our ability to awaken in our dreams if we are setting these checks every other hour in the day. We have all the

powers and potentials already within us to create and experience the life we want, and to become the person we know we can be.

So much of our time is spent getting by, that we'd rather escape reality than face it, because the stress of life becomes too much to bear. In committing to self-reflection you will come in direct contact with the Truth; which will require courage, especially for those who are used to masking what's really going on inside of them.

Self-reflection brings us closer to the most intimate parts of ourselves, which most are unwilling to face. In facing who we really are, and how we relate to the world and the happenings of life, we naturally begin to ripen into virtuous people.

Arrows into Roses

All of the apparent errors we experience on this earth are always pushing us toward the greater good, and never toward inevitable suffering. It is our ignorance of this principle that brings suffering, and causes us to believe that the universe is out to get us, when in fact it's not out to do anything to us, it is always going to reflect back to us what we are putting out. We must become the architects of destiny, rather than the victims of Fate.

A Greater Vision for Life

Integrity is the beginning of fulfilment. When we harmonize our inward conviction with our outward conduct, the path of self-discovery remains a constant joy. When we deny our true feelings, and ignore our personal inclinations, we begin to feel trapped and ensnared. Unhappiness is most often caused by the acceptance of a lesser way of life, when really; we know that we're fully capable of achieving much more.

Therefore, in order for us to achieve a greater sense of fulfilment in our lives, we need to define what it is that we really want. Without that guiding star--all roads lead to nowhere.

Once we have created a vision of our ideal way of life, we must find constructive ways to forward ourselves in the direction of that vision, because what we envision has no substance in and of itself. It must serve as a map that can lead us towards materializing the physical equivalent of our vision.

A Call to Action

I feel that it is vitally important in our day and age to develop the mind as well as the muscle of intuition and perception so that we are well-equipped with the tools and capacities to see ourselves through the many waves of illusion and distraction that beset our world. It is equally necessary to cultivate an orientation on life that makes it worth living. Figuring out what really

moves the inner-pulse of the soul, bringing forth and ripening those aspects of our lives that really make us feel alive and vital.

It is this quest of self-discovery that will bring you closer to your natural destiny, and without needing to convince anyone else that you've found the way, those around you will begin tuning into the energy you exude, and like a candle flame, you effortlessly begin to lend that spark to others who may be seeking what you have found the road to reality.

Final note

Nothing outside of us has the answer to our lives. We may spend years searching for the answers outside of ourselves, and never come to anything truly life transforming.

We must be willing to turn the telescope around, and point it toward ourselves.

Every living thing has a library of wisdom inside its own nature which would take an eternity to explore.

Step by step we come to know and live this wisdom. The book of life is there waiting for us to open its pages.

Charlie Bradford

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