

# Cultivate Life!

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# ***Cultivate Life! magazine***

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**Editors: Greg Willson and Peter Shepherd**

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Never forget that my work is where I am, and with what I am doing... and not with where anyone else is, or with what he or she is not doing.

—*Guy Finley*

## Writing with the Muse by Joanne DiMaggio

A study of soul writing is a study in the creative process. All people are creative in one form or another. The question is—do some creative endeavors, by their very nature, dip into a deeper well than others? This question is especially poignant when applied to the creative arts. Many artists, composers, actors, and writers have learned—whether by accident or intentionally—to access an unseen dimension that becomes an endless fountain from which their creative genius flows. They reach that invisible world by entering an altered state of consciousness brought about by trance, meditation, or dreams. While in this altered state, the quality of their work changes to something on a much higher level; different in style, tone, and composition from what they produce in a conscious state.

Artists, writers, and composers who try to capture their process in words struggle with the same questions—what is inspiration, and where does it come from? How am I able to break through the mundane aspects of everyday life, to leave the confines of my physical environment and sail unencumbered to the unlimited heights wherein the Creative Forces await?

Read through the autobiographies and letters of famous artists, writers, and composers, and you will see how each describes a moment of inspiration when they gained an insight that was different from anything they received in a waking state. When in this reverie, elevated to the unconscious storehouse of universal wisdom, they produced extraordinary work.

When describing the writing process, English poet Percy Shelley acknowledged that this heightened level of inspiration comes from beyond the writer's conscious state. But writers aren't the only ones to experience this cosmic high. Great scientists, artists, and inventors all appeal to a Higher Source, a divinity, or some kind of internal "Daemon."

Over many centuries, the role of the Daemon—best described as an attendant or indwelling spirit—in the guided writing process has been cited by countless writers and provides an insight into who or what they considered to be the source of their creative genius.

Rudyard Kipling accessed his inner helper by a form of meditation that he described as "drifting." The first time he experienced this reverie, he felt as though his Daemon came to him, filling him with ideas and instructions to take down the inner dictation he was receiving. Kipling obeyed and eventually learned to recognize when his Muse was near, crediting his invisible Source for the content of the Jungle books, *Kim*, and both Puck books.

Madame Blavatsky, a Russian mystic who founded the Theosophical Society in 1875, claimed that the great Masters, who had knowledge of man's spiritual history, initiated her into the secrets of esoteric mysticism and helped her write the three-volume, 1,300-page *Secret Doctrine*. I found this especially interesting and somewhat ironic. In the late 1980s

and early 1990s, I was a member of a Theosophical study group in Wheaton, Illinois. We met on a regular basis and each member was encouraged to suggest a topic for further exploration by the group. Knowing Madame Blavatsky had used inspired writing to create *The Secret Doctrine*, I suggested we discuss the process of guided writing. My idea was immediately turned down. Although the description of the writing process for *The Secret Doctrine* is classic inspirational writing, it was a discouraged topic of discussion by the organization founded on that book's very principles.

In his book, *Channeling the Higher Self*, Henry Reed, PhD, relays the story of how author Richard Bach came up with the idea to write *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. As the story goes, Bach was walking one day when he heard an inner voice repeat "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" over and over. "He went home and began writing immediately, furiously trying to keep up with the flow of words that were coming spontaneously to mind," wrote Reed. "In one sitting he provided the world with one of its most uplifting stories."

One of the most famous uses of "automatic" writing was by a St. Louis housewife named Pearl Curran. In the early 1900s, she worked with a spirit named Patience Worth, who had been a seventeenth-century English woman. Those messages turned into several thousand poems, a play, several novels, and many short pieces. Authorities have studied the writing of the alleged Patience Worth, and many have concluded that based on Curran's education and talent, she could not have written them on her own, especially since she used words that had disappeared from the English language long before her time.

William Stainton Moses was a well educated, ordained minister in the Church of England during the mid-nineteenth century. He used guided writing to produce his books *Spirit Teachings and Spirit Identity*, saying he believed that the source of those writings came from higher spirits and were intended for good.

In writing his poem *Hyperion*, John Keats said that the description of Apollo was something that was given to him, as if another person wrote it.

In describing the writing of his novel *Werther*, German poet Goethe said he wrote it unconsciously, as if he were asleep, and added that he was amazed at the process.

English poet William Blake, in talking about his work *Milton*, said it felt as though he had written the poem from dictation without premeditation.

And then there's the remarkable story of Dr. Helen Schucman, who heard her inner voice say, "This is a course in miracles. Please take notes." In describing the process of writing *A Course in Miracles*, Schucman said that while she had grown accustomed to the unexpected, she still was very surprised when she wrote: "This is a Course in Miracles." This was her introduction to the "Voice," and, like Blake, Schucman described the process as a kind of rapid inner dictation.

Of all the famous writers who used a form of soul writing, the one I most identify with is Ruth Montgomery. A nationally syndicated news columnist, Montgomery admitted that many of her metaphysical books were created through what she called “automatic” writing. Each morning, she would sit at her desk in front of her typewriter, say a prayer, close her eyes, relax her fingers, and then her guide Lily and twelve others came through.

Arthur Ford, who by the mid 1950s was America’s best-known living medium, introduced Montgomery to guided writing. She attended a talk he gave and afterward introduced herself as a reporter seeking an interview about the Spiritual Frontier Fellowship, a new organization Ford was involved in that had been founded by educators, professionals, and clergy to investigate psychic phenomena.

After the interview, Ford offered to do a reading for Montgomery. He went into trance and his spirit control, Fletcher, came through. After Montgomery researched and then confirmed the information Fletcher provided, she wrote a two-page Sunday spread on Ford and his uncanny ability. Thereafter, the two became friends.

Several years passed before Ford suggested to Montgomery that she try automatic writing. He instructed her to attempt it for no more than fifteen minutes at a time and always at the same hour each day—the latter advice being similar to what Edgar Cayce had told writers nearly thirty years earlier.

Following Ford’s suggestion, Montgomery sat at her desk at 8:30 every morning, said a prayer for protection, and entered a ten- to fifteen-minute meditation. During her trance, she picked up a pencil and held it over a piece of paper. For days nothing happened. Then one morning the pencil began to move in circles and figure eights. Several days later she began getting messages.

The turning point came when she found herself drawing a lily. The message she received informed her that this symbol was the identification of the source of her writing. From that day forward, Montgomery was greeted daily by the symbol of the flower and the word Lily. Afterward would flow what she called, “The most beautiful philosophy that I had ever read.” Montgomery said she never had such inspiring thoughts.

Montgomery’s initial writing sessions were done by hand, but when the sessions grew in strength and speed, her writing became illegible. She was instructed to “go to your typewriter,” and thereafter got typewritten messages with little punctuation or capitalization. These sessions produced philosophical discourses that filled two to three pages each day.

Lily and the “Guides”—as Montgomery liked to call them—suggested she put their messages in books. At first she refused because she had too much going on in her life. An active member of the White House press corps, she faced a demanding schedule of writing columns, attending dinner parties, and a hectic traveling schedule that at that time included covering the 1960 Kennedy/Nixon presidential campaign.

When her frenzied lifestyle landed her in the hospital, she experienced the power of prayer. This gave her the desire to write a book but one totally unrelated to her experiences. The book was not successful and her Guides quickly pointed out that this wasn't the type of book they had in mind. They gently suggested she not get involved with projects that wasted her time, but instead put her talents into producing material that would help others. Lily told Montgomery that she had no higher mission than to pass on to others the truths she was learning from the writing she had been receiving. And the rest, as they say, is history.

There is much to be said about writing in a dream state. That is, after all, a time when the unconscious mind is in control and can provide us with information that is not filtered by the more controlling waking consciousness. There certainly are a number of compositions that emanate from dreams to uphold that supposition. Robert Louis Stevenson, for instance, recorded his dreams and used them as the basis of his stories. He called his dream helpers his "brownies" and admitted to relying on them for help in the writing process.

With so many testimonials bearing witness to the existence of an unseen Source serving as a writer's Muse, it is easy to understand why, through the centuries, civilization has accepted inspired writings as sacred messages. Spiritually illuminated works, such as the Bible, are not written by any one person, but are said to come *through* that person. The writer, therefore, becomes the vessel through which Spirit manifests its message. Certainly no one can argue the point that they contain wisdom far beyond the conscious awareness of those who put the words on paper.

These sacred writings—all written in an altered state of consciousness—have changed the course of history, yet today, as in past centuries, creative work accomplished by means of attuning to a higher power still is met with skepticism and, in some cases, scorn. Those who readily admit to employing this process are often labeled schizophrenic or mentally unstable. Nonetheless, messages obtained through the writer's profound connection to a Higher Source have transformed millions of lives. Each writer, understanding the process and sensing the connectedness to the All That Is, recognizes that his or her role is that of a messenger, conveying profound Truths in a way that can be digested by readers at all levels of awareness.

There is always some element of fear and stigma attached to writings that don't quite fit in society's conventional box. Nonetheless, throughout history, writers continually aspire to reach into that invisible realm and use their craft to attune to the Divine. Every writer yearns to form a sacred partnership with his or her Muse with the hope that it will produce powerful messages of transformation to benefit all mankind.

Frank DeMarco is one such writer. The co-founder of Hampton Roads Publishing Company and its chief editor for sixteen years, DeMarco helped to select and shape hundreds of books by authors known and unknown and soon-to-become known, including such luminaries as Richard Bach, Joseph McMoneagle, and Robert Bruce.

DeMarco is the author of two novels and three books of nonfiction, with more of each on the way. One of his books, *Chasing Smallwood*, is a record of conversations with a nineteenth-century American who provides a fascinating glimpse of life in the West and during the Civil War.

DeMarco consciously began learning to communicate with the other side in 1989. By then he had been keeping a journal for twenty-three years, and writing in this manner had become a comfortable habit. First he experimented with a form of automatic writing and then moved on to confident written dialogue.

“For the longest time, I would try to do automatic writing, and I would either get gibberish or I would get nothing,” he told me. “I couldn’t figure out how to put myself in a trance. I thought I was just a failure, but over time I evolved a method.”

DeMarco credits The Monroe Institute (TMI) in Faber, Virginia, for deepening his connection to the other side. Founded by the late Robert Monroe, noted pioneer in the investigation of human consciousness and inventor of Hemi-Sync, TMI provides experiential six-day residential programs. In late 1992, DeMarco participated in TMI’s Gateway Voyage program, which showed him how to get in closer touch with what he now calls “The Guys Upstairs.” At this point, he was writing down the messages. Then early in 1993, at another TMI program, Guidelines, he first allowed others to come through in speech. This was followed by years of answering the questions posed by others while he held himself in an altered state.

“After the Guidelines program, it was a little of each—writing and speaking,” he explained. “When I work with someone else, it is always oral. Working by myself, it is always written.”

Even though he has a special relationship with The Guys Upstairs, DeMarco plays down the idea that individuals need to know the identity of their Source.

“It doesn’t matter who’s on the other end of the line, to a degree, because ultimately you’re going to have information coming to you. You then have to judge whether it’s valid or not; whether it resonates or not. What are you going to do? Are you going to get an affidavit saying what or who this really was?”

DeMarco’s relationship with Spirit has evolved to the point where he sometimes does not know whether it’s “himself” or “them” talking, but like knowing the identity behind the information, he doesn’t think it makes much difference. “Half the time when I’m talking, I think it’s them. They’re sort of nudging me. When you say something that has a huge impact on somebody else and it just casually comes out of you, you’re being used—but in a good way.”

Reading *Chasing Smallwood*, you cannot help but wonder if Joseph Smallwood is actually a past-life aspect of Frank, which would mean that in essence, he was talking to himself. But DeMarco prefers not to discuss abstract questions like that.

“I wouldn’t bother to describe the theory; I’d describe the process, because the theory could be all wrong. And even if the theory is right, it’s not going to help you. The process was that I just sat down with my journal in the morning, and there he was.”

DeMarco says he does not believe that he does automatic writing. In reviewing his technique, what he experiences certainly points in the direction of inspirational writing, especially since his handwriting does not change—one of the clear indications of inspired writing.

“The handwriting is no better than mine,” he chuckled. “I have never seen a difference. When I tried it in 1989, I thought it would be different, and I actually tried to make it different, and I couldn’t.”

In fact, when writing with The Guys Upstairs, not only is DeMarco’s handwriting the same, but so is the phrasing. “They’ll use my way of saying things. I sometimes know what’s coming in, and I’ll just write it as I know it. Sometimes they stop, and I can feel them searching for a way to say something. I’ll suggest a word, and they’ll quarrel with it.”

An example of this happened during his communication with Joseph. DeMarco used the word “passport” and Joseph told him that the word was wrong. “It only occurred to me later that he had never heard of passports in the 1800s,” said DeMarco. “He wanted to use the word ‘warrant,’ but I mildly quarreled with him over that because I did not know why I would use that particular word. Of course, the word ‘warrant’ doesn’t mean the same thing to us as it does to someone in that time period.”

If he were to describe his process to someone who had never done inspired writing before, DeMarco would say it’s akin to writing a letter. You start the letter, and the rest of the words come as you keep writing.

“If I were to ask you: ‘How did you do that?’ you’d look at it closely, and you’d say you really don’t know,” he explained. “You have the intent to communicate. You know how you want to start and the words appear. Nonwriters find it hard to believe that what writers really do is make themselves accessible to ‘it’ and then wait to see what comes. A nonwriter thinks you must have known what you were going to write. What they don’t realize is that they themselves don’t know ahead of time what they’re going to write. I can’t say that I usually hear the words in my head, although that happens occasionally. The vast majority is just a knowing.”

While famous writers, artists, and composers may not know exactly how their inspiration comes to them, each of them recognizes, in their own way, their role as the instrument through which this divinely inspired creativity flows. ###

The above is from Joanne DiMaggio's new book, *Soul Writing, Conversing with Your Higher Self*, published by Olde Souls Press.

## **Soul Writing: Conversing With Your Higher Self**

**By Joanne DiMaggio**

When faced with life's big questions, we often find ourselves wishing for a guidebook, a manual to help us through the important decisions. But as Joanne DiMaggio so clearly points out, we do have access to all the answers we need. The process of connecting to the sacred wisdom within us that part of us that has our answers is always available through a technique called inspirational writing, or soul writing. Joanne DiMaggio is an inspired teacher, drawing upon her own experiences and her knowledge of the Edgar Cayce readings to inform and support the quest for self-discovery. With clear instructions on the soul writing process, examples of others' experiences, and information on how to expand this process into other areas of your life, *Soul Writing* is the ultimate guidebook to access that deep knowing each of us holds within. At some point in time, we are all looking for answers. *Soul Writing* shows you that the answers are there just waiting for you to slow down, open your heart, and ask!

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### **About the Author**

Born and raised in Chicago, Illinois, Joanne DiMaggio has been actively involved with Edgar Cayce's Association for Research and Enlightenment (A.R.E.) since 1987. In 1990, she became one of the founding members of the A.R.E. Heartland Region. She moved to Charlottesville, Virginia in 1995 and became Coordinator for the A.R.E. Charlottesville area in 2008. Joanne earned her Masters in Transpersonal Studies degree through Atlantic University in Virginia Beach, Virginia in May 2010. Her culminating project (thesis) was on inspirational writing and served as the basis of her book, *Soul Writing: Conversing With Your Higher Self*. She also earned her Spiritual Mentor certification through Atlantic University. Joanne has given talks on the subject of inspirational writing to groups across the country. She has mentored a month-long online course on inspirational writing for A.R.E. and was a guest on *Reflections the Wisdom of Edgar Cayce*, an Internet radio program. In September 2010, she formed the first Atlantic University Alumni Association for which she was given the charter and named president in November 2010. In April 2011 she was honored at the 2011 Distance Education Training Council's annual conference as Atlantic University's Outstanding Graduate of the year. Joanne has been professionally pursuing past-life research and therapy for over 20 years. In October 1991 she founded PLEXUS (Past Life Exploration, Understanding and Sharing) in Naperville, IL and brought that organization to Charlottesville under the name Athanasy in 1995. She is a member of the International Association for Regression Research and Therapies, the National Association of Transpersonal Hypnotherapists and a graduate of the Eastern Institute of Hypnotherapy. Using inspirational writing, Joanne produced a small line of greeting cards called Spirit Song. The International Greeting Card Association cited one of those cards, *What is Human is Immortal*, for its creative excellence, choosing it as one of six worldwide finalists in the Sympathy category for its Annual LOUIE Awards. Her first book, *Charlottesville: A Contemporary Portrait* was published in March 2002.

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## One Journey to the Divine by Guy Finley

It's a familiar analogy, but quite accurate, to talk about our relationship with the sacred in the same way we describe a beautiful gemstone. There are many facets to a gem, and depending upon the angle from which we view it, we see light reflected and refracted differently. Several people looking from different angles may report seeing something different, and yet they are all describing the same gem. In the same way, there are many facets to the sacred, and we all see it differently depending upon the "angle" of our culture and experience. And yet there is but one sacred.

There is an old saying that actually comes prior to Walt Whitman (who is often credited with saying it) that "the central urge of every atom is to return to its source." When you look at the gamut of religions – all of which describe their own versions of the many-faceted gem – the one truth that runs through every one of them is that each of us is called to discover our true essence – our connection with the Divine.

That discovery is the whole of the spiritual journey, no matter what the religious path or discipline may be. And the beauty that is inherent in all of these individual religions is that they each provide an opportunity for individuals to discover the truth of themselves through their particular tradition.

It's essential for us to realize that in spite of all the differences that seem to exist between us as individuals – color, race, creed, religious background – we all have a need within us that almost never leaves us alone – an almost incessant sense that something vital is missing from our life.

According to each different culture and tradition, that which is vital is named differently. Individuals pursue what has been named, hoping that somehow it will put an end to the sense that something is missing.

But when people get caught up in the particulars of their own religion, they often lose sight of the fact that the vital thing that seems to be missing is already within them, it has always been within them, and *the same vital element that is within them lives within every human being on this planet.*

To find it in myself is to see it in everyone else. And if I can see it in myself and in everyone else, I can't be in conflict with others anymore. I can't judge them. It's impossible not to be compassionate if I see that I am everyone, and that every one of us is born with the same central need and the longing to fulfill it.

Now, more than ever, it is critical that individuals come to realize this common bond between us. There has probably never been as much conflict in our world, as much individual suffering, and as much global potential for a nightmarish situation, including

what is happening to our environment, regardless of its cause. When we look at the planet at this moment, we're looking at what has come from all that we've known, and known to do, from our understanding.

If I can see for a fact that the world that I am in today is not a better place than the one I came into, then inherent in seeing the world as it is, and recognizing that *I am the world that I see*, comes the understanding that the world cannot possibly change until something in me changes – until I begin seeing in a new way.

And this is where we come back to the unifying principle across religions. All true spiritual teachings help individuals see the truth of themselves as they are. When we see the truth, in the very seeing of it an action is mandated. We must stop blaming others and start working to change ourselves so that we can experience personal fulfillment while also making the world a better place.

We must realize that every other human being, regardless of the surface differences, is after the same thing we are. We are all here to find the sacred, and it's a difficult journey for every one of us. That understanding can lead to compassion, peace, and a world where instead of tearing ourselves apart, we work together, creating an environment where all of us can fulfill our greatest potential. ###

**Guy Finley** is the bestselling author of *The Secret of Letting Go*, *The Courage to Be Free*, and 40 other works that have sold over a million copies in 20 languages worldwide. His newest book, *The Seeker, The Search, The Sacred* (2011, Weiser Books) reveals the common thread that runs through every human heart: the wish to unite with the Divine. The book is part of a larger project to share this healing message with the world. Visit [www.onejourney.net](http://www.onejourney.net) to learn how you can help change the world.

### **Where to Look When All Else Fails**

WITHIN YOU — AND WITHIN EVERY HUMAN being — no matter what part of the world they're from, or what their environment has been, or what culture or tradition they've known — there lives a certain kind of greatness.

We all sense this greatness lives within us. We call it by different names, but the bottom line is that all human beings have a central wish to be as good, as true, as kind, and as profitable as we can be. It's in our very DNA.

And that DNA, that divine code if you will, is the same code for all human beings. We just dress it differently. But within all of us lives something grand, beautiful, kind, true, and loving that longs to be recognized; and we in turn long to realize the truth of ourselves.

To realize *who you really are* is the same as knowing the meaning and purpose of your life.

And when you know the meaning and purpose of your life, *you will know exactly what you need* to feel happy... loved... completely fulfilled...

Best of all... you'll know exactly how and to get it!

In Guy Finley's *The Seeker, The Search, The Sacred* you will be introduced to the invisible essence of your own being. Even more remarkably, you will realize that your unique essence is a celestial seed that was sown into you — and every other human being — since the beginning of time.

As part of the **worldwide release** of Guy Finley's new book *The Seeker, The Search, The Sacred: Journey to the Greatness Within*, We've made special arrangements for you to receive over 108 free gifts from leading authors and experts. There is one overwhelming desire that lies at the heart of every human being. Now you can know it and fulfill it. Start the search that leads not only to the fulfillment you seek, but ultimately can help heal our world at the same time! **Click for details:** <http://www.onejourneybook.org/special/CD1352/>  
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## **Saying Good-bye to Being Shy** by Chuck Gallozzi

I'm departing from my *Clearing Cognitive Cobwebs* series in this issue to answer questions and share ideas with a reader, who I will call Omotoso (a Nigerian male name meaning *a child equals wealth*). He is a third year university student, writing from Nigeria. Omotoso's problem is shyness. Although he has read [my article on Social Anxiety Disorder](#) (SAD) and has heard of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), he doesn't know how to apply the information to his life.

He is concerned because he stammers and freezes up when trying to talk to women, feels intimidated and unable to speak to older adults, has a fear of public speaking, and doesn't know how to engage in small talk. Ironically, people come to him because they think of him as a leader, but he turns down or drops responsibilities because of his shyness.

Unlike the flu, which has an external cause (virus), shyness is strictly internal. That is, we don't feel shy because of what happens to us, but because of what we *think about* what happens to us. For example, after Tom asks a woman to dance, she giggles nervously, but he mistakenly believes she is laughing at him and rejecting him. So, he quickly and timidly leaves. Thus, it wasn't the event, but Tom's interpretation of it that made him feel like a failure.

### **Part 1, Mindset**

Our mindset, perspective, or how we see the world is a structure that is made of many bricks called *thoughts* and *beliefs*. Because of their importance, before suggesting ways of overcoming shyness, I wish to lay the groundwork by first delving into mindset more deeply.

**1.** Omotoso, do you ever judge others? Think about this carefully. Perhaps you never  *speak* badly of others, but do you ever  *think* badly of them? Do you ever  *think* that someone is arrogant, too noisy, a bit dim-witted, creates a bad impression, is incompetent, or any other such thought? In other words, do you ever judge people in your mind? You see, Omotoso, shyness is the fear of being judged by others. And when we judge others, we tend to think they are judging us. But if we accept everyone, if we open our hearts to all, and welcome them unconditionally, we will tend to believe others will be equally accepting of us. In other words, we will be less likely to experience shyness.

**2.** The funny thing about shyness is that it is based on the false belief that how we look and perform is important to others. But people are too busy worrying about their own problems to be thinking about yours. So, they are not judging you. But you are judging yourself, and you're a harsh critic. Be kind to yourself. If you allow yourself to make mistakes and be imperfect, you will have less to be shy about.

3. Shy people compare themselves to others. But doing so is irrational because we never have all the facts. For example, Tom may be embarrassed because a classmate received a higher mark on the exam, but perhaps the classmate cheated. Or, Tom may feel humiliated because a classmate seems to have a lot of confidence. But Tom cannot read minds and hearts, so how does he know whether the other student is really confident or merely pretending to be so? The point is, don't compare yourself to others. Rather, compare yourself to your own standard, and as long as you do your best to follow that standard, you'll have little to be ashamed or shy of.

4. Life is synonymous with change. Everything changes. In another year, for example, you will not be a student, but a graduate. You will have more experience, knowledge, and confidence. But when you are experiencing a bout of shyness, you forget about the promise of the future. Don't forget. Remind yourself that you will change for the better. Remembering this will reduce stress and your level of anxiety.

5. Your weakness may be your strength. Shyness makes you vulnerable and vulnerability makes you attractive. Vulnerability attracts people because we all have weaknesses and we can relate to, sympathize with, and root for those who are imperfect. Women can also be attracted to the innocence and inexperience of shy men. Also, the pains of shyness, insecurity, and self-doubt have driven many men and women to compensate for their 'weakness' by excelling in another area. Many movie stars, celebrities, and powerful figures fall into this category.

6. When we change the way we see life, life changes for us. For example, Tom and Larry are sharing the same experience, but Tom sees life as a struggle and Larry sees it as an adventure. They both have challenges to face, but which one do you think finds life tedious and which one finds it exciting?

Use your imagination and creativity to tackle your fears, Omotoso. For instance, suppose instead of being a student, you were the son of a shopkeeper and your father said, "Omotoso, see what that lady wants, go help her." Under those circumstances, whether you felt like it or not, you would be forced to speak to women and adults. Life is a stage and we are actors playing a role. Play the part of a shopkeeper's son, Omotoso. Go and see what that lady wants.

As I write this, it is mid-September. It is the time when Monarch butterflies begin their 2,000 mile migration from Canada to Mexico. Imagine how powerful their wings are! How did they become so strong? Well, before a Monarch becomes a butterfly, it is a chrysalis (the pupa enclosed in a cocoon). And after becoming a butterfly, it must first emerge from its cocoon, but cannot do so without a fierce struggle.

While still in its cocoon, the young Monarch butterfly has a fat body and folded, limp wings. It is hardly an image of strength and beauty. As it struggles to free itself from the cocoon, it pushes, strains, and convulses, and liquid from its body is forced into the veins of its wings. Bit by bit the wings extend and grow stronger. Bit by bit an increasing amount of

pressure is placed against the walls of the cocoon. At last, a slim Monarch with robust wings breaks free.

Omotoso, we are Monarchs. Our cocoon is our comfort zone. Do you expect to break free without a struggle? Do you expect to fly before extending and strengthening your wings? Can you see how the fears we face are not our enemies but our friends?

7. Learn to focus on what you have, Omotoso, rather than what you lack. Although you lack the social skills to speak comfortably to women face-to-face, you already have the skills to speak to them over the phone, or to write to them. Isn't that a sign that you are already halfway to your goal? Isn't that a sign of even greater things to follow? Remember, it is not that you don't have the skills you want, but that you don't have the skills you want YET. It's only a matter of time.

8. Now that you know how painful and frustrating shyness is, make it your mission in life to help others with the same problem. It is impossible to teach without learning; it is impossible to help others without helping ourselves. Form a group. Practice talking to each other. Share your experiences, worries, and solutions. You'll become so busy doing so, you won't find the time to worry about yourself. Move away from worrying about what others think of you to concern for the need of others for acceptance, attention, and affection. Help end the shyness of others and you'll end your own.

9. Questions are magical. Questions are powerful. Questions are transformational. We can change our lives by the questions we ask. But whether we ask others or ourselves, we have to ask the right questions. Ask empowering, or solution oriented questions. In other words, ask questions that produce helpful answers and avoid questions that do not. Don't ask *Why is this happening?*, but ask, *What can I do about it?*

Here's an example of a poor question: *Why am I uncomfortable in the presence of women?* The answers this question produces may be: *because I am shy; I don't know how to engage in small talk; I become nervous; my mind goes blank; my palms and forehead grow sweaty; I stammer when I try to speak to them*, or something similar. Notice how the answers reinforce the problem, keeping one in a rut.

Here are examples of empowering questions:

What qualities do I have that women may find attractive?

What can I do to learn how to engage in small talk?

What skills and talents do I have that I can further develop to make myself more attractive to others?

How can I help others with the same problem (shyness)?

Who or where can I turn to for advice and help?

Are there any assertiveness or public speaking courses I can attend or clubs I can join?

Are there dance classes I can attend?

When faced with my 'problem', what options do I have?

Of these choices which one will I take?

What will my next step be?

What is the smallest step that I can take to bring me closer to my goal?

**10.** Watch what you say. Every time you speak to yourself or others, you are programming your subconscious. Program yourself for success by always looking at things in a positive light. Instead of saying *I am shy*, say, *How lucky I am to be challenged, for as I struggle, I will gain the strength of a warrior. I embrace problems, difficulties, and obstacles because overcoming them will fulfill my destiny to become a victorious leader.*

**11.** The secret to problem solving is to stop *thinking* about it and start *doing* something about it. Action always leads to success because even when we are unsuccessful we learn what to avoid.

**12.** One of the gravest errors people make is to change an ordinary human desire into a demand. Here's what I mean. We all have the desire to be liked, but to expect all people to like us at all times is irrational because we have to allow humans to act as humans. People are different and have their individual likes and dislikes. So, Omotoso, if you expect to charm every woman you meet, you are doomed to fail. Even Casanova couldn't do that. So don't be too demanding; don't be too hard on yourself. Relax and let what will be, be. And here's another tip. Why do you have to charm women? Why not allow them to charm you? If you stop thinking about yourself and become more observant, you will notice some woman trying to lure your attention. Why not give in, say hello, and listen to what she has to say?

## **Part 2, How to Say Goodbye to Being Shy**

### **A) Do It Yourself**

How do we overcome shyness? Well, there are lots of helpful books, courses, and seminars. And there are also various therapies to choose from, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Graded Exposure Therapy, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), and hypnotherapy. But one of the most effective methods is the least spoken or written about. I'm referring to *doing it yourself* without the aid of teachers, books or treatment. All that is required is plenty of commitment or resolve.

I'll use Dr. Albert Ellis (1913~2007) as an example of what I mean. But first a brief introduction to Dr. Ellis. He was an American psychologist who developed Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) and is considered to be the founder of cognitive-behavioral therapies. And according to a 1982 survey of U.S. and Canadian psychologists, he was considered as the second most influential psychotherapist *in history*. Prior to his death, *Psychology Today* magazine described him as the "greatest living psychologist."

Despite his many accomplishments, Dr. Ellis suffered from severe shyness when he was a young man and was especially shy around women. Angry and frustrated by his problem, he finally decided to do something. He decided to force himself to talk to women, no matter what, even if it killed him. It is at moments like this, when we make a commitment to

ourselves that great power is released, and we can finally do what was impossible for us in the past. Besides a commitment, one other thing is necessary, and that is a plan. Dr. Ellis made and followed his plan, which is described below.

Every day he visited [the botanical gardens in the Bronx, New York City](#) (one of my favorite hangouts as a teenager). Many people would sit down on benches and enjoy the sun, sights, sounds, and smells of the garden. Whenever young Albert Ellis saw an attractive woman, he would approach, smile, and greet her. He would do this no matter how he felt, no matter how rapidly his heart was pounding, no matter how sweaty he became, no matter how much his arms trembled. He would just do it. Not only would he approach, smile, and greet, but he would start a conversation. AND he would end his conversation by asking for a date! He did this several times a day. In a couple of months he must have asked 300 women for a date. How successful was he? Only one woman agreed to see him — and she didn't show up for the date! How successful was he? Very successful! Because although he got no dates, by the end of this experiment, **he was completely cured of shyness!**

Here is another tip, Omotoso. Note that Albert Ellis did not practice speaking to women in his own neighborhood, but took a short trip to an excellent location, where he would be exposed to strangers. It may be easier for you, too, to practice speaking to women off campus, rather than trying to do so with fellow students who already know or recognize you. Remember, this highly effective method of 'just do it' requires hard work, persistence, and practice, but the rewards of success are far greater than the amount of effort it takes to succeed.

### **B) Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)**

CBT gets you to think about what you are thinking about, and teaches you how to modify your thinking so it leads to success instead of failure. Although most CBT clients attend private or group sessions that are led by trained professionals, the therapy can be self-administered with the aid of a good book, such as one of the following:

[\*Overcoming Social Anxiety and Shyness: A Self-Help Guide Using Cognitive Behavioral Techniques\*](#) by Gillian Butler

[\*Overcoming Shyness and Social Phobia: A Step-by-Step Guide\*](#) by Ronald M. Rapee

### **C) Graded Exposure Therapy**

Omotoso, although you didn't benefit from your first reading of [my article that describes the Graded Exposure technique](#), after reading this far, I think you are in a better position to apply its principles, so you may want to reread it.

### **D) Internet Resources**

Here are some websites you may find helpful:

[Internet Shyness FAQ](#)

[Shy and Free](#)

[Anxiety and Panic Support Groups](#)

## **E) Physiology**

Because of our body-mind connection, our thoughts, emotions, and physiology are interconnected. That is, each of the three aspects of us affects the other two. For example, if I suddenly hear a loud explosion, I may be afraid (emotion), worry about possible danger (thoughts), and may hyperventilate (physiological). On the other hand, if I were to daydream about the wonderful vacation I just had (thoughts), I would feel peaceful (emotion), and my muscles would relax (physiology). And now for a final example, which is a useful tool for lessening the stranglehold of shyness. If I were to assume the posture of a confident person (physiology), I would begin to feel more confident (emotion), and that feeling would cause me to think *I feel good!* (thoughts)

So, learn to take the posture of a confident person: Stand erect, looking ahead and side to side (not downward), shoulders back, chest out, a relaxed face and a slight smile. Practice this posture over and over in your room. Then practice in public. When you're in town strolling past shops, look at your reflection in store windows to check your posture. Visit places where no one knows you and practice acting confidently. Stop every now and then to ask questions such as *What time is it?* Or *Which way is the post office?* Notice how people treat you differently when you act confidently. Keep behaving in this manner and you will find your confidence will keep growing, until you reach the point where you are no longer pretending to be confident.

## **F) Small Talk Tips**

**1.** Instead of small talk, wouldn't it be better to engage in 'big' talk? By that I mean important talk, exciting talk, meaningful talk. What subjects are exciting, important, and meaningful? I don't know; that's what you have to find out. Play the role of a detective and find out what is exciting, important, and meaningful in the lives of the members of the group.

The first secret of small talk is not to talk! You see, when you approach a group with an intention to speak you may pick a subject that they are not interested in at that time. But if you remain quiet you will learn what excites them, and be in a better position to contribute to the discussion.

**2.** Instead of making statements, ask questions about what was just said. And don't ask questions that can be answered with a simple *yes* or *no*, but ask questions that draw out more information. For example, don't ask, "Did you say Mr. Jones is a severe professor?" Rather, ask, "In what ways did you find Professor Jones severe?"

**3.** Remember what each person you regularly see is interested in. Stick to their favorite subjects and they'll be happy to talk.

**4.** Treat each discussion you join as an opportunity to learn. Not only will you learn more about the members of the group, but they may have some useful ideas to share. Whenever you hear something interesting, immediately say so.

5. Treat each discussion as an opportunity to serve. Each member of the group is seeking recognition, acceptance, and respect. Look for opportunities to praise, agree with, and compliment members. When you focus on them rather than yourself, you will feel less self-conscious or shy.

Well, Omotoso, there is much more that can be said, but that's what libraries, bookstores, the Internet, and friends are for. Just remember that overcoming shyness is no different than overcoming other obstacles. It involves risks and rewards, setbacks and victories, challenges and triumph. But most of all it is your invitation to join the ranks of the courageous by doing what you fear and releasing your inner greatness. You can succeed, Omotoso. Today, resolve to do so. ###

### **About Chuck Gallozzi**

Chuck Gallozzi lived in Japan for 15 years, immersing himself in the wisdom of the Far East. He is the author of the book, [\*The 3 Thieves and 4 Pillars of Happiness, 7 Steps to a Life of Boundless Joy\*](#). He is also a Certified NLP Practitioner, speaker, and seminar leader. Among his additional accomplishments, he is also the Grand Prix Winner of a Ricoh International Photo Competition, the Canadian National Champion in a Toastmasters International Humorous Speech Contest, and the Founder and Head of the Positive Thinkers Group that has been meeting at St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto since 1999. He was interviewed on CBC's *Steven and Chris Show*, appearing nationally on Canadian TV. Chuck is a catalyst for change, dedicated to bringing out the best in others and his main home on the web is at: [www.personal-development.com](http://www.personal-development.com).

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## **The 3 Thieves and 4 Pillars of Happiness: 7 Steps to a Life of Boundless Joy by Chuck Gallozzi**

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## **More Than Meets The Eye** by Beca Lewis

We were walking through a department store and I saw a display of pillows with a logo that said, *Penn State*. Since we were in Ohio State territory I turned to Del and asked, “Why is this store displaying Penn State pillows?” As he turned to look at the pillows, I looked again.

Of course, the pillows really said Ohio State not Penn State, even though just a moment before I saw the words Penn State clear as day. I grew up at Penn State, so in a sense I had been trained to see those words on sports memorabilia, therefore that is what I saw.

This is a perfect example of what has happened to all of us. We see only what we have been trained to see. We see the world as we expect it to be.

The essayist Erich Heller said, “Be careful how you interpret the world: it *\*is\** like that.”

Each culture, family, and schooling system has its own version of how the world *is* and within that context that is all that exists. Have you ever imagined what it would be like if none of us had been trained into a limited view?

We all have escaped this limited view at times and in those moments of clarity the realization that there is more than meets the eye explodes into our thinking as the infinity of Life’s possibilities unfolds. However, habit kicks in and we return to our trained state of focused tunnel vision.

I watched a decorating show where designers made holiday decorations out of items that would never occur to the majority of us to use. We see common every-day items one-way, and they see them another. They have trained themselves to see differently in that area of their lives.

How do we undo our limited focused tunnel vision training? By training differently. Just as training narrowed our world and severely limits what we see, we can reverse that training and undo the effects of what we have been taught.

One way to begin our retraining is by practicing the habit of gratitude, which expands our limited view because it forces us to notice outside of what we are focusing on. Our focusing on one thing, one item or problem, blinds us to the awareness of the multitude of possibilities.

It is not surprising that so many people have “clutter issues.” If we believe that what we see is what we get, we better keep everything within sight. Carried to an extreme we end up with a narrow pathway through our home of clutter. This is the outward picture of an inward point of view.

It works the same way with our thinking. As we build up more and more beliefs of “this is how it should be, or must be,” and accept the limited worldview, our thinking narrows to a tiny pathway of possibilities.

The result of our training becomes very noticeable during stressful times. Retreating into the familiar, we focus only on what is right in front of us. We increase what we expect of ourselves, which builds even more stress. We block out anything that we don’t think will help us.

This is the exact opposite of what really works. When stressed or overwhelmed it is time to stop and pause. It is time to practice expanding inner vision. It’s time to reach out into the Infinite and feel the idea of the qualities of everything always present. It’s the time to stretch our thinking into the arena of Imagination, and relax in the awareness of the omnipotence and immediacy of the Infinite.

Reaching out into the Infinite, emerging from the tunnel vision of focusing only on what we have to do, there is instant recognition that there is always more than meets the eye. This recognition and gratitude for Its presence floods everything with light and possibilities.

As we retrain ourselves to be aware of the Infinite, we realize that this is not an attraction theory; it is the awareness of what Is. We don’t need to attract anything, it is already present waiting for us to shift our thinking to It’s Reality, and to leave the cluttered belief system of the worldview’s narrow prison.

As Frederick Langbridge said, “Two men look out through the same bars: One sees the mud and one the stars.” Alternatively, perhaps we can be inspired by Marcel Proust’s quote: "If a little dreaming is dangerous, the cure for it is not to dream less but to dream more, to dream all the time."

To be retrained to see the stars, to see what does not meet the eye, and to dream within omnipresent Infinity, what a glorious gift to ourselves this will be. ###

### **About Beca Lewis**

As an author and guide **Beca Lewis** is dedicated to bringing Universal Spiritual Principles and Laws into clear focus, to shift material perception to spiritual perception, which following the law “what you perceive to be reality magnifies™”, adjusts lives with practical and measurable results.

Beca developed an easy system to do this called The Shift® and has been sharing how to use this system to expand lives, and bring people back to the Truth of themselves for over 40 years.

Beca and her husband Del Piper are constantly working to develop new ways to support and reach out to others. Much of what they have been developed can be found for free at their membership site [Perception U.com](http://PerceptionU.com). They also founded The Women's Council with the intent of "strengthening the connection to yourself, to others, and to the Divine."

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## **Catch-22 of Forgiveness** **by Steve Wickham**

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors... For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

~*Matthew 6:12, 14-15 (NRSV).*

We can be forgiven - pardon the pun - in struggling to forgive, not understanding the nature of grace is to consider others the same as ourselves. Jesus, of course, propounds the fact in the next chapter of Matthew; verse 12. The golden rule is, do to others as we would have them do to us - this sums up the spirituality of relationships.

We may figure God having a sense of humour; we get coming right back at us exactly what we give out. You can't get any fairer than that.

### **ONE-WAY FORGIVENESS**

There is an important clarification so far as forgiveness is concerned. Forgiveness is normally offered and accepted - the two-way street. Many people falsely see no attribution of forgiveness other than via the two-way street; they think forgiveness offered that's not accepted is not full forgiveness. This two-way street is not the type of forgiveness, I think, that Jesus has in mind here, above.

When we think about it, in most cases, forgiveness does not involve two parties equally, as there is usually one party more aggrieved than the other is. In many cases, only one party is aggrieved; they are the ones that struggle to forgive.

If we can accept that forgiveness can also be a one-way street - the process offering grace, without necessarily being accepted - then we can progress. After all, if forgiveness is not forgiveness because of some part another person plays or doesn't play, how on earth do we achieve it? But this is not our prime focus.

Now, to the business end of the discussion on forgiveness.

### **THE PLAIN TRUTH ON HOW FORGIVENESS WORKS**

As suggested above, the key to forgiveness is *humility*.

Rather than pray for humility, however, God makes us able to be more humble at the pure consideration of our many imperfections - not to be put down by them but to see them in their true light.

Strangely, focusing on our own sinfulness is the secret to humility, which is also the foundation of a forgiving manner.

The truth of our sinfulness - seeing it raw and true - is blessing because a miraculous thing happens when such humility becomes us; suddenly we see the moment and our world as they truly are. God, that moment, has blessed us with his vision. There are a plethora of spin-offs. Unabashed joy coats our demeanour and others are blessed by us without the waft of an effort. When we see ourselves aright - struggling in our sinfulness, but not giving up - we see God's grace all the more, and we see others in a much better light, naturally. We have adopted fairness and justice.

Forgiveness works as a miracle, but one engendered by our investment in humility.

God blesses such an investment - the commitment to true sight - with provision of feelings of forgiveness that we cannot explain; hence the miracle. We cannot claim this as a work of our own. It is too marvellous for us.

### **THE REVERSAL IN FORGIVENESS**

There is a classic irony in forgiveness as we've touched on above. We are fooled to think that the person betraying, disregarding, or hurting us is the only one to have done wrong.

Forgiveness can only occur, genuinely, when - in the initial state - we comprehend our own sinfulness and need of God's unrelenting forgiveness. Understanding that the compassion of the Lord to forgive us, once and for all, is incomprehensible can't be understated.

It helps us understand how comparatively small our forgiveness of someone's indiscretion against us is. This is not to downplay the hurt we feel, but it puts it into perspective.

When we put the acid of condemnation on ourselves, and find afresh that God has instead replaced that acid with the cream of forgiveness, we are so much more able to see that favour we ought to extend to others.

Forgiveness is, indeed, a reversal. It has nothing to do with the other person. Forgiveness is about us and God. If we struggle with this let's rethink grace. That's the Catch-22 of forgiveness - it begins and ends with us and our processes with God. ###

**Steve Wickham** is a Registered Safety Practitioner (BSc, FSIA, RSP[Australia]) and a qualified, unordained Christian minister (GradDipBib&Min). His blogs are at: <http://epitemnein-epitomic.blogspot.com/> and <http://tribework.blogspot.com/>

## **Foundations of Integrity** **by Dr. Alan Zimmerman**

"The time is always right to do what is right."

—*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

The elections are upon us, and no matter what the outcome, history is in the making. And history needs to be made ... considering the lack of integrity that is so rampant in so many of our so-called "public servants."

In fact, I like the way one health care expert put it when asked about a particular elected official. He said, "I don't think they could legally put him in a mental hospital. On the other hand, if he were already in, I don't believe they could legally let him out."

Well, it's easy to pick on politicians because their lives and careers are very public. But the need for integrity is just as critical in our businesses and in our relationships. As author Brian Tracy declares, "Integrity is the foundation upon which all other values are built."

I couldn't agree more. So what does a person of integrity look like? How do they behave? And how can you become a person of integrity? You have to build it on five foundations...

### **1. Be authentic.**

It doesn't matter what you call it ... ethics, honesty, or being true to yourself. Authenticity is the first part of integrity. And it's the first thing other people want to see in you ... not some superficial image you've created and tried to project.

In the book "Be Your Own Brand: A Breakthrough Formula For Standing Out From The Crowd," McNally and Speak say, "We make the most lasting and vivid impressions when people witness us being true to our beliefs and staying in alignment with who and what we really are. When we summon the courage to be authentic, the effect is powerful."

You may need to take some time to figure out YOUR values and YOUR beliefs ... not your spouse's, your parents', your boss's, or society's values and beliefs ... but YOUR values and beliefs. As I often tell my audiences, "If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything."

Or as Brian Tracy advises, "Be absolutely clear about who you are and what you stand for. Refuse to compromise." Refuse to compromise on your authenticity and thereby your integrity.

### **2. Practice self-discipline.**

Integrity may not come easily or naturally ... because it takes a bit of work to do the right thing instead of the easy thing. After all, building a strong character requires self-discipline,

and self-discipline is the willingness and ability to do what's right when you don't feel like it.

Plato knew that thousands of years ago. He taught, "The first and best victory is to conquer self." And it takes years for some people to learn that lesson, and others never learn it.

Take the great golfer Bobby Jones, for example. He was winning golf tournaments by the age of 12. But he had a temper ... and his nickname was "club-thrower." An older gentleman called Grandpa Bart recognized Jones' talent and his character issues. He said, "Bobby, you're good enough to win, but you'll never win big until you conquer that temper of yours."

Jones did master his temper and went on to win his first US Open at age 21. Grandpa Bart used to say, "Bobby was 14 when he mastered golf, but he was 21 when he mastered himself."

Yes, self-discipline may take some time, but the integrity it builds will pay off for a lifetime. As the English theologian Henry Parry Liddon put it, "What we do on some great occasion will probably depend on what we already are; and what we are will be the result of previous years of self-discipline."

If you are serious about building your character and your integrity, look for an opportunity to say "no" to yourself every day in some SMALL area. Try it. You'll be surprised how hard it is. But the payoff will come when you need to say "no" to yourself in some BIG area of life. You'll have the spiritual strength to do what you need to do when you need to do it.

### **3. Accept responsibility.**

Don't pass the buck. And don't blame anybody else or anything else IF you are indeed responsible.

Of course, that goes against human nature. Almost everybody wants to avoid the punishment that comes with doing something wrong ... so they "naturally" and immaturely deny responsibility. They protest, "I didn't do it!" even when the evidence proves otherwise.

The problem is ... when people don't admit to their mistakes, it leads to bigger issues in the workplace and on the home front. The blame game becomes a habit. Productivity suffers as people spend more time covering themselves than actually doing their jobs. On an extreme level, unethical behavior grows, and before long, it has become front-page news.

Instead, I urge you to do the "unnatural" thing. Admit your mistakes. Take responsibility. Stop worrying about what other people think of you. Ultimately they'll respect you more for admitting what you can't do or the mistake you made, than observing you blame others.

The one-time slave and world-famous educator George Washington Carver knew that. He said, "Ninety-five percent of failures come from people who have the habit of making excuses." So don't make excuses. Just accept responsibility.

#### **4. Keep your word.**

A promise is a promise. Period. It doesn't matter if you no longer "feel" like doing what you said you were going to do. Unless all h\_\_ll breaks out, if you're going to be a person of integrity, you have to keep your word. You have to follow through on every promise you make.

As one wise person observed, you can't build a reputation on what you're going to do. You build your reputation, character, or integrity on what you did.

Again Tracy's wisdom is profound. He says, "Character is the ability to follow through on a resolution long after the emotion with which it was made has passed." In other words, you don't rule your life by your feelings; you rule it by thoughtful, conscientious, ethical decision-making.

#### **5. Do what is right.**

This element of integrity seems so elementary that we shouldn't even have to mention it. But in a time when "looking good" seems to be more important ... or at least gets more attention ... than "being good," this foundation needs to be stressed as well. As one person put it, "Cowardice asks, 'Is it safe?' Expediency asks, 'Is it politic?' Vanity asks, 'Is it popular?' But conscience asks, 'Is it right?'"

If you want to be known as a person of integrity, a leader of character, or a parent of value, you've simply got to do what is right. Dan Zadra, the CEO of the Creative Director Compendium, says, "Live your life so your children can tell their children that you not only stood for something wonderful-- you acted on it."

Of course, that is easier said than done. After all, our media-obsessed culture seems to glorify "taking the easy way out." But it wasn't always that way. Walter Lippmann, a journalist of some 50 years ago, used to say, "A man has honor if he holds himself to an ideal of conduct even when it is inconvenient, unprofitable, or dangerous to do so." He didn't preach the "easy way out;" he taught the importance of taking "the right way out."

Other people think "doing what is right" is so old-fashioned. They'll say there are lots of definitions of "right," and they're all "right." There's no such thing as "right or wrong" or "good or bad" ... which leads to the issue of being able to justify anything and everything. Ethics and integrity become cloudy concepts rather than guiding principles.

I defer to John G. Diefenbaker, a politician from a few generations ago. He cut through all the fancy distorted rhetoric by proclaiming, "Freedom is the right to be wrong; not the right to do wrong."

Integrity, ethics, character, reputation ... whatever you call it ... is not genetic. It is not inherited. It is built upon these five foundations. And you can build as much of it as you want. The more you build, the more you succeed. So go out there and build.

**Action:**

Write the five foundations of integrity on a piece of paper and rank order them from 1 to 5. 1 is the foundation you're best at and 5 is the foundation that needs the most work. Once you've made your ranking, go to work on number 5. ###

As a best-selling author and Hall of Fame professional speaker, **Dr. Alan Zimmerman** has taught more than one million people in 48 states and 22 countries how to keep a positive attitude on and off the job. In his book, *PIVOT: How One Turn In Attitude Can Lead To Success*, Dr. Zimmerman outlines the exact steps you must take to get the results you want in any situation. Go to Alan's site for a [Free Sneak Preview](#)

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~ **Pivot** ~

*How One Simple Turn in Attitude Can Lead to Success*

by **Alan R. Zimmerman**

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## **Becoming a Person of Integrity** **by Brian Tracy**

Integrity is a value, like persistence, courage and industriousness. Even more than that, it is the value that guarantees all the other values. You are a good person to the degree to which you live your life consistent with the highest values that you espouse. Integrity is the quality that locks in your values and causes you to live consistent with them.

Integrity is the foundation of character. And character development is one of the most important activities you can engage in. Working on your character means disciplining yourself to do more and more of those things that a thoroughly honest person would do, under all circumstances.

To be impeccably honest with others, you must first be impeccably honest with yourself. You must be true to yourself. You must be true to the very best that is in you, to the very best that you know. Only a person who is living consistent with his or her highest values and virtues is really living a life of integrity. And when you commit to living this kind of life, you will find yourself continually raising your own standards, continually refining your definition of integrity and honesty.

You can tell how high your level of integrity is by simply looking at the things you do in your day-to-day life. You can look at your reactions and responses to the inevitable ups and downs of life. You can observe the behaviors you typically engage in and you will then know the person you are.

The external manifestation of high integrity is high-quality work. A person who is totally honest with himself or herself will be someone who does, or strives to do, excellent work on every occasion. The totally honest person recognizes, sometimes unconsciously, that everything he or she does is a statement about who he or she really is as a person.

When you start a little earlier, work a little harder, stay a little later and concentrate on every detail, you are practicing integrity in your work. And whether you know it or not, your true level of integrity is apparent and obvious to everyone around you.

Perhaps the most important rule you will ever learn is that your life only becomes better when you become better.

All of life is lived from the inside out. At the very core of your personality lie your values about yourself and life in general. Your values determine the kind of person you really are. What you believe has defined your character and your personality. It is what you stand for, and what you won't stand for, that tells you and the world the kind of person you have become.

Ask yourself this question: What are your five most important values in life? Your answer will reveal an enormous amount about you. What would you pay for, sacrifice for, suffer for and even die for? What would you stand up for, or refuse to lie down for? What are the values that you hold most dear? Think these questions through carefully and, when you get a chance, write down your answers. Here's another way of asking that question. What men and women, living or dead, do you most admire? Once you pick three or four men or women, the next question is: Why do you admire them? What values, qualities, or virtues do they have that you respect and look up to? Can you articulate those qualities? What is a quality possessed by human beings in general that you most respect? This is the starting point for determining your values. The answers to these questions form the foundation of your character and your personality.

Once you have determined your five major values, you should now organize them in order of importance. What is your first, most important value? What is your second value? What is your third value? And so on. Ranking your values is one of the very best and fastest ways to define your character.

Remember, a higher order value will always take precedence over a lower order value. Whenever you are forced to choose between acting on one value or another, you always choose the value that is the highest on your own personal hierarchy.

Who you are, in your heart, is evidenced by what you do on a day-to-day basis, especially when you are pushed into a position where you have to make a choice between two values or alternatives. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, Guard your integrity as a sacred thing. In study after study, the quality of integrity, or a person's adherence to values, ranks as the number one quality sought in every field. When it comes to determining whom they will do business with, customers rank the honesty of a salesperson as the most important single quality. Even if they feel that a salesperson's product, quality and price is superior, customers will not buy from that salesperson if they feel that he or she is lacking in honesty and character.

Likewise, integrity is the number one quality of leadership. Integrity in leadership is expressed in terms of constancy and consistency. It is manifested in an absolute devotion to keeping one's word. The glue that holds all relationships together—including the relationship between the leader and the led—is trust, and trust is based on integrity.

Integrity is so important that functioning in our society would be impossible without it. We could not make even a simple purchase without a high level of confidence that the price was honest and that the change was correct. The most successful individuals and companies in America are those with reputations of high integrity among everyone they deal with. This level of integrity builds the confidence that others have in them and enables them to do more business than their competitors whose ethics may be a little shaky. Earl Nightingale once wrote, If honesty did not exist, it would have to be invented, as it is the surest way of getting rich. A study at Harvard University concluded that the most valuable asset that a company has is how it is known to its customers, its reputation.

By the same token, your greatest personal asset is the way that you are known to your customers. It is your personal reputation for keeping your word and fulfilling your commitments. Your integrity precedes you and affects all of your interactions with other people. There are several things you can do to move you more rapidly toward becoming the kind of person that you know you are capable of becoming. The first, as I mentioned, is to decide upon your five most important values in life. Organize them in order of priority. Then write a brief paragraph defining what each of those values means to you. A value combined with a definition becomes an organizing principle, a statement that you can use to help you make better decisions. It is a measure and standard which enables you to know how closely you are adhering to your innermost beliefs and convictions.

The second step to developing integrity and character in yourself is to study men and women of great character. Study the lives and stories of people like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Florence Nightingale, Susan B. Anthony and Margaret Thatcher. Study the people whose strength of character enabled them to change their world. As you read, think about how they would behave if they were facing the difficulties that you face.

Napoleon Hill, in his book, *The Master Key to Riches*, tells about how he created an imaginary board of personal advisors made up of great figures of history. He chose people like Napoleon, Lincoln, Jesus, and Alexander the Great. Whenever he had to make a decision, he would relax deeply and then imagine that the members of his advisory council were sitting at a large table in front of him. He would then ask them what he should do to deal effectively with a particular situation. In time, they would begin to give him answers, observations, and insights that helped him to see more clearly and act more effectively.

You can do the same thing. Select someone that you very much admire for their qualities of courage, tenacity, honesty, or wisdom. Ask yourself, What would Jesus do in my situation? or, What would Lincoln do if he were here at this time? You will find yourself with guidance that enables you to be the very best person that you can possible be.

The third and most important step in building your integrity has to do with formulating your approach based on the psychology of human behavior. We know that if you feel a particular way, you will act in a manner consistent with that feeling. For example, if you feel happy, you will act happy. If you feel angry, you will act angry. If you feel courageous, you will act courageously.

But we also know that you don't always start off feeling the way you want to. However, because of the Law of Reversibility, if you act as if you had a particular feeling, the action will generate the feeling consistent with it. You can, in effect, act your way into feeling. You can fake it until you make it.

You can become a superior human being by consciously acting exactly as the kind of person that you would most like to become. If you behave like an individual of integrity, courage, resolution, persistence and character, you will soon create within yourself the mental

structure and habits of such a person. Your actions will become your reality. You will create a personality that is consistent with your highest aspirations.

The more you walk, talk, and behave consistent with your highest values, the more you will like yourself and the better you will feel about yourself. Your self-image will improve and your level of self-acceptance will go up. You will feel stronger, bolder, and more capable of facing any challenge.

There are three primary areas of your life where acting with integrity is crucial. These are the three areas of greatest temptation for forsaking your integrity, as well as the areas of greatest opportunity for building your integrity. When you listen to your inner voice and do what you know to be the right thing in each of these areas, you will have a sense of peace and satisfaction that will lead you on to success and high achievement.

The first area of integrity has to do with your relationships with your family and your friends, the people close to you. Being true to yourself means living in truth with each person in your life. It means refusing to say or do something that you don't believe is right. Living in truth with other people means that you refuse to stay in any situation where you are unhappy with the behavior of another person. You refuse to tolerate it. You refuse to compromise. Psychologists have determined that most stress and negativity comes from attempting to live in a way that is not congruent with your highest values. It is when your life is out of alignment, when you are doing and saying one thing on the outside, but really feeling and believing something different on the inside, that you feel most unhappy. When you decide to become an individual of character and integrity, your first action will be to neutralize or remove all difficult relationships from your life.

This doesn't mean that you have to go and hit somebody over the head with a stick. It simply means that you honestly confront another person and tell them that you are not happy. Tell them that you would like to reorganize this relationship so that you feel more content and satisfied. If the other person is not willing to make adjustments so that you can be happy, it should be clear to you that you don't want to be in this relationship much longer anyway. The second area of integrity has to do with your attitude and behavior toward money. Casualness toward money brings casualties in your financial life. You must be fastidious about your treatment of money, especially other people's money. You must guard your credit rating the same way you would guard your honor. You must pay your bills punctually, or even early. You must keep your promises with regard to your financial commitments.

The third area of integrity has to do with your commitments to others, especially in your business, your work and your sales activities. Always keep your word. Be a man or a woman of honor. If you say that you will do something, do it. If you make a promise, keep it. If you make a commitment, fulfill it. Be known as the kind of person that can be trusted absolutely, no matter what the circumstances.

Your integrity is manifested in your willingness to adhere to the values you hold most dear. It's easy to make promises and hard to keep them, but if you do, every single act of integrity

will make your character a little stronger. And as you improve the quality and strength of your character, every other part of your life will improve as well. ###

**Brian Tracy** is a leading authority on personal and business success. As Chairman and CEO of Brian Tracy International, he is the best-selling author of 17 books and over 300 audio and video learning programs.

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# Seven Tips to Keep You Going When You No Longer Know What to Do

by Gabriella Kortsch, Ph.D.

We all have difficult moments. It doesn't really matter how wealthy we are, how beautiful we are, how professionally expert we are, how young we are, how successful we are, or how healthy we are. Despite that, moments come when life really feels like it is disintegrating. You just don't know how to continue. And of course if those moments come and we have not previously spent some time practicing what to do at bad times, then at those moments we might really believe we are falling apart. At such times we all need some tools, just to get us through the day.

If only they would teach us these tools at school! When I worked with inner city kids in Miami, and when I was a *guardian ad litem* with abused children there as well, we actually worked at giving these young people some tools to help them circumvent the often deplorable conditions of their lives. But we don't seem to consider it necessary – the educational system doesn't seem to consider it necessary to offer such tools as part of a regular curriculum to *regular* students.

But we can make use of and practice these tools at any point in our lives. As I've mentioned in previous articles, neuroplasticity (the flexibility of the brain to learn new behaviors and new things at *any* age) allows us to create *new* neural pathways as long as we practice something – *anything* – with awareness.

**Gratitude** – sometimes when you're overwhelmed, it's enough to focus on gratitude. Numerous studies have been carried out demonstrating that those people who most make the daily practice of gratitude in their lives, are precisely the people who are most content. They maintain an inner state of well-being – according to said studies – precisely because of that practice. Make a point at least several times a day, of focusing on something in your environment that makes you feel grateful for it being there. Nature is an easy one to use. Allow the feeling of gratitude to suffuse your being for a few moments. Notice how peaceful you feel, how relaxed. Just for a moment your past and future worries, pain and concerns have moved out of your immediate awareness. *Something in you has shifted.* Try it.

**Energy** – When your body is missing essential micro-nutrients, you notice an improvement if you begin to take some targeted supplements. It's the same with the mind, heart and spirit. Revving up our inner energy, which is the way we feel inside *under any circumstances*, can be done by giving ourselves some nourishment. Food in this case refers to what we read,

listen to, and view, the conversations we have, and so on. Decide – when you are in one of those moments when you no longer know what to do, that you will begin *right now* to make a habit - a daily practice – of giving yourself some of this nourishment.

**Mindfulness** – Being mindful – being aware – has been shown to increase well-being, and more importantly, has demonstrated in study after study, that it helps create new neural pathways that will also, in turn, *increase your sense of well-being*. So what does it mean? I used to call it open-eyed meditation long before I had ever heard of mindfulness. Simply put, remain in the now. Are you working on paying bills? Remain in the now by allowing something in your surroundings to keep you in a state of gratitude as you complete that admittedly onerous chore. Are you in the car during your daily commute? Again, allow yourself to feel gratitude for something in your surroundings in order to stay in the present. More than anything, begin to practice doing every single thing in your life with awareness, with mindfulness. *This will change your life*.

**Inner Monologue When Thoughts Threaten to Overwhelm** – People may panic or hyperventilate, or feel as though they are jumping out of their skin when thoughts about stressful events or worry or fear or pain (emotional or otherwise) threaten to overwhelm them. At that moment, they simply don't know what to do. Here's one way to help yourself: try to resume your negative thoughts in one sentence:

- I can't bear it that my partner abandoned me, I don't know how I'll go on
- I am so frightened about the diagnosis of \_\_\_\_\_ that the doctor gave me
- I am so worried about not being able to meet my monthly bills
- My company is downsizing and I might be the next one to go
- My daughter/son is taking drugs/dropping out of school/hanging out with people I disapprove of, and won't listen to me

The sample thoughts that are resumed as indicated now require a monologue that might go like this: I know you (the thought ... and the 'problem') are there and I know I can't do anything about you right now. But I can choose to focus on something different right now, just for a moment. I'm not pretending you aren't there anymore, but I choose to focus on something that will give me a moment (or hour) of peace. So I'll take my thoughts and inner and outer images to something else – just for now. When you come to plague me again, if I've done my due diligence about you for today (perhaps an hour's time of trying to resolve or brainstorm about whatever the issue is), then I will once again choose to take my focus elsewhere. I'll do it for my own inner well-being and because I love myself. Note: Doing this will *not* solve the problem. It *will*, however, help you view the problem with different eyes and therein you may find a new way of solving your problem that before you had simply not seen, because you are in a new energetic place now. And you *will* feel better.

**Oxygen** – Make sure that you do some strenuous walking or biking or swimming or rowing, or whatever you prefer on a daily basis in order to get oxygen into your system. Your brain not only grows new cells and connections between those cells, when you do this, but your endorphins and serotonin levels (the feel good chemicals in the brain) rise. Spending 15-30 minutes doing this every day will do much to make your inner world look so much better. And if your inner world looks good, *the way you see* your outer world also changes.

**Remembering What Exhilarates You** – This one is important! As with all the others, if this one were already in place in your life, you might not have arrived at that place of difficulty where you no longer know what to do! Try to go back deep into your younger self and remember what used to exhilarate you. What made you vibrate energetically when you thought about it, or did it? How can you – if it still causes you to react that way – incorporate it into your present life? If you can't remember any such thing, begin to pay attention carefully to how your body reacts with certain conversations, documentaries, books, etc. Is there a fluttering in your belly? An agreeable tightening somewhere? Does your breath come more quickly? Is your heart beating faster? All of these indicate that something about this subject *means something to you even if you are unaware of it consciously*. What we are looking for is something that will serve to increase the *meaning* in your life.

**Giving Yourself Small Joys** – Remember to give yourself some small joys every day. I can't tell you what those are for *you*, but here are some of mine: watching the waves come up on the shore; having a coffee (a good one) in peace and tranquility at a café I enjoy, preferably with a good view and reading the paper, or a bit of a good book; wandering about a flea market; having a food treat that I particularly enjoy, especially things that remind me of my childhood in Germany; sitting down to write a brief email to someone I care for very much, *just to keep in touch*; walking along a pristine beach early in the morning with no one else there at all; sitting down to a book/movie/documentary/audio program, etc. I *know* I will enjoy – even if I know I just have 10 minutes right now, and will continue at a later time. These *small joys* can make such a difference in the wholeness of your day. Look for those that you love and make sure your days contain at least one or two of them *every day*.  
###

**Gabriella Kortsch** has written a highly-anticipated new book *Rewiring The Soul: Finding The Possible Self* that is now available globally in over 100 countries. This book can be critical in helping you make the positive changes you want in your life. Gabriella is so well respected by her peers that myself and numerous other authors and experts are joining in to spread the word. It's that important!

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Read Gabriella's book and 'Soul' is no longer just a dogma, nor hypothesis, it is made real and as much a part of your being as your toes. We usually shut off our inner voice, yet by recognizing this aspect of ourselves we begin to discover our essential nature, our intuitive truth, and that becomes our loving guide. The author illustrates the limitations of living only as the mind's Ego, and demonstrates in practical terms how we can transcend this by awakening a conscious viewpoint, following the path of our intuition and feelings, no longer separated from our body and the reality around us, and integrating at last our Soul's inner guidance and wellspring of love. The implications are profound.

Blog: <http://www.RewiringtheSoul.com>

Website: <http://www.AdvancedPersonalTherapy.com>

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## **Action to Thought** **by Rob McBride**

In the magic of our mind we can create spectacular scenarios. The key to making these dreams come true is to convert thought into action. Normally, we know what we want and even know what we need to do to achieve it. The difference between accomplishing what we most desire and simply a nice thought is to apply Action to Thought.

“If you can dream it, you can do it.” ~ *Walt Disney*

This doesn't have to be so difficult. Thinking of all we need to do in order to reach a specific objective can be overwhelming though it doesn't have to be so complicated. To bring Action to Thought, it is essential to determine the steps necessary to begin our journey. A pen and a paper can set the wheels in motion. To achieve what the magic in our mind imagines, we must be disciplined, clear and persistent.

We have to put the “pedal to the metal” to jumpstart our internal engine. It's much easier to remain in the fantasy of what might be rather than doing what needs to be done to make it a reality. Playing the mental game of, “What will be of me?” will lead only to the result of, “It is not for me to be!” We can make excuses or we can be disciplined to bring Action to Thought, both cannot be done at the same time.

The clearer our objectives, the easier it is to achieve them. How would a soccer game be with no goal or a basketball game with no basket? Without a clearly defined goal, it is difficult to complete what our mind creates. Someone may ask us, “How much farther do I have to go?” To which we may reply, “Where are you going?” If they answer, “I don't know,” we can in turn respond, “Then you have already arrived!” To quote one of the legends in profound thought, Yogi Berra says...

“If you don't know where you are going, you will wind up someplace else.”

In order not to “wind up someplace else,” it's fundamental to be clear in what we want.

When we are well on our way to what we desire, we must be very persistent so as not to get sidetracked on the way. Napoleon Hill, a pioneer in personal development, expressed it this way...

“Most great people have attained their greatest success just one step beyond their greatest failure.”

If everything were so easy, we would all have what we want right now. To get to “great,” we must act “greatly.” We all have a tendency to take the path of least resistance because it is much easier to go that way. For this reason, to become a shining star in the dark of the night instead of just one more in the mass of humanity it’s necessary to be persistent in putting Action to Thought.

The difference between dreaming and achieving is the action we take to corral our imagination and take specific steps to make it happen. Our minds are marvelous machines which can create incredible images about what we want and how we want to live. Those who achieve greatness are those who first create their burning desire in their mind and then put Action to Thought. ###

**Rob McBride** is an International Public Speaker who motivates, inspires and trains people. His keynotes, seminars and workshops enhance effectiveness and increase corporate productivity with concrete, dynamic tools which enable people to take control of their professional direction and destiny.

Visit his website at: <http://www.inspire.com.ve/rhm/>

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~ **A Special Gift** ~  
*Journey to Excellence*  
by **Rob McBride**

Embark on a journey to excellence with Juan José, a young man on a mission to find his "Special Gift." He is determined to find his reason for being and a foundation for living a plentiful and productive life. His travels are filled with adventure. Those he meets along the way are blessed with profound wisdom they share as he ventures on his Journey to Excellence. A Special Gift is a heart-warming story of a young man's transition to adulthood. Juan José's adventure is for young adults and for those young at heart. One is never too young to begin learning life's valuable lessons nor too old to re-evaluate the lessons learned.

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## **No, You're Not A Powerless Victim** **by Linda Sapadin, Ph.D.**

No, you're not helpless. No, you're not powerless. No, you're not a victim!

Sure there are some aspects of your life that you're not in control of. You didn't expect to get a serious illness, a financial reversal, a divorce, a kid on drugs. Other situations are less serious but can be just as frustrating. You hate your job; you're fighting with your spouse; your kids are mouthing off. In short: life has not turned out the way you expected it to. So what are you going to do about it? Be miserable? Give up? Sink into a depression? Spiral downward?

Or, are you going to figure out where your power lies. Maybe you need to brace yourself for chemo, begin family therapy, seek out the services of a headhunter. You're not locked up in jail. But, it may be that you're in the wrong marriage, wrong career, wrong approach to parenting. Reflect on the matter. Pinpoint the problem. Then make a decision as to how you'll continue to grow your future.

If, in contrast, you keep yourself in the helpless position of "I'm screwed; I have no choice," you reinforce an ineffectual mind-set. If you don't modify that now, what makes you think it'll be any easier as time goes on?

So, let's start being proactive right now.

Think of a situation in which you view yourself as a victim. If you're thinking about skipping this exercise by saying, "This is dumb" or "I can't do this," you're actually enacting the victim position. So instead of whining, do it!

As you reflect on this situation, see if you can discover where your power lies. The answer may not come to you right away but stay with it. In every situation, you've got power. Don't believe me? Listen to Viktor Frankel, a World War II concentration camp survivor:

"The one thing you can't take away from me is the way I choose to respond to what you do to me."

Just because you can't do everything doesn't mean you can't do anything. As much as you want to, you can't snap your fingers and make it all better. You can't close your eyes, click your heels and go home again. You can't make other people change; hell, you can't even make yourself change. All true, but so what?

Finish this sentence. "I don't know how to deal with the issue I'm facing but one thing I do know is ..."

Take the time to complete this sentence and you'll be on the road to discovering where your power lies. ###

**Linda Sapadin, Ph.D.** is a psychologist in private practice who specializes in helping people enrich their lives, enhance their relationships and overcome self-defeating patterns of behavior. For more information about her work, contact her at [lsapadin@drsapadin.com](mailto:lsapadin@drsapadin.com) or visit her website at <http://www.psychwisdom.com/>. Visit her newest website [www.sixstylesofprocrastination.com](http://www.sixstylesofprocrastination.com) which is devoted to understanding and overcoming debilitating procrastination patterns.

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**~ It's About Time! ~**

*The Six Styles of Procrastination and How to Overcome Them*  
by **Linda Sapadin, Jack Maguire**

Overcoming procrastination is one of those things we'll get around to--eventually. It's About Time! goes beyond time management books on this eternal problem by tracing procrastinating behavior to personality traits and early family dynamics. Using quizzes and case studies, psychologist Linda Sapadin helps readers find their own personal style and then helps them tailor an individual program for change.

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## **Spirituality Made Simple** by Owen Waters

You are a spiritual being, living in a material world and secretly endowed with infinite intelligence and creative power.

You only have to look within, to your true being, to connect with spiritual levels of consciousness. The more familiar you become with these expanded levels of consciousness, the more potential becomes available to you for the creation of a better life and a better world.

Each one of us is part of the all-pervasive consciousness which is behind all of Creation. This all-present, all-aware beingness, this Infinite Being, created the universe to experience itself from all possible perspectives.

You are an expression of Infinite Being, experiencing life from one individual point of view. Just as each snowflake is unique, so is each person. We are the eyes, ears, and hearts of Infinite Being as it experiences life from all possible perspectives.

As self-aware individuals with freewill, we choose our pathways through life. Spirituality is a path which, sooner or later, all individuals will choose because the objective of the human experience is to find the way back to the ultimate state of consciousness from which we originally came.

As expressions of Infinite Being, we literally have infinite potential. In the basic stages of human experience we use just 10% of the potential of the brain. Once you move into the spiritual stages of human experience, your potential opens up and your higher abilities begin to flourish.

Intuition, precognition, and healing abilities are all normal attributes of spiritual development. With them, your life becomes more meaningful and you become more equipped, in your own unique way, to make the world a better place.

Three easy steps to spiritual consciousness:

1. Look up: Recognize your spiritual nature.

Know that you are a spiritual being in a physical world. Know that the real you is ageless and immortal. You are part of the spiritual essence which fills the universe and you are here to experience physical life as a human being.

2. Look in: Look within and open your heart.

Your heart is the gateway to spiritual consciousness. Once you begin to think with an open heart, you are stepping from basic human consciousness into the spiritual stages of human

development. This is exactly what we came to earth to accomplish, because finding spirituality is the mission of the human experience.

It may take courage to move into heart-centered consciousness, but once you acquire the expanded view of a life filled with love, you will never want to give it up for anything. You will soon find that worries and fears can be transformed by the greatest power in the universe - that of unconditional love.

3. Look out: Make the outside world a better place.

When you see life through the lens of your heart, you see how your innermost joy and passion continually prompts you to develop your own unique talents. When you recognize those talents, you can acquire the skills that bring them into active expression.

When you spend your working days doing what you love and loving what you do, then your life becomes a constant experience of heartfelt joy. You can bring light and joy into the world by engaging in heartfelt action and doing work that you love. You can also make a positive difference by using spiritual energy to heal the world and make it a better place.

Look up, look in, look out

These three steps to spirituality can transform your life in a very powerful and positive sense. This is a message of spiritual freedom which has the power to bring a special depth of meaning and purpose into people's lives.

Be sure to tell all your friends who could benefit from it. Spread the news and help make the world a better place! ###

The above article was from the book *Spirituality Made Simple* by Owen Waters. [download here](#).

**Owen Waters** is editor and cofounder of Infinite Being LLC. He promotes a philosophy of spiritual empowerment through inner connection to the source of your ultimate potential. For more Spiritual Words of Empowerment subscribe to his [free weekly newsletter](#). For the full picture, read Owen's book, [The Shift: The Revolution in Human Consciousness](#).

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## ~ 7 Words to Turn Painful States Into Healing Powers ~

by Guy Finley

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## **What Is Spiritual Healing?** *from **Spiritual Techniques for Healing the Body***

Spiritual healing is the ability of your mind and soul to repair your ailments. These ailments are not limited mere physical wounds, but can also relate to mental illness and self esteem issues. Many modern day physicians invoke the idea of spiritual healing along with western medicine as a means to promote the health of their patients.

The belief that a healthy mind equals a healthy body is not new to anyone. However, the idea that a positive spiritual existence might heal the body is sometimes misunderstood.

But, those who carefully examine their own lives can probably see where their mental state inflicts harm on their physical health. An easy example is the “when it rains it pours” syndrome. Just when everything seems to be going poorly some people find that they wind up physically sick. It is hard to believe that the two are not in some way connected. The same can be said for working things in reverse. Start feeling positive and having a more balanced energy and physical illness can also dissipate.

Spiritual healing is often associated with religion and faith healing. There are many religions, including Christianity, that believe strongly in the power of prayer to heal illness. The belief in divine intervention has been widely documented. The laying of hands or other religious rituals are claimed to heal everything from cancer to blindness. This is not the same as spiritually healing your soul so that your body can be more healthy.

True spiritual healing requires work on ones self. It requires you to figure out how to get your body and energy into focused balance. There may be relation to the belief in a higher power along with meditation, but in this context it is not specifically about divine intervention. ###

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## **A Course in Miracles**

### **Lesson 53**

Today we will review the following:

**(11) My meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world.**

Since the thoughts of which I am aware do not mean anything, the world that pictures them can have no meaning. What is producing this world is insane, and so is what it produces. Reality is not insane, and I have real thoughts as well as insane ones. I can therefore see a real world, if I look to my real thoughts as my guide for seeing.

**(12) I am upset because I see a meaningless world.**

Insane thoughts are upsetting. They produce a world in which there is no order anywhere. Only chaos rules a world that represents chaotic thinking, and chaos has no laws. I cannot live in peace in such a world. I am grateful that this world is not real, and that I need not see it at all unless I choose to value it. And I do not choose to value what is totally insane and has no meaning.

**(13) A meaningless world engenders fear.**

The totally insane engenders fear because it is completely undependable, and offers no grounds for trust. Nothing in madness is dependable. It holds out no safety and no hope. But such a world is not real. I have given it the illusion of reality, and have suffered from my belief in it. Now I choose to withdraw this belief, and place my trust in reality. In choosing this, I will escape all the effects of the world of fear, because I am acknowledging that it does not exist.

**(14) God did not create a meaningless world.**

How can a meaningless world exist if God did not create it? He is the Source of all meaning, and everything that is real is in His Mind. It is in my mind too, because He created it with me. Why should I continue to suffer from the effects of my own insane thoughts, when the perfection of creation is my home? Let me remember the power of my decision, and recognize where I really abide.

**(15) My thoughts are images that I have made.**

Whatever I see reflects my thoughts. It is my thoughts that tell me where I am and what I am. The fact that I see a world in which there is suffering and loss and death shows me that I am seeing only the representation of my insane thoughts, and am not allowing my real thoughts to cast their beneficent light on what I see. Yet God's way is sure. The images I have made cannot prevail against Him because it is not my will that they do so. My will is His, and I will place no other gods before Him.

## Commentary by Allen Watson

Today's review carries enormous impact for me. In each of the short review paragraphs are sentences that convey to me the awesome power of my own mind: its power to choose its thoughts, and thus choose the world that it sees. I have real thoughts as well as insane ones. I can therefore see a real world, if I look to my real thoughts as my guide for seeing.

I am grateful that this world is not real, and that I need not see it at all unless I choose to value it. And I do not choose to value what is totally insane and has no meaning.

Now I choose to withdraw this belief, and place my trust in reality. In choosing this, I will escape all the effects of the world of fear, because I am acknowledging that it does not exist.

Let me remember the power of my decision, and recognize where I really abide.

The images I have made cannot prevail against Him because it is not my will that they do so. My will is His, and I will place no other gods before Him.

If I remember the power of my decision, I can choose not to value what is insane; I can choose to withdraw my belief in it. I do not have to accept that the images I have made have power to overcome God's Will; I do not have to make gods out of them. I can look to my real thoughts and let them guide my seeing. The words "choose" and "decision" and "will" echo through these paragraphs. What power has been given to my mind!

I once read these ten review lessons onto tape; they fit on less than a 30-minute tape, read quite slowly. Recording them had tremendous impact on me, and listening to the tape several dozen times had even more impact. These fifty pithy paragraphs are a remarkable overview of the Course's thought system. And as I read them aloud, I found myself putting deep feeling into sentences such as "I cannot live in peace in such a world. I am grateful that this world is not real. And I do not choose to value what is totally insane and has no meaning".

Every time I came to a line that said, "I do not choose" or "I choose," it was as though something deep within me was shifting. I felt a growing determination, and a sense of being enabled by God to choose what my mind would think and what my perception would see. Try reading today's lesson aloud and see how it feels. ###

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