

Cultivate Life!

MAGAZINE

ISSUE 63



Cultivate Life! magazine

Cultivate Life! magazine is published by www.trans4mind.com

Editors: Greg Willson and Peter Shepherd

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Affirmation for Fearless Living:

I cannot hope to change the unwanted world that I experience without first working to change those parts of me that are, at present, creating the world that I feel needs to be changed.

—*Guy Finley*

Start from Where You Are by **Geoffrey J. Canavan**

In this crazy world of perception we so often demand that our own truth, our own success and our own happiness just goes away because then we're left with the illusion of what we are and it can be easier to believe in the illusion.

Fear of success is one of our greatest obstacles to growth and development.

Sometimes, on top of this, we fear losing that perceived identity in finding the truth of who we are. And some of us believe that success and happiness come with a very high price tag attached and involve some degree of compromise. We cannot accept that having everything we ever wanted is not only possible, but our natural state. It is almost as if we make a decision not to take the easy path but use instead a much more difficult route.

But success, happiness or personal truth will not ask you to give up anything of your self.

However, fear will demand that you surrender some aspect of success, happiness or personal truth because, in the presence of true success, happiness and personal truth, fear cannot exist.

The darkness of the world cannot make the decision to stay if we have already made the decision that the light within us will illuminate the past. Now we will start to see the world that for so long we wanted to see but only witnessed in fleeting glances.

Diminish any sense of failure, disillusionment and separation by dealing with your fear of having everything you ever dreamed of.

Sometimes we are aware of success and sometime we really feel like it's gone. As we play out this story the sense of our own achievement and the sense of our own success is nearly seen as dangerous because it seems like it is there one day and then it's not there. It feels uncertain so we start to view our own sense of purpose as being without stability. We never see how sad or how diminishing our ability to align our selves with failure is.

Success is our real identity. It is where we can release our selves to a world where freedom awaits and truth will always shine.

Real success does not involve sacrifice or loss of any kind.

Success and happiness manifest when we start to realize that we are relinquishing nothing. Instead, we are finding our true selves and reconnecting with what we thought we had lost.

Look Within

Always remember that the truth of who you are lies within. The real power of what you can be has to come from inside your self.

It's a futile exercise to look for success outside your self when true success, true happiness can only come from inside.

The world we live in is full of perceptions and is full of ideas of our own limitation. We can go through life constantly looking outside ourselves, constantly trying to find what we can never take ownership of. Yet the true realization of what we are must teach us that

everything we need to be is already and firmly in our hearts awaiting the small change in perception, the small willingness to no longer see our selves as outsiders in our own personal world.

We all believe in lack, we've all experienced lack but our greatest lack is the non-realization of our own true self and the life that we can afford our selves through that knowledge. We must learn to let go of the purposes we may have assigned to the past. If we don't, the future will just be a continuation of the past in which failure and disappointment thrive. We need to engage on a course whereby we change all this and where we can in essence release our selves from continuous disappointment and failure.

We have taught our selves to preserve our identity even in failure and so the things that can save us will often appear to threaten us or threaten the identity we have become so attached to.

This need not be so if we all learn to look at life in a different manner and if we can find our hope within every fiber that we are, all based in truth, all based on the realization that we are, in essence, our own hero — just waiting to reconnect with the world of truth and harmony.

Take Three Steps

Reconnecting with that truth and harmony starts with the recognition and acknowledgment of our feelings of being '**One Step From Meltdown**' — that last vestige of hope in a world that teaches hopelessness.

From there we have the potential to find a better perspective and move to the **First Floor** of our new experience of life.

The final step involves making the necessary changes as we move to the **Ignition** stage and create the perfect life we were born to live.

By going through One Step From Meltdown (recognizing and acknowledging the truth), First Floor (looking from a better perspective) and Ignition (making changes) you undertake the process of reconnection to the true You; the You who deserves the happiness and success you crave.

You make your self more complete and successful. You return to the person you always were. You simply re-engage with your true self.

It is here that you find all freedom and all the perfection of the perfect You you were born as. You are in tune with your own life, your own success and your own self.

In finding your self you open a world where you are seen in the truth of who You really are.

You see a different world and the world sees a different You.

It Could be You!

Alan is a salesman struggling to meet his targets every month. With every perceived 'failure' to measure up his confidence in his selling ability diminishes and falling short becomes his trademark.

Barbara thought she married the love of her life, only to discover that he was a controlling bully. At first she did her best to please him but now her main aim is not to upset him or give him any reason to launch yet another brutal verbal attack and list the many reasons that she is such a bad wife and mother.

Chris has never had any problem earning money but is always broke. No matter how much income he generates, his expenditure always exceeds it, as life seems to throw up expensive crises that swallow up all the cash and credit he can lay his hands on. He is now deeply in debt and has run out places and people from whom he can borrow money.

Alan, Barbara and Chris are all now feeling 'one step from meltdown' and thinking that there must be another way.

They each believe that they are trapped by their circumstances and can't see a way out and yet, for these fictitious characters and for every one of us, the beginning of change for the better is no more than a thought away.

There is no time, no place or no situation where success is absent, as long as we believe in our own truth and as long as we do not take ownership of fear.

Make Change Happen

We can do much more than just cherish a choice for change or cherish a longing to do things differently and better. We can actually start to see our selves in a whole new light.

We can start to accommodate what we know we are and we can tap into the resourceful wealth that is inherent in our make up and nature, often obscured but never, never lost.

Looking at the purpose of the position you find yourself in is a real benefit to the enactment of change. In other words, ask your self 'what purpose does my current situation fulfill and how is this purpose impacting on my own self-belief and my own integrity? What am I getting out of being broke/alone/afraid/sick? Who am I without my story of being broke/alone/afraid/sick?'

This process requires a depth of honesty that many people are not ready, willing or able to give.

If there's a reason you are in a situation that you are not happy with (and there is always a reason) then equally there is a reason and a way you can change. The choice for change is all-important in the course of achieving our own success.

Recognize and acknowledge that you are 'one step from meltdown' and be willing to believe that life can be better. Then actively look for better ways to live, think and act.

There is another way. There are choices. There is always a solution.

Crucial Questions

Before Alan goes to his next sales meeting, he admits that he is not happy with what's happening and decides to have a willingness to look at his life differently and in doing so, to look at himself and the role he is playing within his current situation. He simply asks himself 'Am I happy? Am I sad? Am I able to continue? Do I want to continue? Are there any positives to focus on?'

The next time Barbara's husband decides to verbally attack her she can choose not to accept his version of who she is. In doing this she begins to examine the purpose of this relationship — for better for worse, good or bad. She looks at the reasoning behind her staying or leaving or changing this relationship. What's in it for her? When she honestly examines what purpose this situation serves then she can focus on her desire for difference.

Chris can break the cycle of lack by looking at the history of his lack, studying his non-abundance and being aware of his right for choice.

History — including the history of lack — has a tendency to repeat itself.

By deciding to openly acknowledge himself and his situation Chris can now begin the reconciliation of a life where abundance has failed him. The simple steps of looking at where he is and in truth deciding for difference become his passport to a whole new world which does not include not having enough or being without.

Chris learns about deciding for change and through this he will see how lack and non-abundance have been his prison.

A Better Perspective

Think about what happens when you move from the ground floor to the first floor of any structure. The perspective changes!

Once we have looked at and acknowledged the real truth of our situation 'on the ground' we can make the decision to move up to the first floor. This is where we can see any situation from a different perspective.

From our new vantage point, we can decide 'I can change; I can move on, I can explain my position to people in the context of re-evaluating a need for change. I can do nothing and even though I look at what surrounds me I have an option to stay as I am.'

At first floor level there are always options and opportunities.

The question is now 'how do I transform what I see as a difficulty into an opportunity?' There is no point in engaging in a process without the determination for difference in ones' life and that difference must be apparent in the form of improved circumstances.

If we take the example of Alan the salesman his 'one step from meltdown' moments were those many meetings where the sales didn't happen, where he questioned his career direction and where his ability to deliver results was under threat. He is now recognizing some of the issues associated with his career and the feelings that these issues give rise to in his daily life.

By moving to a First Floor thought process he can now focus on simple things such as the product he sells, the market, the demand, the company he works for, why he continues working in this field and any other issues that may be relevant. It is here, at First Floor level, that he can unveil an honest assessment of himself and his circumstances and create a profile of his life/work relationship.

In this process he can focus on the difference between an unsuccessful sales meeting and an unsuccessful self.

Within the truth of starting from that point where he sees himself as successful Alan can begin to honestly evaluate the situations around him, make appropriate decisions and take appropriate action for change.

In practical terms, the product he sells might need to be updated. Maybe its failure is a reflection on the marketplace? The company he works for might be working off a system not appropriate for the current financial circumstance. There are endless reasons to examine but with his emphasis on his own successfulness these reasons will soon become apparent as he learns that success in any area is not about self-blame.

It's all about self-awareness.

From First Floor level Barbara learns about healthy self-love and realizes that she does not have to accept her husband's version of who she is. She views her situation from a better perspective. She can see where she has compromised her self and what she can do to develop her Self-respect. She accepts that she does not have to take ownership of or responsibility for her husband's opinion of her. She starts to recognize that she is doing her best and to acknowledge her personal right to success and happiness.

Moving to the First Floor Chris begins the empowerment of his own future and sees that it is just as easy to embrace abundance as it is to embrace lack and just as easy to embrace success, as it is failure. By looking from the First Floor, regardless of present circumstances, Chris now has the opportunity to focus differently on the world.

Through this different focus new opportunities will become apparent and hence a new abundance can be found.

All of this will come from Chris' willingness to see the world differently and fundamentally accept his birthright of success, his birthright of fullness and his birthright of completion.

The world teaches us separation. The heart teaches us that even what may have seemed like a changeless destiny can now be afforded an opportunity to change.

Within your heart lies your true identity.

This is your passport to freedom as you start to realize that in truth you will never be content with anything less than the real you.

It is here you find completion. It is here you find truth, honesty and happiness. There is a real alternative and there is a real escape. It all emanates from realizing your self worth and your self value.

The realization that the choice is yours is often the hardest thing for us to do but it's in that realization that we can then make the choice for change, difference, and enlightenment and the experience of living in the true fashion and in the true sense of what we are.

Light Up!

Every situation has a point of Ignition. Ignition is where the interaction begins. So in the context of change — a change of direction in lifestyle, thinking, working or living — we also find a point of Ignition.

Igniting the process for change is the beginning of real ownership of your own destiny.

Ignition involves making decisions based on your determination for a better way of living. Your historic ‘failures’ are no longer your future influences.

With the full knowledge of where they really are and the truth of the situations that surround them, Alan, Barbara and Chris can now look towards the phase of Ignition for change. They can decide on the most appropriate action they can take while maintaining the integrity of their own successful Self.

This integrity and this willingness for change become the map to guide and direct their choice for a future of difference. They can break past patterns and old habits and embrace a future determined by the honesty and direction that comes from the belief in their own self-success.

Armed with that feeling, which is probably the most powerful and abundant feeling you can have, they can now commence the phase of Ignition. The awareness of this newfound sense of personal integrity and success will lift their experience of the world.

Success loves success and so the attraction of this honesty will bring opportunities as they separate their sense of self from the old world of underachievement, victimhood and lack.

One Real And Perfect You

Don’t confuse a failed situation with a failed person. Remember that there is no place for a substitute in your own life.

There is only one real and perfect You.

We all put on different faces in different situations but there is a core perfect You that doesn’t change. Within that core you find and nourish the successful and complete Self that you may have compromised by circumstances or situations of difficulty.

Never give up on yourself — because you don’t have to.

At the point of Ignition we begin a journey whereupon interaction has a focus coming from that core of self-expression, honesty and truth. We have nothing to hide, nothing to apologize for and nothing to fear. Ignition is the beginning of the end of intimidation and a sense of loss.

Hope is restored through a deep understanding and a total acceptance of ‘I am okay’.

This is the truth about real success is the realization that, regardless of circumstances, history, health, race, financial situation, education, gender, age, religion, social status or any other external influence, you are perfect and everything is okay. ###

The above is the first chapter from *See You On Venus* by Geoffrey J. Canavan

Geoffrey J. Canavan is an Author, Business and Personal advisor, we work with mid sized, owner managed and large corporate enterprises.

The focus of Geoffrey’s work is about letting go of your investment in limitation. Geoffrey’s work is also about hope, observation ,integrity and the power of realism.

Geoffrey's vast business experience has led to a deep understanding of the nature of success and to the belief that, regardless of circumstances, education, social status, history or any other outside influence, success is an inside job, inherent in, available to and attainable by everybody.

Our objective is to work with our clients to further develop their success potential.

Visit the author's website: www.geoffreycanavan.com

See You on Venus! is a book about learning to let go of your investment in self-imposed limitations so that you can dismantle the blocks you have created to your innate freedom, success, choice, happiness and completion.

It is also a book about hope, observation and reconnecting with your lost self — the self of perfect success, happiness and harmony. Like a half-remembered song, each one of us carries a distant memory of how that perfection feels, but this memory is clouded by what we have learned on our journey through life.

The message is simple: you have the power to bring together the parts of your self that have become fragmented and to become one daring and truthful realization of the perfect star you truly are.

See You on Venus! shows that you can stop undermining yourself and that you can hold the belief of the truth of what you can be. Remember, never lose moments in your own time when a decision to make a new choice or to see the world in a new way can be so freeing.

Whatever aspect of your life you want to focus on, however you define 'success' or 'happiness', wherever you want to take that inner perfection, it's really only a matter of realizing the unlimited resource that you already are (and always were) and reconnecting with what you have forgotten about your perfect self.

We all start perfectly successful. We all start complete. We acquire failure.

Real success is based on who we are within rather than anything we come by externally. The willingness to look at ourselves in a light of perfection, success, inclusion and completion provides a real opportunity to move forward in the true meaning of peace and happiness.

In this book Geoffrey Canavan explores the intrinsic nature of success and produces a universal road map for real life that can be tailored to corporate or individual needs. A must read for business and individual decision-making.

Jerry Flynn, MD Sony Pictures

There is a way of thinking that will bring peace and happiness into our life; that will free us to the memory of a perfectly whole, completely loving and forgotten Self. It is an awareness that mystics and philosophers through the ages have tried to explain and teach how to access. Geoffrey Canavan is a modern mystic with the unique ability of explaining

why and how our lives function the way they do and— most importantly—in concepts we can relate to and using language we understand, showing us how to make choices that will change our self perception, and then the world that it has made for us.

In a world made from the belief that there is “something wrong with me,” “See You On Venus,” offers a refreshing and needed alternative to the beliefs that have made the ego’s perception seem true. In a world given to finding better ways to defend ourselves and maintain the “distance” between us, it offers a way to find real healing through forgiveness and joining. For anyone willing to be truly happy or to “risk” finding the truth of who and what they really are, “See You On Venus,” will be a blessing and a joy!

Tom Carpenter, Author and founder of The Forgiveness Project

More than ever, individuals, families, organizations, and governments need to create a vision for success that helps to deliver true happiness, abundance and freedom. Geoffrey Canavan shows us the way.

Robert Holden Ph.D author of *Shift Happens, Happiness Now. Success Intelligence and Be Happy*

See You on Venus is published by Trans4mind

Available in Kindle format at <http://astore.amazon.com/cultivatelife-20/detail/B005K2J4ZA>

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Discover the Greatness Within by Guy Finley

Within all human beings, no matter what part of the world they're from, what their environment has been, what culture they come from, what their religious tradition is, there lives a certain kind of greatness. Everyone knows that this greatness lives within them. We call it different things, but the bottom line is that we all have a central wish to be as good, true, kind, and as profitable a human being that we can be. It's in our very DNA. And that divine code if you will, is the same in every human being. We just dress it differently.

Within every individual there lives a wish to embody something grand, beautiful, kind, true, and loving. None of us – no matter where you go in the world – can escape the *need* we have to realize the truth of ourselves. And this longing we have to be free, to know ourselves, and to express ourselves, was given to us by something sacred. Nothing in the world has the right to take it away from us.

We all have common needs: the need to love; to grow as human beings; to continually perfect ourselves; and to integrate our lives with the universe around us. These needs are common to all of us, regardless of the place in the world we live in or the discipline we grew up with. The commonality of these needs means they were placed in us by something that came *before* our culture – that came *before* our religious backgrounds and traditions.

It is honoring the true needs we have as human beings that places us in relationship with that which put those needs within us – that places us in relationship with that which transcends all boundaries, that transcends all of the moralities and the mores, and all the other things that currently govern and divide human beings. If you know the truth of yourself, you will find freedom, because to know the truth of yourself is to come back into relationship with these essential needs that were put in us so that we could discover our connection with something that is timeless.

We share an uncommon possibility as human beings, which arises from the fact that we all share common heartaches. No matter where you go in the world, you'll find men and women in one way or another whose dreams have been broken, who have lost something that they love or someone they love, who have a regret or a disappointment that they're unable to shake free from.

As a rule, when we meet people with problems, the first thing we tend to do is distance ourselves from them because “I already have enough pain.” But we can start to understand that in the truest sense of the word, this man or this woman is in fact a celestial brother or sister because we have the same needs. And if I am going to be able to help another human being – to hear, to understand, to bring any light whatsoever into the heart or mind of another individual – I do so because I have found that understanding first in myself. And the extent to which I am capable of adding some light to the life of another human being, is the extent to which I have first found that light in myself, and know that

we all hold that light in common. In that common sharing of a new understanding lies the uncommon possibility for a transcendent life that we all have as human beings.

There have been great individuals in the past who have truly helped and changed mankind – individuals like Christ, Buddha, and Mohammed. Compared to them, our efforts to help one or two people discover the truth of themselves and their connection to the sacred may seem insignificant. But one of the most beautiful things you will ever learn is that no one on this earth is more important than you – not important because other people say you're important, or because you have some social standing or your own possessions that lend you a sense of power, but because it is the individual who changes the world.

Long before there was Christianity, or Buddhism, or Taoism, or Hinduism, or Islam, or any other religion, there was an individual who felt compelled to learn the truth of himself in response to a need seeded in him by the celestial. When that individual was touched by what he had reached for – and what was reaching for him, then he brought forth what he discovered within himself. And those discoveries became what we now call the world religions. They all started with an individual. And each of us, in our own way, and in scale, is meant to do the same thing.

Every truth ever discovered—each new light that will ever burn bright—already exists in our consciousness. All we will ever know and share about love, humility, compassion, and sacrifice—the secrets that will reveal and then resolve old sorrows—awaits us within ourselves. Hidden in this truth is our great promise, both as individuals and as a race of beings.

Add to that this one important and beautiful idea: You cannot add a measure of light to any measure of darkness that doesn't change the darkness everywhere. This is a law in physics. How much more true is it when it comes to us and the world we live in? If I understand a truth, if I embody it, if I become the instrument of that awareness, then wherever I go, whatever I do, no matter who I'm with or what is taking place, the very discovery and relationship I have to that little bit of light in myself changes *everything* around me, and the Universe itself.

What is really empowering is the recognition that this little bit of understanding, this little bit of awareness, this little love we may have for what is true and timeless, changes all human beings, makes it possible for all creatures on this earth to have a different order of being. It is possible because the being of the individual changes first, and then that higher being *is* all there is. ####

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 to learn how you can help change the world.

Special Offer:

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/>

~ The Essential Laws of Fearless Living ~ *Find the Power to Never Feel Powerless Again* by Guy Finley

YOU have an unlimited storehouse of untapped energy lying dormant in your own heart and mind. It is the secret source of all that is wise, loving, timeless, and truly you.

To touch this vibrant force of Life is to be lifted above any limitation... given the solution to any painful problem... and gifted with a whole new way to look at a life whose beauty never fails to amaze you.

The way to contact this core power is through a whole new way to use your attention. Used consciously, attention acts just like a bridge — it connects you to what your heart desires.

The secret to being fearless and free is to use your attention to connect yourself to the living ground of the present moment.

For more information go to <http://bit.ly/gYTTNU>

~ Secrets of Spiritual Success ~ *The Lost Elements of Enlightenment* by Guy Finley

Realize a genuine success that is perfect, confident, and totally secure!

Discover the secrets of awakening a new part of yourself that can brighten and empower every area of your life -- both in the material world, and in higher worlds as well.

Find out exactly how in *Secrets of Spiritual Success: The Lost Elements of Enlightenment* — a 7-hour audio album that was recorded live during Guy Finley's 2010 *Talks in the Pines* 5-Day Workshop.

Go to <http://bit.ly/hg5WXl>

~ 7 Words to Turn Painful States Into Healing Powers ~ by Guy Finley

Free MP3 audio download

By Special Arrangement — A free 60-minute MP3 download exclusively for subscribers of *Cultivate Life! magazine*.

Go to <http://bit.ly/fNKaki>

Clearing Cognitive Cobwebs: *The Actor-Observer Bias* by Chuck Gallozzi

We often wonder why people do the things they do. In our attempt to understand, we frequently arrive at false conclusions. Our failures to understand others can lead to lost opportunities or needless trouble. Some of our misunderstandings become habitual, forming a part of the way we view life. Although we don't like to admit it, we all have biases. You see, our brain loves biases because it likes to arrive at conclusions as quickly as possible. Figuring out why people act as they do can be tedious. After all, there can be countless explanations. So, it's far easier, and quicker, to stereotype people.

When driving, were you ever cut off by a jerk? When shopping, did you ever have to deal with a rude sales person? At work, were you ever told what to do by an incompetent supervisor? If so, chances are you are suffering from a bias! Words like *jerk*, *rude*, and *incompetent* are labels or shortcuts that allow us to 'understand' others without taking the time to investigate the cause of their actions. Did you ever stop to think how strange it is that when *you* cut off someone on the highway, you always have a good reason for doing so, but when someone cuts you off, he or she is a jerk! This is an example of the *Actor-Observer Bias*.

In a word, when we do something undesirable, we blame our environment for causing us to act that way, but when someone else does something we don't approve of, we blame them, their character, their personality, or their nature. For example, Tom angrily snaps at Larry in the office. And when confronted by Larry and asked to explain, Tom answers, "Sorry about that. I'm having a bad day. I'm under a lot of stress today."

In other words, Tom sees himself as a nice guy who occasionally acts rudely, not because he is rude, but because he is under a great deal of stress. But when someone upsets him, Tom never thinks, "Oh, he must be having a bad day." Rather, Tom thinks, "What an idiot! What a jerk! He has some nerve! Who does he think he is?" So, we are soft on ourselves when we are the Actor and harsh on others when we are the Observer (watching others).

Why It's Important to understand *The Actor-Observer Bias*

1. We cannot solve problems unless we know their cause, and if we're not careful, *The Actor-Observer Bias* can obscure the cause. Suppose, for example, the government wants to improve the educational system and asks teachers and students why the students are getting poor grades. The teachers are apt to blame the students ("They don't study or do their homework. They can't concentrate. They are restless. They don't take their curriculum seriously."). And the students are apt to blame teachers and the educational system ("We have poor teachers. The material is boring. Subjects aren't explained clearly enough. We have poor text books."). The Actor-Observer Bias reminds us to avoid falling into the trap of studying just one side of the issue. We need to step back and objectively study all sides of the problem.

2. If we are unaware of the AOB (Actor-Observer Bias) and how we unfairly judge others, we are apt to have fewer friends, less success, and little happiness.

3. When we allow ourselves to fall prey to the AOB, we drift away from human compassion and find it easy to demonize others. What is a man who steals a loaf of bread to feed his starving family? Is he a thief or a loving father and husband?

One of the most powerful countries in the world is one of the weakest. Despite its incredible potential, the U.S. government can't get anything done because of partisan bickering. The AOB is rampant in the halls of congress.

4. Life itself can be at stake. On September 21, 2011, Troy Davis was executed in Georgia for killing a police officer 20 years earlier. The execution took place despite new evidence that created reasonable doubt and the appeals for clemency from Pope Benedict XVI, former President Jimmy Carter, former FBI Director William Sessions, former Georgia Supreme Court Chief Justice Norman Fletcher, Rev. Al Sharpton, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and former U.S. presidential candidate Bob Barr. You can read about the case [here](#).

Why Are We Susceptible to *The Actor-Observer Bias*?

1. We are especially susceptible to the AOB, and other biases, when we are in a state of stress because we lack the energy to make exhaustive examinations and want to make quick decisions.

2. When we observe someone else perform an action, we focus on the actor, but when we perform an action, we focus on the situation. This is because we are aware of our thoughts and the situation we are in, but unaware of the thoughts and circumstances of others. Also, when people catch our attention, we focus on them, but the situation merely fades into the background.

This is particularly true with our interactions with strangers. Since we know a great deal more about our friends and family members, we are less likely to succumb to the AOB with them.

3. Since we strive to maintain a positive image of ourselves, we are apt to credit ourselves when we succeed and blame circumstances when we fail.

4. We tend to see ourselves as more complex and multi-faceted than others. So, we believe there are many factors influencing our behavior. But since strangers are 'less complicated' than us, their behavior is simple to explain. (They're stupid!)

5. We are inclined to believe that people get what they deserve and deserve what they get. (This is called the *Just-World Phenomenon*). So when others fail, it is because they are lazy, stupid, or incompetent. But when we fail, it is because life is unfair!

The *Just-World Phenomenon* can have horrible repercussions, such as when rape victims are blamed instead of helped and perpetrators are set free instead of brought to justice.

6. The AOB is prevalent in cultures that promote individualism, such as in the United States and Western Europe. But in interdependent cultures, such as those in Asia and Latin America, the importance of the group and getting along with others is stressed. So, when

members misbehave, more weight is given to the circumstances that influenced their errant behavior than to the individual's character or personality.

How Can We Eliminate *The Actor-Observer Bias*?

1. Become aware of the extenuating circumstances. The cure for the AOB is empathy, but how can we walk in the shoes of another if we do not have their shoes (understanding of their circumstances)?
2. Compassion. It is not always possible to learn the circumstances that others are in, but if we always remember that we all make mistakes and everyone is doing the best they can under the circumstances, it becomes easy to be tolerant and live in fellowship instead of friction.

Caveats

1. *He is stupid* is not a fact; it is an interpretation. Remind yourself that all your conclusions, experiences, and beliefs are merely interpretations and subject to error. Although your brain loves to make decisions as quickly as possible, learn to stop and think things through before acting.
2. Sadly, some religions thrive on the AOB, demonizing those of other faiths. Novelist Anne Lamott expressed it well when she wrote, "You can safely assume that you've created God in your own image when it turns out that God hates all the same people you do."

Yet, religion can be a beautiful thing, for as Indian Saint Mata Amritanandamayi Devi ("Amma") said, "There is no harm in having many religions and faiths, but it is harmful to think that they are different and that one faith is higher and the other one is lower. Children, do not see the differences. See the unity in them and the great ideals that they teach."

3. Good advice is also offered by Victor Daniels, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Sonoma State University, California, "We must learn to tailor our concepts to fit reality, instead of trying to stuff reality into our concepts."
4. We need to remember that we see the world not as it is, but as we are. Troubled people see a troubling world; angry people see a hostile world, and loving people see a loving world.
5. "We should be lenient in our judgment, because often the mistakes of others would have been ours had we had the opportunity to make them." (Dr. Rasmus Larssen Alsaker, 1883~1960)
6. "For all right judgment of any man or things it is useful, nay, essential, to see his good qualities before pronouncing on his bad." (Thomas Carlyle, 1795~1881)
7. Remember that when we judge another, we do not define them, but define ourselves.
8. "A man is not good or bad for one action." (Thomas Fuller, 1608~1661)
9. Double Olympic Men's Sailing Gold Medal champion, Ian Percy, reminds us that "We judge others by their behavior. We judge ourselves by our intentions."

10. If we must judge others, let's do so as we judge stained-glass windows: only in their best light.

Helpful Book to Clear the Cobwebs from Your Mind

Social Cognition: Making Sense of People by Ziva Kunda ###

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.

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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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Three Habit Stories by Beca Lewis

Story One:

For over 6 years, I had eaten peanuts in the shell for breakfast. This may be a crazy breakfast but I loved it all the same. However, every time I cracked a peanut, little peanut pieces flew around which required some careful cleanup afterward. Then one day Del decided this was the day I could learn the easy way to eat peanuts. Instead of breaking them in half I just had to look, or feel, for the dimple in the top of the peanut, give a slight push and the peanut opened easily, with very little flinging of pieces.

I was amazed to learn I had been cracking peanuts the hard way for years. That was the easiest part of the lesson. Ever since then I have to remind myself constantly, “Not that way,” as I crack instead of push, “this way.” I am still working on eating peanuts the easy way.

Story Two:

When we used to go to an office there was a time in the morning that we had to use a swipe card to get in before the doors were officially unlocked. The office had three doors, two of which are right beside each other. One day another person and I reached the two doors at the same time.

I swiped my card in the one door as he swiped his in the other. As I did so, he turned to me and said, “What? This card works on that door too?” He had worked in that office for almost two years and had taken the longer route to his office all that time because, obviously, the first person who had shown him how to use the card showed him how to open the side door. For two years, he had never thought to try the card in the other door, or even noticed that other people entered through different doors.

Story Three:

We had two cars, therefore two huge car keys to carry around on our key chains. I had taken one set of keys off my chain since I never used the other car. I kept the keys in a bowl by the door. Then one day we decided that I best put the keys back on the chain. I looked in the bowl and they weren't there.

I then remembered that I had thought of taking the one set with us when we were traveling and I decided that I must not have returned it to the bowl afterwards. I searched our traveling stuff and it wasn't there. For the next few months, every time I thought about it I would look for the keys. In the car I would look under the seats, in the glove compartments, in desk drawers—anywhere I thought I might have put them.

One day Del decided to take the Thule off the top of one of the cars. He went to the box where we keep keys that we rarely use to get those specific keys and—yes—you guessed it, there were my car keys. I remembered then that when I was cleaning one day I had put the keys in the box for rarely used keys.

Why didn't I look there? Because as soon as I realized they weren't in the bowl I assumed that I had not returned the keys to their proper place after traveling, because I had accepted that I am a person that misplaces keys.

Imagine what would have happened if I would have said to myself instead, "There is only One Mind and that Mind is intelligent and never misplaces anything. Therefore, this mistaken belief about myself is not true and cannot affect my world."

Changing patterns, or habitual habits, of how we do things takes five steps:

- It must occur to us that there is another (and easier) way.
- We must be willing to learn this new way.
- We have to learn the new way.
- We have to actually *do* the new way
- We have to remember that we learned it!

Which makes me think that perhaps the most valuable service we can offer each other is to be willing, to become aware, and to learn and live the Truth as an example and a reminder that we all already know there is only One. Imagine the result! ###

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."

Sign up for **Beca's** free Shift Ezine and Ecourses here: <http://budurl.com/lwyr>

~ **New from Beca Lewis** ~
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One Thousand Rejections, But Still in the Game by Steve Wickham

The primary school-aged boy, barely 12 years old, suffers from bullying. He's not kicked or beaten, but ignored and isolated. Still, he keeps coming back to school. Day in, day out, there he is, reporting for another dozen rejections at the hand of his peers.

Yet, he has one person in his life, perhaps two, who may be reliably trusted. He has some sense of love within the bounds of tyranny that enfold his life. They show him hope.

For this reason, despite his want to give up when things are especially tough, he finds reason to go on.

The Gospel's Power Made Relevant

You have to admire any person, who through their instinct for resilience, will continue on despite many harsh, little and large, rejections. For, in this is the gospel's power.

Salvation's day is power in the hour of need.

Out the jaws of humiliation is reprieve unto exultation, for the Lord takes great issue with the scouring aggression of those moral weaklings whom abuse an easy target in the presence of palpable encouragement.

Sympathy of the Spirit may be known. Anyone who bears under the strain of the domination of evil - with some invisible knowledge of hope, one that expresses itself in faith for actually no reason but the resolve to hold on - may feel the rising tide of peace within. God will never leave him nor forsake him.

The gospel is built as a buckle for the belt of persecution. No wonder the kindly, docile world - asleep to any sense of suffering - needs, and identifies with, little of it.

Our Vision Beyond The Rejections

Hope is such an essential ingredient within the overall scope of the circumstance of the bullied. If they have even one reason to hope, just one person to instil love and a sense of confidence, they can endure almost anything. Indeed, the very trials they endure will convert within them an inimitable power for good that will serve them all the days of their ever-blossoming lives.

As we count up the several rejections as they occur minute by minute, accumulating in countless proportion day by day, even these are not enough to crush the spirit of the person with vision beyond those rejections.

The power of God is a miracle for the socially destitute; for, the person isolated and ridiculed by their peers has hope in proportion to even a moment's vision of the love that supports them. A pinch of love sustains hope in a world of pain. ###

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/>

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Daring to be Yourself

Interview with [Peter Shepherd](http://www.Trans4mind.com) www.Trans4mind.com
by [Mike Bundrant](http://www.HealthyTimesNewspaper.com) www.HealthyTimesNewspaper.com

Mike Bundrant: Why did you write this book, 'Daring to be Yourself' (your personal reasons)?

Peter Shepherd: Going back 15 years, I originally wrote 'Transforming the Mind' as a personal compilation of what I considered to be the most valuable information I had acquired from my psychology studies, particularly topics from transpersonal psychology and rational emotive psychotherapy. These may at first seem an odd combination, but in fact I believe they complement each other very well.

I then decided to put that material freely online in 1997, in the early days of the Internet, and I was surprised to find it was a popular download, indeed over half a million. It formed the basis of the Trans4mind.com website, alongside the free Positive Approach course and our more in-depth products. More recently I was approached by a publisher to provide a text and I thought it sensible to compile the best of the book Transforming the Mind, expand a bit on the Positive Approach course, and select from the many articles I've written over the years, with revisions along the way to make it a whole.

Primarily, I have been trying to reach people with an empowering message, that they can have a much better life if they are true to themselves - their conscience, their inner knowing, their talents and creative potential.

MB: Why "Daring"...? This presupposes that it takes courage or involves risk to be oneself. How is this the case?

PS: That's right. Of course, one is already oneself, inside... one's spiritual and genetic makeup exists now. But you are not necessarily BEING that way, because that would require a re-awakening of parts of oneself that have long been put to sleep. Why were they put to sleep? Because we have learned to conform to other people's expectations and to other people's interpretations.

We may have been slapped down badly by parents or teachers in our early years, when we expressed our true feelings and inclinations. To belong to our peer group we may have had to compromise in a big way too, or to prevent being bullied. We may have had painful episodes when we tried doing (or being, feeling, saying) what we felt was right, and it all turned out wrong, so we don't try that again. Unfortunately this new, diminished way of being becomes a habit. Habits aren't changed easily, as we all know; it requires motivation and determination to do so, otherwise we slip back to what now seems "the easy way."

MB: Isn't being myself the only choice I have?

PS: No, you also have the easier choice of being a person who conforms to the expectations and standards of their peers and authority figures. Then, to awaken from that habitual way of being, we need a shock - such as a big failure or a powerful inspiration - to reveal to us that our life isn't all it could be, or that we have the chance now to start again, to achieve great things. That gives us the required motivation and determination.

We also need knowledge and experience, so that we don't fall down the same potholes as before. And we may need to acquire necessary life skills in order to succeed, such as better communication, relationships and marketing ability, or more subjectively, how to be mindful and more emotionally intelligent. All of these resources can be found in the best personal development information, such as we include at Trans4mind, and a lot of that know-how is included in my book as well.

MB: Do you advocate a specific approach to becoming oneself - or an eclectic approach...tell us a little about the process.

PS: I suppose the process is outlined most clearly in Part Four of the book: A Positive Approach and the first lesson about Invalidation. It begins...

There are many and various ways you might have been put-down by others and as a result agreed to have less power. You need to look again at what happened and ask yourself: What choices did I make? Consider:

What did I decide about myself ?

What did I decide about the other person or other people?

What did I choose to think?

How did I choose to feel? What emotion did I choose?

What did I choose to do?

How did my choices affect my behavior going forward?

What other choices could I have made, and what might the effect of each of those choices be?

What positive learning can I get from this experience?

The positive learning is basically whatever insight you have found after realizing you have chosen one direction and that you can revise that choice if you want. For we always have choices, and the following lessons go on to look at issues such as co-dependence, suppression, criticism, taking responsibility, and then reconstructing the beliefs and considerations that drive emotions and resulting behaviors. Letting go of fear, grief, guilt and shame is then possible, and creating one's life purpose.

We all choose what we wish to be. No one can actually compel us... we may delude ourselves that it is so, but it is not. The same wind that blows a ship onto the rocks could equally blow it into safe harbor. In short, it is not the wind, it is the set of the sail. A thousand choices are daily open to every person, and we make our choices.

MB: Can people become themselves on their own or through self-study - or is a coach, therapist or mentor a necessary part of it?

PS: Having help and support from someone who has already travelled the same path can help immensely, and particularly, if certain issues are overwhelming then a psychotherapist may be needed. But given sufficient motivation, self-directed personal development is well within most people's capability. It's all about going beyond simply reading and agreeing with some principle, but actually applying that principle in the practicalities of day-to-day living, and repeatedly so in order to develop a new habit.

There are two fundamental approaches that we adopt in life - we may be thinking about things or we may be taking action. We can do these in a masterful way, serene and calm; or we may find difficulties, get stressed and worry ourselves - in this case we have a life challenge. Well done personal development involves changing from living for tomorrow to living today. By learning to change our way of being, while facing challenges in life, and gradually developing the knowledge and skills we need, we move from stress and worry to serenity and calmness.

To illustrate this, imagine a tennis match between two players: both of whom are well involved in the action and playing well. But then it reaches a crucial point; one of the players becomes nervous, worries about whether their serve will be good enough and as a result, becomes self-conscious and serves badly. The other player stays cool and involved in the game, and thrashes the weak serve with a pass down the line. One player then is even more tense and 'out of the flow' of the game; the other is excited but calm and really into their flow.

This tennis match is just like the game of life. We all need to make plans, learn from the past, think about things, and then take action, by getting involved in making the plans a reality. But when we have challenging situations, often we have difficulties... We may not have the required knowledge and skills. We also may have previous negative experiences that we fear may happen again, or we may have acquired self-defeating beliefs as a result of our past experiences and conditioning.

These factors may prevent full involvement in, and commitment to, the actions you need to take, and impede the good performance that you need in order to succeed. By learning and applying the skills, insights and understandings that Trans4mind resources provide you are empowered to overcome these life challenges. Then although you are in the same situation, facing the same life challenge, you can now succeed!

**MB: What are the core aspect of a self (values, beliefs, assumptions, social filters?)
Do you have a model for the self that you prefer?**

PS: The way I see it, your way of being involves a core self - the spiritual being that you brought into this world combined with your genetic inheritance - and a developed personality or ego. The ego is a model of the world and your relationship to it that is the result of all that you have experienced, through struggling to survive and express yourself. The core self is essentially loving, that's the spiritual essence, but also one is a survivalist, a product of the evolutionary line. It's easy for the ego - one's thinking self and face to the world - to become closed-minded, set in a defensive posture, with values, beliefs and assumptions based on fear, caution and anxiety, and the solutions of others that you have been conditioned to accept; but a developed, mature ego has a confident, independent, open-minded and adventurous mind-set and with values based one's essential spirituality. Fear oriented or love oriented: these are the liability and the potential of human nature.

MB: What is the role of individuation in becoming myself - individuation from parents, social hierarchy, etc...

PS: Parents and authority figures do their best to demonstrate and teach a model of beliefs and behavior that they consider to be helpful and correct. However well-intentioned, their fears, prejudices and dogma will inevitably be passed on to the young person. In the

teenage, rebellious years it may already be too late to easily brush off all this conditioning, but also in the process of rebellion and individuation a new set of values is often also adopted, that of the peer group, and it may be adopted unconsciously and without inspection. It is necessary to "grow up again" as we get older, and re-evaluate all that we believe and hold dear, in order to actually be our true selves... moving toward values based on courage, freedom and love.

MB: Fundamentally - why don't more people set out to become themselves? It seems like this would be a primary goal - like going to college, getting a job or starting a family - but "becoming myself" isn't a popular goal and most people are not raised with clear ideas about what this means? Why?

PS: We have learned to conform to the expectations of our parents and later our peers. We have established a safety net of fixed beliefs and solutions to the challenges involved in living. We may have little awareness of our inner self, as that has been suppressed alongside our natural desires and inner expression, which have so often been knocked on the head whenever they emerged in the past. Mindfulness, where we retain a certain objectivity to our emotional reactions and therefore open-mindedness, is a facet of maturity that is usually undeveloped at the time we start our careers. And as soon as we take on responsibilities it becomes increasingly difficult to take on new risks or to go against the grain. A person's self-image is their ego, and of course we identify with what we are being - we can't see that objectively.

To "change yourself" therefore appears like a betrayal of self, and all that has been invested in you, rather than the exciting possibility of actually becoming more of your true self... that is a concept few have discovered. Parents, partners and peers also may consider it threatening to their relationship with you, and an implied criticism of their values and influence, when you express a desire to change or develop yourself. They may be jealous, envious, possessive or manipulative. For these reasons, personal development is a courageous (as well as honest and true) path to follow.

MB: In the West are we lacking rites of passage? If so, what can we do to compensate for this?

PS: In primitive societies young people are initiated in the knowledge and ways of their elders and given a chance to prove their courage and ability, to take their place as an adult. It's an empowering step, although also a commitment to the culture that would be hard to break. There is little in our society equivalent to this. Going to university perhaps. But we are inadequately prepared and often effectively alone in the passage to adulthood, and without mentors.

In particular, with society becoming more and more secular, we have failed to develop properly thought-out values. We are philosophically naive. We don't usually really know who we are, why we are here, and what the meaning of it all is.

One important thing we can do is to read widely. Reading is an active mental process and quite different from watching films or TV series, which are passive processes. Reading stimulates the imagination and provides insight into the workings of the minds of others. Empathy and understanding result from reading a wide range of classic novels, and this can't be so readily achieved in any other way, in my opinion.

We need to learn about love, above all else. Without that insight, we flounder. There's a passage in Taylor Caldwell's book, Captains and the Kings...

Joseph continued, "I was feeling, well, depressed, and I asked Harry what a man lives for. The average man. Even us. We work all our lives, struggle, plot, contrive, aim, direct our activities. That is our major occupation. Sometimes we like what we do, and it absorbs us. But in the main, the average man does not. So I asked Harry, what in the hell do we live for. For our daily bread, and endless work, and fighting, and marrying and having children, and disappointment or worse? What are our pleasures? A few hours of liberty a week, whether we live in a mansion or a hovel, a few opportunities for adultery and a few hundred pleasures, which most of us are too tired to enjoy anyway. Then we die and that is all there is. If this is so, I said to Harry, then it is not worth living."

Harry replied, "My grandmother was an old illiterate Lebanese woman, and she once told me that we live for love." Joseph laughed at that scornfully.

Unfortunately, Harry was the henchman of Joseph and never carried out his grandmother's advice. Through loyalty to Joseph he always compromised his integrity - his essential loving nature - so that finally, he killed himself to end this inner conflict.

Here is a quote from Margaret Wheatley that I feel makes life more understandable...

"When we seek for connection, we restore the world to wholeness. Our seemingly separate lives become meaningful as we discover how truly necessary we are to each other."

Love, and loving service to our fellows, connects us so we do not live isolated lives and life becomes meaningful. Krishnamurti says...

"It is love alone that leads to right action. What brings order in the world is to love and let love do what it will."

MB: What are the top 2-5 things you'd recommend anyone do to grow more as a person?

PS: Each of us can make a lot of headway by applying some simple principles and disciplines...

Firstly, to always be guided by Love, since Love is the creative force, the intent, the quality, that is your essential nature. It always leads to truth... it IS truth. So whenever you act, ask "Am I doing this through love?" This is the best way to get in touch with inner guidance, to start to know your true self.

Secondly, be mindful before reacting emotionally. Take time to breathe, to get into the present moment - pull yourself in from attention trapped in the past and the future and be grounded and centered in your body. Here and now. Then respond, from love and not from fear.

And thirdly, remember that communication is the solvent of problems. When in doubt, or you're anxious, or you feel stranded: communicate. That means to express your feelings and safeguard your rights - but equally to ask questions and listen intently, not just to spout off yourself.

These will take you a very long way. The key is to take what you learn and put it into practice in your daily life. To change the engrained habits of a lifetime, and even to change the nature programmed into your genes, is possible but it will take your determined application, over and over again, to reprogram your mind and transform yourself.

No one need accept that they must remain as they were shaped by their hereditary body-mind and by the conditioning of their childhood and culture. Each of us can evolve consciously by undertaking our own path of personal development, according to our individual needs, weaknesses and strengths.

For more details and to order the book please visit this page at Trans4mind:

Daring to be Yourself

<http://www.trans4mind.com/daring/>

~ Daring To Be Yourself ~

by Peter Shephard

You can create a new life. A life revised in small but crucial ways—or perhaps you will totally change the way things have been up to now. You choose, of course. But first you need to know just who you really are and to shed the conditioning imposed on you by decades of conforming to other people's expectations and other people's interpretations.

This book—a blueprint to the life you really desire—has been developed by Peter Shepherd, author of *Transforming the Mind*. A step by step approach is followed throughout to help you uncover and remove the barriers to self-knowledge and freedom of expression and action.

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To be a master in the art of living, does not mean your life is free of problems or challenges. It means that you always carry an unshakable inner peace as your way of being into every situation. It is this inner state of calm that then enables you to face your life challenges with creativity, clear communication and discernment. As a result you are able to progress effortlessly and powerfully to achieve the result you desire.

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Steve Jobs and the 7 Rules of Success by Carmine Gallo

Steve Jobs' impact on your life cannot be underestimated. His innovations have likely touched nearly every aspect — computers, movies, music and mobile. As a communications coach, I learned from Jobs that a presentation can, indeed, inspire. For entrepreneurs, Jobs' greatest legacy is the set of principles that drove his success.

Over the years, I've become a student of sorts of Jobs' career and life. Here's my take on the rules and values underpinning his success. Any of us can adopt them to unleash our "inner Steve Jobs."

1. Do what you love. Jobs once said, "People with passion can change the world for the better." Asked about the advice he would offer would-be entrepreneurs, he said, "I'd get a job as a busboy or something until I figured out what I was really passionate about." That's how much it meant to him. Passion is everything.

2. Put a dent in the universe. Jobs believed in the power of vision. He once asked then-Pepsi President, John Sculley, "Do you want to spend your life selling sugar water or do you want to change the world?" Don't lose sight of the big vision.

3. Make connections. Jobs once said creativity is connecting things. He meant that people with a broad set of life experiences can often see things that others miss. He took calligraphy classes that didn't have any practical use in his life -- until he built the Macintosh. Jobs traveled to India and Asia. He studied design and hospitality. Don't live in a bubble. Connect ideas from different fields.

4. Say no to 1,000 things. Jobs was as proud of what Apple chose not to do as he was of what Apple did. When he returned to Apple in 1997, he took a company with 350 products and reduced them to 10 products in a two-year period. Why? So he could put the "A-Team" on each product. What are you saying "no" to?

5. Create insanely different experiences. Jobs also sought innovation in the customer-service experience. When he first came up with the concept for the Apple Stores, he said they would be different because instead of just moving boxes, the stores would enrich lives. Everything about the experience you have when you walk into an Apple store is intended to enrich your life and to create an emotional connection between you and the Apple brand. What are you doing to enrich the lives of your customers?

6. Master the message. You can have the greatest idea in the world, but if you can't communicate your ideas, it doesn't matter. Jobs was the world's greatest corporate storyteller. Instead of simply delivering a presentation like most people do, he informed, he educated, he inspired and he entertained, all in one presentation.

7. Sell dreams, not products. Jobs captured our imagination because he really understood his customer. He knew that tablets would not capture our imaginations if they were too complicated. The result? One button on the front of an iPad. It's so simple, a 2-year-old can use it. Your customers don't care about your product. They care about

themselves, their hopes, their ambitions. Jobs taught us that if you help your customers reach their dreams, you'll win them over.

There's one story that I think sums up Jobs' career at Apple. An executive who had the job of reinventing the Disney Store once called up Jobs and asked for advice. His counsel? Dream bigger. I think that's the best advice he could leave us with. See genius in your craziness, believe in yourself, believe in your vision, and be constantly prepared to defend those ideas. ###

We gratefully acknowledge *Entrepreneur* for permission to include this article which was originally posted on October 14th, 2011.

Carmine Gallo is a communications coach, a popular keynote speaker and author of several books including *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs* and *The Innovation Secrets of Steve Jobs*. His latest is *The Power of Foursquare* (McGraw-Hill, 2011).

Visit the author's website at <http://www.carminegallo.com>

The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs: How to Be Insanely Great in Front of Any Audience

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Healthy Cognitive Development and Global Wellbeing by Sean McKenzie

Having a basic knowledge of human cognitive development, we are offered the possibility of witnessing, unfolding, and acting from a life-giving reference frame. Our knowledge of human cognition can lend greater clarity to our understanding of people, as well as offer unfolding possibilities regarding world views, interpersonal relations, and individual progressions over the lifetime. Also, our ability to positively be and inter-be are enhanced through an understanding the cognitive stages. Additionally, greater freedom, compassion, and instrumentally arise through our awareness of the synergistic progressions of the human consciousness and their implications globally.

All the essential cognitive stages were first identified by Jean Piaget (1896-1980). His experimental findings have been repeatedly verified in the scientific community. Piaget realized four stages of cognitive growth: 1) sensorimotor, 2) preoperational, 3) concrete operational, and 4) formal operational. His stage theory still stands today as both relevant and indispensable. It remains the corner of our understanding of human consciousness.

In the sensorimotor stage (birth to about two years of age) the child's interrelationship with the world is largely tactile, symbiotic, sensory-driven, and devoid of opaque cognitive constructs. However, a sense of "object permanence" is developed in that the child realizes objects and persons can reappear after their absence. Also, attachment to the child's primary caregiver(s) occurs, defined by a porous boundary of self and other.

During the preoperational stage (approximately two to five years old) a sense of a separate self develops, magical thinking abounds, and motor and language skills are dramatically acquired. Reasoning is predominately subjective and self-focused with progressively opaque images forming of the self, as well as the child's nurturer(s), others, and potential resources and threats. Objective reasoning regarding object relations is not yet established with only a vague and oftentimes misleading understanding of cause-and-effect.

The concrete operational stage (approximately five to 12 years of age) is denoted by concrete reasoning abilities (abstract relationships still not being realized), self-identity solidification, blind allegiance to family values, rule/role approaches to ethics and morality, and heroic reference frames.

In formal operations (about 12 years of age and onward) abstract reasoning abilities develop, family values are differentiated from, and the individual identifies with either their peer group or a subculture. Ethical and moral perspectives are self-structured, and a world view arises that is not ethnically or culturally bounded. System dynamics are understood and embraced as abstract interrelationships, and potentialities arise outside of the framework of socially dictated structures and expectations.

Piaget's cognitive stages have profound implications regarding interpersonal and global relations, human development, and our intrinsic right to be our true selves as evolving beings. Interference with any of the stages, whether through ignorance or malice, causes

unnecessary suffering too often ending in developmental arrest. Also, a trans-generational chain of dysfunctional and toxic relationships can occur.

Reflecting upon the world's current state of affairs, we can easily see that our disharmony with nature and ourselves is largely predicated upon developmental arrest and our lack of understanding of the cognitive stages. Simple awareness of the stages is our first step in dissolving dissatisfaction with ourselves, compassionately relating to those around us, and laying the groundwork for a healthy humanity and interdependent global system.

Our institutions and governmental personages are largely developmentally arrested in concrete operations. Rule/role ethical, moral, and legal structures abound, leaving little room for depth understanding, intuition, and compassion, as well as human dignities and freedoms. Ironically, while a larger portion of humanity than ever before enjoys formal operations, our institutions have remained rule/role machines of corporate control, devoid of boundaries in their exploitation of the world's peoples and environments. Donning the robes of progress, most of our institutions promise positive change while creating Machiavellian competition, an alienated global humanity, ecological collapse, and fixed class structures that do not honor the random nature of artistic, spiritual, and intellectual giftedness. Unwittingly born into such systems, we get to self-realize our individual worth and transformative potentialities with respect to compassion, positive change, interdependence, and healthy developmental progressions. As a result, our cutting-edge paradigms have now shifted from institutions to the individual as the nucleus for illuminated awareness and actions leading to a better world.

Awareness of the four cognitive stages is central to understanding our shared developmental progressions, human potentialities, and those expressions of cognitive arrest that keep us repeating the same negative actions generation after generation. Our human Reality is mercifully dynamic, evolving, open, and intrinsically uncertain. This Reality, this Mystery of Awareness, opens unexpected creative possibilities that can reduce unnecessary suffering, increase global hope, and offer a future centered upon interdependent diversity, intrinsic individual freedoms and rights, and the need for deeply personal spaces to create lives on their own terms with an unshakable sense of belonging and contribution.

Allowed to be what we naturally be, properly nurtured and given a fair playing field, and inclining ourselves towards expressive freedom and trust in the individual, we can begin creating a heaven on earth, reflecting the Miracle that is everywhere extant while dancing our dance of self-expression and intimate belonging. Understanding the mind is the key to our existing circumstances, and when we are allowed to go through all of our stages unimpeded, wonderful possibilities arise as illuminated realization, intuition, and freedom. Formally present, we are informally selfless and celebratory, offering each personhood their very nature of unbounded possibilities and evolving expressions.

Inclining ourselves towards formal operations and its needed environments of affirmation and nurturance, we can dramatically up the quality of life globally for humans and other species. Seeing the need for expanded formal operational thinking, it is imperative we lay the groundwork for its continued emergence despite our ossified institutions and negative trans-generational patterns of relating. It is up to us as individuals to make this evolutionary transformation happen, and this entails an unfolding awareness of the

interdependent nature of all things, cognitive stage progressions, and particularly formal operations with its potential to nurture human awareness and offer truly life-giving environments of freedom and creative expression. ###

Sean McKenzie (aka Silent Temple) acquired an academic background in human cognition and interpersonal relations while attending the University of Arizona where he received degrees in both the hard and soft sciences. He has also been tutored in regressive therapy techniques and functional paradigms promoting being, principally stemming from André Rochais' PRH process. Over the last 15 years he has developed a form of neo-Zen called Silent Temple which eschews established structures and rules that have shaped Zen institutions for the past several hundred years. He has also self-published a book of poetry, *The Path*, and his first volume of neo-Zen teachings, *The Transcribed Talks of Silent Temple*, is scheduled for Trans4mind publication later this month under the nom de plume Silent Temple. After recently returning to the States from an extensive stay in Finland, he is finalizing another book of poetry titled *Songs of Suomi*. Sean is an ardent advocate of human freedoms, and he works tirelessly to promote aware and self-created lives of being and belonging. His website, [Silent Temple](http://www.silenttemple.com), offers free articles to those interested in neo-Zen approaches to life. It enjoys a growing worldwide audience.

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Is There A Special Trick for Law of Attraction? by Joyce Shafer

Surely there is one technique that, if you knew it, would make Law of Attraction work every time. Do you believe that?

An ad for a Law of Attraction system arrived in my inbox and got my attention with its promise: a way to make LOA work every time. That promise gave me pause and prompted me to mull over my thoughts and experiences.

The school of thought is that LOA is always working. I accept this, particularly because I liken it to the hidden life force that operates our bodily systems like heartbeat, breathing, brainwaves, digestion, and so on. We don't have to consciously manage these things; *something else* does this for us—in our best interest—so we can focus on other matters of living. And, if we decide to get involved with how our body functions, we can be deliberate about using our brain power, diet, exercise, meditation, how much sleep we get, and more.

So, the first thing I want to consider about the ad's promise is **Best Interest**. To say you can make LOA work every time prompts several questions in my mind:

- Will everything you request be in your best interest so that your soul aspect/expanded self has zero argument with the request?
- Or, will you need to have a soul agreement in place that everything requested is to be considered in your best interest as a designated experience—no holds barred.
- The ad's promise must mean LOA will work every time you use it **deliberately**, and that you will be consistently, consciously deliberate. Otherwise, if we allow that LOA is at work all the time, we'd have to watch that we have absolute control over inner and outer conscious and subconscious feelings, thoughts, and words—which means no “oopsies” ever happen, as can take place when we're angered or fearful, and negativity-attracting thoughts run amok.

I believe our LOA experiences are tailored to our unique selves and experiences to help us gain conscious awareness, especially about our interconnectedness with all in existence and with the conscious, intelligent creative energy—not just to get something we want or need. We do want to be able to be deliberate about it at times (like eating a certain way to improve digestion, etc.), which is why I suggest looking at your own experiences of LOA in your life, whether or not you choose to use a system.

It's my opinion that Law of Attraction isn't as much a technique as it is a label used for **the result of a State of Being**, which I'll explain. And, that state isn't lived in 24/7 (it would be tedious to consciously operate your bodily systems along with every other part of your life 24/7). But, it is a state we find happens **naturally** at times—without deliberate thought to be in that state—and at other times **deliberately**, when we apply conscious awareness and thought about something specific. The rest of the time, we do day-to-day life—having the experience of being a human with simplicities and complexities, challenges and wins, voids and fulfillment, frustration and accomplishment.

When LOA has been natural for me, what happened was I had a thought that was actually **a decision more than a desire—with no discord attached to it**. No massive amount of description and planning was engaged. In fact, it was more a general idea, concept, or image that came to mind for a very brief moment. No attachment to attainment was present because, as I said, it was decided on—a done deal, before its arrival—more than it was felt as a desire. I love these moments, but for me they just happen, with no conscious intrusion or influence on my part.

No energy of fear or need is attached to these natural moments either; and neither do I attempt to amp up faith or the absence of doubt—I'm just “one” with the decision. No time limit or “by this date” is involved. Arrival into my life of what is **a decided desire** has varied from minutes to years—however long it takes for the timing to be right for me—in my best interest.

And, the word “want” is used. It's been said that the word “want” should be avoided because LOA will then work to keep you in a state of wanting. That hasn't been my experience, because I've found it's the **energy** supporting the word that influences what happens. When I said, “I want a lamp for that corner,” the word was imbued with the energy of a decision with no discord (the perfect lamp was found less than two hours later in the basement of my apartment building—and it was free to take).

When I've said “I want...,” and the energy was fear-based need, I had a very different experience. I think the need for deliberate times come my way to help me learn to apply what I described in my “natural” paragraph above, to matters that have sticky or entrenched fearful energy attached. The deliberate ones make me pay attention differently so I can figure out how to be in a natural state of being about something that's held me in its grip in a negative or limiting way, which may require more than one “visit”.

I've also noticed the “deliberate” moments, when my energy is fear- or need-based, allow me to see that there isn't one trick to use at these times, but it is a good time to see **what works for me at a particular moment**. Here are a few ways that work when I'm not feeling as “natural” about LOA as I would like:

- Deciding to just let go, which often results in my laughing out loud at how ridiculous it can all seem or become at times, which definitely diffuses the energy so something better can happen—and *does!*
- Taking a time-out from fretting to engage a walk, a good book or movie, or doing anything unrelated to where I've been focusing my anxious attention.

Do you see what those two bulleted items have in common? **Letting go. It almost seems too easy.** Letting go helps me move into a this-or-something-even-better frame of mind, which lets me slide into a more open, relaxed state of being—the LOA Natural State, you might call it—where “magic” happens.

Think back to times when LOA worked for you naturally, deliberately, or not at all. What was going on at the inner level when it worked effortlessly? What did you do or not do? What about when you felt you had to be deliberate (because you sure weren't feeling “natural”)—what did you do that created results? And, what about when it didn't work—did you later (even if much later) realize that your best interests were being attended to,

perhaps in ways that amazed you (once you got over thoughts like “Why me?” and “I’m such a failure”)?

It amazes me to use this “rearview mirror” on my life to see that where I am in life at a particular moment is where I belong (like it or not, at times), and that if XYZ hadn’t happened, even if emotionally painful, I don’t know how I would have arrived where I belonged with the same cleverness the hidden life force employed. For me, this builds and expands trust in the hidden force that looks out for my best interests and the highest good of all involved, and assists or propels me, when I’m resistant, to my next destinations and life phases.

I don’t see LOA as something that fits into the “One size fits all” category. The one-size-fits-all items never fit the same, look the same, or perform the same—because we’re all different. Play with or try any system that grabs your fancy, but give some thought to what I’ve mentioned here.

The crux of what I ask you to consider is whether or not you’ve attuned to **what your personal LOA experiences involve and feel like for you**. You tap into true personal power if you grasp what this is for you as an individual and follow it—repeat and perhaps tweak—as needed. And that, my friend, is likely the most significant “trick” of Law of Attraction: you, your conscious awareness, and state of being drive it.

Practice makes progress. ###

About Joyce Shafer

I help women 45+ get their Awesome back! **Love Who You Are, Go for What You Really Want**—a life-changing online coaching course with **Joyce Shafer**, life coach; author; and publisher of **State of Appreciation**, a free weekly online newsletter that blends practical & spiritual approaches to life for personal development & self-realization. Terrific empowering gifts available when you subscribe free at <http://stateofappreciation.webs.com>

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What Has Been Stopping You All These Years? by Jahiel Yasha Kamhi

For many years, I have been asking myself: “What has been stopping me from achieving my goals?”

If you want to make any change in life, ask yourself the same question, and your future might be different.

Ask yourself:

1. How high is my self-esteem?
2. Do I trust myself?
3. How comfortable am I with stepping out of my comfort zone?

There are other questions one might ask, but issues of self-esteem, self-trust, and one’s comfort zone are essential to achieving any goal in life.

Be honest with your answers

Be honest when answering these questions. These answers will help you make your own master plan for improving your life.

Very few people think about these questions; they only seem to have one question on their minds: “How do I succeed in life?” This is okay to ask, but why do you not ask yourself other important questions as well?

I can tell you, with utmost certainty, that emotionally unprepared people will have a hard time keeping their life on track. Many people simply do not accept that state of mind can affect their own lives. They need to realize that unless people make an attempt to improve themselves, nothing can be done.

You are driven by your mind, thoughts, and perceptions

When you accept that you are driven by your mind, thoughts, and perceptions you will improve your overall status in life, including your relationships and employment.

What I am saying is very simple: Everyone must see what he or she needs to improve in his or her lives, and then change it for the better. You will experience a good outcome by adopting this practice. Changing yourself is a stressful process for one reason: you have to adapt to the new situation, which is challenging and of itself.

If a person does not adapt quickly to new surroundings, they will be out of harmony and unbalanced, which is, of course, unhealthy.

In other words, a well-adapted individual is a healthy one.

Therefore, learn how to easily adapt to new surroundings by learning that the mind and the body work together on a deeper level toward the same goal.

Healthy mind + healthy body = successful outcome!

Sometimes, you have to do things you don’t like, but they may be good for you.

Self-esteem

To reach your goal, whatever is it, you need to be able to handle any possible situation. When you feel you are in control, you feel confident, and your self-esteem level is high. Feeling self-confident is essential for achieving goals. Self-confident people have realistic expectations; this enables them to plan and accomplish what they wish.

For all of you who are having a hard time during the process of change, remember that life satisfaction isn't stripped away from you. When you know what has been stopping you all these years, going through difficult times is just a part of the process of improving.
###

Jahiel Yasha Kamhi holds a degree in Medical Biochemistry and a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry. Jahiel writes regularly for www.personal-development.com and other magazines. He also delivers presentations that inspire others to find more meaning and balance in their lives. He is passionate about writing, and conveying positive ideas that help people live life with more passion and purpose. Jahiel's mission is to promote a good mental and physical health. Email at: jasakamhi@hotmail.com.

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Grace and the Family by Annie Burnside, M.Ed.

I experienced a dream last night where I was swimming in the ocean with my family. We were facing enormous waves, but enjoying the adventure because of the waves not despite them. I realized that while guidance to another on how to navigate the chaos of each crest was possible, it was ultimately up to each individual to chart her own path through the breaking waves. I felt in my deepest space the full responsibility that was mine to remain ever-present and available to each powerful wave. I intuitively chose to dive deeply under the crashing whitecaps rather than attempt to push through the surface. In doing so, I calmly glided in silence under the turbulent motion and felt barely a ripple on my back. In between each wave, I rose to the surface of the ocean and took a deep conscious breath of gratitude and exhilaration for the experience. As the inevitability of another massive wave struck, feeling confident, empowered, appreciative, safe, exuberant, joyous, and invincible, I once again dove deeply under the wave and experienced gliding gracefully through the challenge. The initial fear of the waves readily turned into a deep faith in myself to embrace the opportunity to feel and ultimately own my true power.

I awoke from this dream understanding more fully the meaning of living GRACE. Through this dream, I experienced grace as a conscious balancing, an integration of both the outer and inner world. In life, we must survey and accept the reality of our co-created outside world, while simultaneously move with ease into our own unique interior world to receive insight, guidance, and sustenance to relax into our next moments. Conscious spirit-embodiment requires the understanding that beneath the thunderous waves (external reality) lies a connection to a deep source, all-knowing, pure, and true (internal reality), and the realization that liberation and grace within a physical body stems from marrying these two perspectives.

It is important to teach your children the immense value of visiting their inner world often. If one simply remains on the surface of the wave, he will be continually pounded by the outside world. Indeed, there may be some calm space in between waves, but eventually another wave always crests. Children can be taught at an early age to dive deeply into their own consciousness to dissect and explore beliefs, patterns, priorities, thoughts, words, deeds, perspectives, emotions, reactions, focus, expectations, intentions, habits, and overall energetic input and output to make conscious choices that are in alignment with who they really are as authentic, spiritual beings and enable them to live with grace. All parents can train their children to take full responsibility for their created reality. Through the deciphering of natural consequences, children begin to see that they are the cause not the effect of what is reflected back to them in physicality. The physical world mirrors the interior world of each individual consciousness mingled with overall mass consciousness, no exceptions. For our world to change, all participants, including our children, must learn through the example of other conscious individuals to become keenly aware of themselves as creative beings. It is important that they realize that while they do not solely create world events, they are soulfully accountable for their vibration entire that emanates at all times from them into the world at-large.

Grace is a state of being. It is a conscious knowing that you are in this world, but not of it. Grace is the capacity to uncover the gems hidden in your humanity coupled with the ability to utilize them to propel you toward your highest potential. Grace is the inner sensing that obstacles on your path in the form of setbacks, disappointments, and pain offer unparalleled opportunities to expand and evolve as a soul. In teaching your children that they have the capacity within them to exhibit every possible universal human trait and its polarity, you offer them a starting point to accept themselves as a whole being here to create from their own unique lens. In doing so, you invite your children to accept their divinity as a spirit-embodied individual and create their reality from the inside out. The merging of universal humanity with a natural state of divinity leads to an expanded self-awareness and heightened perspective.

Ultimately, model for your children that GRACE is the freedom to live your truth, be your truth, and offer your truth to the world through your life lived. Children must be encouraged to value their own truth as they utilize what resonates with their soul to create future moments of their choice. Always encourage your children to release what does not serve them. Through continual open discussion in the family, children can be taught to listen to their inner voice to know whether to partake or to pass on a life experience, relationship, or situation that presents itself to them; no fanfare needed, simply an act of inner knowing and free will. Grace is modeled within a family when family members become fully awake to their infinite and eternal nature as an integral aspect of a divine whole so magnificent, so creative, and so unconditionally loving that it literally blows the mind wide open to create space for the ever-present invitation from the soul.

Annie Burnside, M.Ed., is a soul nurturer, author, public speaker and teacher specializing in conscious relationships and spiritual development. Her book *Soul to Soul Parenting: A Guide to Raising a Spiritually Conscious Family* (Wyatt-MacKenzie, June 2010) offers everyday mediums and universal, life-affirming themes to those families seeking to expand spiritual awareness. Annie resides in Chicago, IL with her husband and three children. www.annieburnside.com

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A Course in Miracles Lesson 54

These are the review ideas for today:

(16) I have no neutral thoughts.

Neutral thoughts are impossible because all thoughts have power. They will either make a false world or lead me to the real one. But thoughts cannot be without effects. As the world I see arises from my thinking errors, so will the real world rise before my eyes as I let my errors be corrected. My thoughts cannot be neither true nor false. They must be one or the other. What I see shows me which they are.

(17) I see no neutral things.

What I see witnesses to what I think. If I did not think I would not exist, because life is thought. Let me look on the world I see as the representation of my own state of mind. I know that my state of mind can change. And so I also know the world I see can change as well.

(18) I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my seeing.

If I have no private thoughts, I cannot see a private world. Even the mad idea of separation had to be shared before it could form the basis of the world I see. Yet that sharing was a sharing of nothing. I can also call upon my real thoughts, which share everything with everyone. As my thoughts of separation call to the separation thoughts of others, so my real thoughts awaken the real thoughts in them. And the world my real thoughts show me will dawn on their sight as well as mine.

(19) I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my thoughts.

I am alone in nothing. Everything I think or say or do teaches all the universe. A Son of God cannot think or speak or act in vain. He cannot be alone in anything. It is therefore in my power to change every mind along with mine, for mine is the power of God.

(20) I am determined to see.

Recognizing the shared nature of my thoughts, I am determined to see. I would look upon the witnesses that show me the thinking of the world has been changed. I would behold the proof that what has been done through me has enabled love to replace fear, laughter to replace tears, and abundance to replace loss. I would look upon the real world, and let it teach me that my will and the Will of God are one.

Commentary by Allen Watson

This review links these ideas together as a powerful motivator for changing my thoughts.

My thoughts make the world, either the false world or the real world. The world I see is a "representation of my own state of mind". I can contribute to the making of a world of separation, or I can, by awakening my real thoughts, awaken those thoughts in others. What I think and say and do "teaches all the universe". By changing my own mind, I can change every mind along with mine. When I realize this, I am filled with a dynamic

determination to look upon the real world, to open my mind to the thoughts I share with God, and in so doing, to transform the universe.

Archimedes is reputed to have said, "Give me a lever long enough, and I will move the world." I have that lever. It is my mind; "mine is the power of God". One man whose mind is wholly transformed will transform all the world. Jesus was such a man, and the impact of his thought is still unfolding, the ripples still spreading in the pond of mind. I can join with him and add the power of my mind to his.

I do want to see "love...replace fear, laughter...replace tears". I want to let this be done through me. In each situation in which I find myself today, with each person I meet, may this be my aim. "I am here only to be truly helpful. I am here to represent Him who sent me". By allowing my mind to be changed, I will bring healing to everyone I meet today.

###

~ The Journey Home ~

(Course in Miracles)

by Allen Watson

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