

A Whole New
Attitude

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T i m o t h y J . B r i l l

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A Whole New Attitude

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Dedication

I wrote this book as a guide for my three boys, Matthew Jon, Alexander William and Nathan “Cody,” to understand what their dad considered important in this journey we call life. I love them always. They are always my inspiration and compass as I navigate through my life.

Matthew. My ROCK. You are a beacon of light on a stormy night. Calm, strong, dependable. You give comfort. Your love gives me peace.

Alex. My PHILOSOPHER. You are an old soul. Empathetic, perceptive, theoretical, and a natural leader. Your spontaneous wisdom is my compass.

Cody. My CRAFTSMAN. You are my master artist. Sarcastic, comedic, insightful, and genius. Your scholarly and reflective observations about life focuses my efforts onto what is really important.

This book is also dedicated to my cousin, John Richards. Death is just another step in our authentic life journey.

God speed John.

Preface

I graduated from Fordham College with a BA in Philosophy in 1981. Spent three years as an infantry officer in the US Army, traveled extensively as an international mountaineering guide for ten years, fly airplanes for a living, love to sail, received my MA in Ministry from Saint Martins College in 1992, ran for US House of Representatives, been imprisoned for civil disobedience, been shot at, drank some beer, was present when the fat lady sang and have generally had lots of fun with my life.

In 2009 and 2010, I brought my family on a 162 day world trip. Among the countries visited were Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Ireland, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Greece, Egypt, UAE, Australia, Japan, India and Nepal. In Italy we visited the Vatican and had an audience with the Pope. In India, we visited the holy Hindu City of Hardiwar during the three month Maha Kumbh Mela festival. Meditated on the teachings of Osho in Dharamsala. Introduced our minds to Tibetan Buddhism with the Dalai Lama in McLeod Ganj. We were blown away by Sikhs hospitality at the Golden Temple in Amritsar. We lived in the harmony of Hindu and Buddhist in Nepal. Were introduced to Shinto in Japan, and fell in love with the wonderful Islamic people of Egypt and UAE.

Introduction

Many years ago, my family reminds me, I began using the phrase: “So this is life.” That phrase has continued to entertain and haunt those who remember it.

What is the real purpose of our lives? Certainly, our life must be more than a credit score, or goose-stepping behind the incessant drum beat of those mouthy marionettes who claim to know what is our best interests. Life is nurtured by authentic experiences. Life must be lived, not watched from the illusionary safety of our holographic empire.

All people are essentially the same. All people participate in that mysterious act of existence, and as such have an ultimate dignity that cannot be taken away. We are unique human persons, not some pathological creature. Our Deep True Self is knowable through reflective action and a lot of intentional, conscious, hard work. As a person we become authentic through the three great relationships we have in our life. We are capable of transcending into something that is more than the sum of its parts. We are problem solvers, although we tend to solve problems one of two ways, one correct, one doomed to fail. We are adventurers. We

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are moral and free. We attempt to understand and comment on evil, moral choices and peace and justice issues through use of our rational thought process. But, this same rationalism that gives birth to some of our most wonderful dreams, also condemns us to our greatest nightmares. Exceptionalism is morally bankrupt. We must learn to love, using our wisdom, understanding, compassion and forgiveness.

Each “chapter,” or essay, of this booklet can be read separately, and then “woven” together into a tapestry of one simple man’s understanding of who, and what, his life is all about.

This is to be read as a meditation. It is chewy. The words are complex. I think your best approach is to read in its entirety first, then go back and read S-L-O-W-L-Y. The order is not really important. You will take away from it what you need.

So this is life.

Enjoy.

Timothy “Tim” Brill
September 2013

Our Universe

We are all the same, made of the same basic stuff. Every living thing is made of energy. This is a basic principle of physics and fundamental to our understanding of our universe. This energy, this matter, this spiritual energy, is common to everything we experience.

We live in a universe of many real beings. In order to be, each being is one, self-cohering as a single act of presence and center of its own action. We are not just talking about men or animals here. We are talking about the most basic and fundamental question, the *is* of existence. John *is* a man. Snowy *is* a dog. The fact that beings exist at all is truly amazing. Yet this is often taken for granted. We typically do not think about life until something significant, like loss or death, happens in our lives. That beings like ourselves exist at all gives each one of us an *ultimate dignity* that can never be reduced to the level of a mere object or thing.

Understanding the exact nature, or make-up, or composition, of existence itself is the study of metaphysics. There are three basic

parts of this fundamental composition of all the beings of our experience. These parts are:

- existence and essence
- matter (the material cosmos or energy) and form
- substance and accident

When substance and accident explain the process of change within the being itself, they are instances of a larger co-principle of all change, that of act and potency. So, how do these parts fit together?

Existence and Essence:

The most basic composition is that of existence and essence. Every finite being (that is every being in the universe except perhaps one, which, if it exists, is infinite - *God*), participates in this amazing act of existence, according to the limited mode of each being's essence. This makes possible a universe of more than one being. All real beings exist, but essence answers the question: what is it? What level or kind of existing being is this? It is a man or a dog or a tree?

A beings nature is its essence considered as a principle of operation. How does that being act? It is the nature of man to love. It is the nature of a dog to be loyal. A beings nature can be objective (in itself). In man this might mean how we experience our own consciousness directly. Or subjective (in another), in man this might mean that since we cannot experience the consciousness of someone else we can only infer their thoughts by their actions.

Form and Matter:

The next basic composition of all beings is that of essential form and primary matter (the material cosmos or energy). Form and prime matter as terms coined by Aristotle (12) and many other western philosophers. But these basic concepts are found in philosophy and theology worldwide. Modern physics might call this primary matter, energy. Modern physics also understands that energy cannot be created nor destroyed. Theology perhaps call this primary matter, spiritual energy. Regardless of the words used, the backdrop of our universe is energy, perhaps inert, perhaps *alive*. Matter is then understood as the energy that all the things of our experience share in common. All things are made of matter. Form then *creates* the entity that exists in a specific space-time matrix. This tree, this rock, or this person. All the beings we experience are simply matter which has taken a specific form. Note that matter is common to all things, meaning we all share a similar trait. This concept is fundamental to many spiritual (especially Animism and Panentheism) traditions. Animism is the religious worldview that the natural world is a *living* and spiritual interconnected whole. Panentheism suggests that a divine force interpenetrates every part of nature.

However, when we burn that log in our camp fire, where does the log go? When we die, what happens to us? What happens to the stuff, the energy, the matter, of what gave existence and essence to that being? Its form changes, so how can we explain its change?

The One and the Many:

To understand this question of change, we need to understand what is Essential Form. This is a composition within essence itself, which, in addition to sharing in existence with all beings, share a common essence, or form, with similar beings. For instance, all men share a similar essential form. All dogs share a similar essential form. This ingredient of essential form is necessary to take into account the classic question of the *one and the many*. How can a being, like a person, grow, change, and yet still be the same person? Each individual in the species resemble each other not only in the fact that they exist, but also in their essence. As an example, we are all men. Yet, although each individual in the species participates in a common specific essence, like man, it is separated by its own spatially extended matter (or energy), which limits it to a particular situation or location in the space-time matrix (form) of our material universe. Each individual is essentially equal in the qualitative order of the kind of being it is, but individualized by their being situated in a specific space time matter, this man here, not that man there. As soon as each new essential form is *born* in its unique bit of energy, as a unique individual of this species, here-now and not there-then, its own history becomes unique, and it takes on many qualitative accidental differences from all the others of the same species. This is how a being can at the same time be one, and many.

The reverse is a being that is not limited to a particular situation or location in the space-time matrix (form) of our material universe, but is pure spirit, is one of a kind within its species. Hence every pure spirit (angel) is unique, not limited in the space time matrix. These spirits can be present wherever

and whenever they are thinking about. Our universe is full of wonderful surprises!

Substance and Accident:

The next question is how are we to account for changes within each specific limited being itself? The general principle here is that of *act and potency*. This allows for the being to change through successive actual states, or acts, while persisting as a unique being throughout the change, the potential subject, or potency. This being retains its unique self identity throughout the process of change by the general structure of *substance and accident*. Substance is the existing form-energy composite (essence and existence + form and matter) which enters into an open ended series of various non-essential attributes, or accidents. This then becomes the beings *history*. Its unique experiences that help define its self-identity. This substance is not inert, but an active center that integrates and assimilates into itself all of its own actions and experiences.

Substance then has two roles. As the unified center, or subject, of a beings self-identity, and as the principle of unified continuity through a beings successive changes in time. Substance is that which is apt to exist in itself and not in another. It is what remains throughout change. You always know your mother, or friends and family. Accident, on the other hand, is that which is apt to not exist in itself, but only in another. You experience your mother, or children, getting older, growing. To them, they are still the same. You notice changes. A beings Substance then, is its essence, or nature, as a principle of unity.

Substantial Change:

Now, when a change cuts so deep that it essentially modifies the very substance itself, so that the original being disappears and a new being appears at the end of the process, it is called a *substantial change*. This is what happens when we burn the log and, perhaps when we *die*. The composition of matter and form within the substance makes this possible.

The potential subject which passes over here is primary matter, or energy. The successive acts or actual states are the successive essential or substantial forms. Matter (energy) then has two roles, as the principle of individuation in a species and as principle of continuity in a substantial change.

So, we begin with the fact of the existence of many finite beings, which all participate in existence and in the common specific form of their species, and undergo changes, both accidental and substantial.

We postulate every complete real being, like a human person, is a product of its unique experiences. These experiences happen by chance (although some may argue destiny), and are called accidents. The being that persists throughout these accidental experiences and changes is the existing substance. Which is a composite of existence limited by its essence. Essence is energy that takes on a specific form, here-now and not there-then.

Complicated . . . Not really. You just never think of it this way. This *big question* has always been contemplated by mystics and spiritualists and shamans and gurus and others, worldwide:

granted that beings exist and change, what must they be like within, to be such? Why and how it is that these beings came into being or exist at all, and why do they actually undergo change? Do they contain the sufficient reason for their existence and change within themselves alone, are they self-explanatory, or must we look outside them for their sufficient reason in another real being or beings? Perhaps this is beginning of your own spiritual journey.

We are all *family*, having in common the same *spiritual* energy as the basic *matter* of our existence. We have different essences, limited by taking a specific *form* in our space-time matrix, but fundamentally we are the same. Who we are, who we become, is nurtured by our experiences as we live this *life*. Given that energy cannot be created nor destroyed, when we *die*, the energy that was *us* does not cease to exist, but continues presumably forever. More controversial is what happens to the *I* as the unique center of who I am.

Our goal here is to live intentionality. The more *authentic* I live my life as a unique I; the more *intentionally* I live, the more forceful the *I* becomes and will continue to be present through a substantial change, like death. Think of the experiences you have in your life. Why are some much more important than others? Why do some define who you are while others are soon forgotten? The same is true when we die. I am absolutely convinced (ok, I take it on faith), that a forceful experience (like unconditional, absolute love) will persist through a substantial change.

Theodore Roosevelt perhaps states it best:

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.” (Excerpt from the speech “Citizenship In A Republic” delivered at the Sorbonne, in Paris, France on 23 April 1910)

Of course, our superficial and specious modern *life* removes us from the authentic life we ought to be living. We are taught by society to relate to each other, and to the whole of nature, as objects. We tend to focus only on the differences, instead of the similarities. The cost of such a superficial relationship is individual dignity and freedom are lost as *collateral damage*. Perhaps this is where the very poor and vulnerable can teach us about living. They truly understand we are all the same. They simply cannot afford to replace their authentic life with celebrity or a brand.

In Memoriam, Norris Clarke, S.J.

Who am I?

Now that we are a bit more familiar with our universe, understanding our true self as a unique existing I within this universe is much like peeling layers of an onion. It will take time, presumably a lifetime, to achieve a grasp of the significance of who I am. Perhaps that is why we are *alive* in the first place. To use this time we call life to understand and celebrate the unique being that we are, and will become. As we try to pull together some of the basic ideas of the nature and structure of the human person, we can draw from the disciplines of philosophy, psychology, theology and spiritual experiences.

First is the basic contribution of the classic western medieval metaphysical traditions, notably St. Thomas Aquinas (11). Next, is the twentieth century awakening of the explicit awareness of the uniqueness and originality of the person. Of course, *Eastern* thought is similar, just different words that flow from a different world-view.

Thomas Aquinas, (28 January 1225-7 March 1274), was an Italian Dominican priest and an immensely influential philosopher and theologian in the tradition of scholasticism.

He was the foremost classical proponent of natural theology, and the father of Thomism. His influence on Western thought is considerable, and much of modern philosophy was conceived in development or refutation of his ideas, particularly in the areas of ethics, natural law, metaphysics, and political theory. The works for which he is best known are the *Summa Theologica* and *Summa contra Gentiles*.

These twentieth century contributions include:

- (a) the person as subject, as the center of a unique subjectivity, as *I*, not capable of being objectified or studied like an object *out in front of us* for some detached objective analysis, but knowable only by being lived existentially from within hence describable only through indirect, evocative, symbolic language;
- (b) the person is relational, finding its own self-identity only by relating itself to other persons, including the Archetypal Exemplar which is the perfect image, the model upon which all existence is based and from which the person is the created image. (Bernardinus De Moor (19), Plato, the Neoplatonists (47), John Chrysostom and Christology);
- (c) the reawakening to the depth levels of the human person extending from one's immediate surface consciousness and expressions of self, to the profound levels of depth far below our ordinary levels of consciousness. Including the levels of the subconscious and unconscious as uncovered by Carl Gustav Jung, that stresses the positive creative forces of the unconscious. Then there is the deeper self, and beyond that to the deepest levels of the True Self. That fine point where the soul is in immediate contact with,

and always in the presence of, its ground of existence, oftentimes revealed in the deepest levels of religious and mystical experiences. This is the level of intentionality and absolute love I hinted towards when understanding a substantial change.

But before we explore these twentieth century ideas, lets go back to Thomas Aquinas and the thirteenth century western scholastics:

Nature and Person:

“Persona significat id quo est perfectissimum in tota nature, scilicet subsistena (elsewhere distinctum subsistena) in rationali natura.” (Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I, q. 29, art 3.)(11).

“The person is that which is most perfect in all of nature, namely that which exists in its own right as an ultimate individual subject of existence and action.” The unified center of its own actions. (translation of Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I, q. 29, art 3).

Nature and Person are specifically not identical in meaning. Nature refers to the *what* in a thing, what kind of being it is, *what is it?* Person refers to the *who*, that which possesses the nature as the ultimate subject or center, originating the actions of the nature it possesses, as its own actions for which it is ultimately responsible, *who is it?*

So, if I ask of the total being Matthew, what is it, the answer is it is a man. If I ask who is it, the answer becomes, Matthew.

Our ordinary language understands this distinction, that the who is not the what, but the possessor of the what. Only the who, the I, is self-aware, self-determining and responsible for my actions.

Although in our experience every who has only one nature, and every nature is possessed by only one who, there is no necessity that this always be true. So as an example, in the Christian Trinity we find one infinitely perfect divine nature possessed by three distinct who's, Father, son and holy spirit. Of course my purpose here is not to *convert* you to Christianity, but rather to cause you to begin to think in a new way.

Because of their emphasis with understanding the person as it relates to the Christian Trinity, Aquinas and most thirteenth century western scholastics focused on the person as a unique subject, distinct from every other person. The human person as an incarnate self-in-the-world. The person is where a being for the first time (as compared with other living things) comes into self-possession of itself, as a center of self-consciousness and self-awareness. The person is "master of itself" (*sui dominus*). (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*).

In the Christian myth (myth here understood in the context of how a group describes or identifies itself and not as something that is not real), for God and Angels this self possession is an immediate intuitive act. But for man this is a slow process through reflection of oneself interacting with the world, and especially with

other persons. It is a process of taking possession of one's actions as the responsible self-determining source of those actions. Every sane and rational person then has the ability for self-determination and self-guidance of his/her own actions and life.

Becoming A Moral Person:

One only becomes a mature developed moral person when one comes to self-knowledge and self-acceptance of one's own unique self. A responsible self-government of one's life toward one's ultimate authentic good as understood by himself. Therefore, a mature psychological and moral person is not just a good docile follower of the law, of what someone else tells you to do no matter how high the human authority, but it is to guide yourself freely towards your authentic goal from within, prudently accepting help from the law and the advice of legitimate authority, but never acting just because someone else tells me to do it or tells me it is good, but because I personally and responsibly judge that this action is good for me to do. This is a morality not of law, but of liberty. We do not have to act differently than everyone else, but whatever we do comes from our own commitment to do good as seen by me.

Contrast this morality of liberty with the theologian Bernard Lonergan (20). The essence of the "moral conversion" is that one no longer acts out of the primary motive of desire of reward, pleasure, approval, or fear of punishment, but because it is the good. This *moral conversion* is a shift from self-satisfaction to veneration as the basis of one's moral decision-making and action.

Test out your own inner motivations for your moral actions. Why do you do what you do?

Personal Growth:

As one grows and matures, he begins to understand himself by relating to others not himself. Alternatively, many Zen, Hindu and a few Christian mystics maintain that by turning one's concentration inward, and descending progressively back through all thoughts, images, and faculties, one can come to the ultimate ground of oneself in an act of pure intuition of self-awareness. Most Christian traditions however, still hold that this pure self-awareness is only possible through an out-of-the-corner-of-your-eye intuition of yourself acting in relation to others. Regardless, to be one person, in our conscious personal development, we must be one in the order of action, and the unity of that one action always lies in front of us, in intentionality. This is the unity of the goals I work towards. What, if anything, is the one single great dominant goal, my one true love, in my life? Or am I at war with myself, pursuing multiple goals? Am I truly one, or many?

Dignity:

A person is not pure spirit (an *angel*, remember the discussion about the one and the many) or a mind attached to a body. He is a synthesis of soul and body. A unity of mutually influencing co-principles to form a single being, a person. A person's deepest nature, his personal self-identity and destiny, is to be an image

of *God*, coming from *God* by a creative act of love, and called by name (the who) to final union with *God*. A person is nurtured and prepared by a process of self-development in which he tries to unfold into action, as far as he can in this life, the potentiality of this image of *God* within him. A person is the manifestation of this symbolic self-expression, in our ever unfinished effort to express in rational form what is beyond all rational form and expression.

Since man possesses a spiritual nature capable of direct personal and immortal union with God, or my Archetypal Exemplar, *each and every human person has an inalienable and ultimate dignity, not subordinated to any other person, let alone any human institution, and can never be reduced to the level of a mere object or thing.* The person is “master of itself” (*sui dominus*, Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*).

This is a summary of the classical western view based on Thomas Aquinas and the thirteenth century western scholastics.

The Human Person is:

- a) An imperfectly self-possessing being through self-awareness (*presence to itself*), self-consciousness (*knowledge of itself*), and self-determination (*responsible for its own actions*).
- b) A spirit incarnate in matter. A synthesis of soul and body. A psychosomatic whole.
- c) A self symbolizing being. Expressing to itself and others in ever unfinished, imperfect visible symbols, the reality of its inner true self: his / her nature, meaning, destiny, final goal and life as a journey towards this goal in community with other persons.

- d) A being involved in a dynamic process of growth, self-development and self-fulfillment. From an initial state of unlimited potentialities, towards self-fulfillment through the dynamic integration of the many levels of psychosomatic drives within us, guided by a stable and ordered set of values, towards a final goal, a union with the Infinite Good (*truth, beauty, love, God*). A union on the order of knowledge and love, not just a fusion of being.
- e) A being whose deepest self-identity is to be an image of *God*, towards transformation and union with the Infinite Good, the source of all existence.
- f) The Main phases of this process of transformation include:
 - * Self-Awareness
 - * Self-Development of all our human capacities
 - * Self-Alienation: Tendency towards disorder, self-centeredness, bending us aside from true self-development toward loss of true authentic selfhood, making us a stranger (from the latin *alienatus*) to our true selves.
 - * Self-Transcendence: The paradox of self-development is to break out of our narrow circle and perspective of self-centeredness (*self as opposed to others*), and to surrender oneself in union with the Infinite Good, taking on a universal perspective of *God* as knowing and loving all things under Him. This loss of self (*self-centeredness*) is the ultimate step in finding our richer self.

The Modern I:

This idea of self-possession and self-determination through freedom and moral self-guidance towards one's ultimate authentic goal, or good, was articulated by the classic medieval metaphysical traditions, notably St. Thomas Aquinas. But it tended to focus heavily on each individual as distinct and separate from each other. Modern thought refines this idea with added emphasis on self-consciousness and freedom, on free self-determination.

The person as subject is a unique *I*, which cannot be captured in any abstract idea of what is common to all persons. Where is the *I* shouts Soren Kierkegaard (21), the Danish founder of existentialism. Authentic love between two persons is from I to Thou. This unique *I* resists classifications in any common categories. This is the root of *situational ethics*. Since the I in each situation is unique, and the existential situation is also unique, my moral decision here and now cannot be determined or judged by any moral principles or norms.

The person as the unique I is the source of all its actions and cannot be objectified. Whatever we objectify is known somehow *out in front of us*, as an *object*. But the I, as the *subject*, is always the source of its own actions, behind the scenes, the *doer*, the *observer*, never the *observed*. The I can only be known by living existentially from within, and pointed to by indirect language. The most complete self-consciousness, connecting oneself with I, seems to only be done in silence.

This turn to the I as subject is characteristic of contemporary thinkers like Soren Kierkegaard, Gabriel Marcel, Martin Buber and Emmanuel Mounier.

I to Thou:

The human person does not first become a person by his own intrinsic development and then enter into relations with other persons. A human person becomes a person, self-possession as a unique I, only through the inter personal relation with other persons that is an I to Thou relationship. Only when another person reaches out to me, calls me by name (as a unique who, a person with an ultimate dignity), involving loving acceptance of me, as a Thou, and not an object, do I wake up to my own I. Thus the person as a person, a self-possessing I, is intrinsically relational. Of course, mom is naturally the first Thou. At the very deepest level of my true self is my interpersonal relationship with *God*. He calls me by name in pure loving acceptance.

These interpersonal relations can bloom into a permanence of community, a stable *we*. Western thought seems to argue there is no developing I except in the framework of some supporting *we*, and no well grounded *we* except in the framework of an ultimate, personal, Infinite, faithful Thou that transcends the flux of change, time and space, our *God*. Keep in mind that many traditions argue that this developing I can also be understood in an act of pure intuition of self-awareness. There seems to be no *right* way. The key is to choose *a way*, and begin *your* journey towards understanding.

These profound depths of the human soul were known to mystics of all the great spiritual traditions, where the soul is in immediate contact with the Infinite good (however one describes this), but seems to have been recognized more explicitly by eastern spiritual traditions: Hindu, Buddhism, Zen, Yoga, Taoism, etc. The Tibetan Book of the Dead (The Bardo Thodol)(9) is now recognized as having described in detail the many levels of the subconscious now rediscovered by western psychology. Our present day rediscovery of these depth dimensions of the person in western culture comes from a renewed understanding of these rich eastern traditions, the western mystical traditions, and the modern depth psychology of Freud, Jung, etc.

More than a computer in a body:

Man no longer appears to be a two level structure of a consciousness sitting on top of a purely mechanical or automatic biological physical mechanism. Rather, a multi leveled being, from the zone of self-consciousness on top, down through the levels of the sub-conscious and unconscious, such as subliminal consciousness, dreams, Freud's repressed unconscious (*where unacceptable impulses or memories were kept hidden from awareness as a basic defense to ward off anxiety and fear*), Jung's collective and archetypal unconscious (*the reservoir of ancient and non-conceptual wisdom, communicating through symbols*), all the way down to the ultimate ground, the point where soul in contact with, and in the presence of, the Ultimate Ground (*God*). This is the level desired by the great mystics, which can be brought into consciousness, into the light. This is the goal of intentionality for any substantial change.

Lets attempt a rough amateur map of these levels:

The top level is ordinary self-consciousness, where we are aware of ourselves doing things and aware of a limited set of personality traits. This is the hub of moral decisions and responsibility. The levels below can send up wisdom, but cannot make decisions. The deciding I operates at this level.

Next is the level of dreams, that strange, little known realm of non self-consciousness and non self-determining (hence not morally responsible) consciousness, operating through symbolic imagination. Often fragmentary and disjointed, dreams operate apart from our ordinary space-time. The contents of the dream come from many different sources and levels: outside stimuli, the Freudian repression of elements from our top level and the Jungian messages and wisdom from the creative unconscious (the source of creativity) deep below. With practice, one can remember dreams, interpret them, and use them for specific purposes. For instance, the tribal Senoi people of Indonesia, and the Jean Houston - Robert Masters Foundation for Mind Research, both teach people to creatively re-dream their dreams.

There is the unconscious level of repressed content, as uncovered and explored by Freud. Pushed down by upper consciousness and not allowed to rise again because it's too painful. Freud's big problem is that he tended to understand the whole of the unconscious with these negative repressed thoughts.

Also, the creative unconscious, as explored by Jung and Ira Progoff. A power of free spontaneous creativity, working through holistic images and image patterns. Nourished from below by

the deeper sources of the collective unconscious and archetypal symbols. Perhaps the source of creative solutions, intuitive perception, telepathy, and other psychic powers of perception and healing.

At an even deeper level is the great aquifer of the Jung's collective unconscious, the buried archetypal symbols common to all of man; most positive and creative, and some negative, like Jung's shadow.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) was a Swiss psychiatrist and student of Sigmund Freud who tried to bridge the gap between psychology and spirituality.

One of Jung's most significant ideas is the shadow. Jung describes the shadow as those parts of our psyche, our spirit, that we're not too proud of. The shadow might be a desire disapproved by our conscience or peers. It could be a bizarre or unhealthy interest that civilization have suppressed.

The Shadow contents involve known and unknown aspects of the self, making the ego, the unconscious and the environment all play a role in its expression or repression. When confronted by the ego, the largely unconscious shadow can be integrated into consciousness. But, for the most part, the shadow lies beyond the threshold of our awareness.

Jung explains the shadow through his concept of the archetype:

“When it [shadow] appears as an archetype . . . it is quite within the possibility for a man to recognize the relative evil of his

nature, but it is a rare and shattering experience for him to gaze into the face of absolute evil.”

(C. G. Jung, Aion in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, ed. William McGuire et al., trans. R. F. C. Hull, Bollingen Series XX (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1954-79) Vol. 9/2, p. 10.)

This deeper level is the realm of the ancient, intuitive, non-conceptual wisdom manifesting itself through symbols and intuitive insights. This level goes beyond human history, into contact from within, with the whole of the cosmos, the immanent presence of *God* himself, the Infinite Good, the creator of the cosmos and all existence.

The main point of this rough map is to remember to keep the communication between all these levels open. The rational, deciding self or ego, the upper consciousness and the deeper unconscious level of creative insight and psychic energy. They are all important to a mature persons development. The self is a bridge between the conscious level above and the sub conscious level below. We must find our own way of communicating with our depths: both the natural and supernatural, cosmic and religious, perhaps through *altered states of consciousness*. What is your personal way?

Meditation:

The typical, if not only, way this hidden aquifer of the unconscious levels reveal itself and can be stimulated is through

the mediation of symbols, especially the great archetypal symbols held common to all men of all cultures in some similar way (*light, darkness, fire, water, father, mother, sexual union, blood, the shadow, the journey, etc.*).

Our True Self:

The deepest (*or highest*) True Self is the hidden spiritual self that is the ultimate center and unity of all the levels of the human person, and its ultimate integrating force. One of our life goals is to bring our *lower* self-conscious deciding ego into explicit awakening with our *higher* self, which remains quite hidden for most people, but is quite real, the most real part of ourselves. This is the point of our existence where the person becomes pure spirit, outside the barriers of time and space, and transcends substantial change. No barriers, no distances or gaps, present, absolute, authentic and eternal. Immediately present to the spiritual self at this level, as it reaches out with love, transcending its own depth dimensions and forgetting itself, is the ultimate great self, the infinite self, the ground of the soul and of all being. What we in the West call *God*, the Hindus *the Atman who is also the Brahman*, (The Brahman is the original, spirit of the world, it is effectively the creator. The Atman is basically our soul, and it is immortal. The atman is part of the Brahman, that has *split* from the Brahman, and has been trapped inside our bodies. It is the main focus of Hinduism to release the Atman back into the Brahman, in a process known as Moksha.), etc. This is the mystical level where the Ultimate Real reveals itself directly to our soul, to our ultimate self, I to Thou, beyond all image, concept or expression, by direct *touch* of the divine to me. This is the level of understanding we

ought to strive towards. This is the forceful, unconditional, absolute love, that will persist through a substantial change. This is your authentic *I*.

How important does that credit score, or goose-stepping behind the incessant drum beat of those societal mouthy marionettes who claim to know what is our best interests, seem now? Our collective self delusion towards obedience, compliance and subordination; towards personal gain at the expense of our humanity and the environment; this constant self conscious class struggle for *stuff*, creates a pathological creature, not a mature human being. It seems to me that our very lifestyle hinders our effort to become the authentic *I*, the person, we are to become. We get transfixed by the quickening of changing events and forget that we are ultimately in control of our own lives. We are not *innocent victims* but *sui dominus*.

Depth Structure of the Human Person, a synthesis

The Outside Material World

Perception (hearing, seeing, touch, taste, smell)

Persona: my stable social face

Ego: my center of consciousness + center of awareness, thought
and decision

(Conscious Level)

(Unconscious Level) *(Communicates by symbols with the EGO)*

Subconscious: Just under the surface. My center of artistic
creativity, problem solving, ESP?

Personal Unconscious: My repressed Stuff (*Freud, etc.*)

Collective Unconscious (*Jung*)

*(The reservoir of inherited wisdom from the collective experiences of all
of mankind. Condensed into archetypal images or symbols, each of which
represents some basic significant experience, situation, relationship, natural
force, etc., met with in human life and charged with emotional significance.*

*Examples: Birth-death, father-mother, light-darkness, blood, water, fire,
journey, mountain, home, animals, etc.)*

Timothy J. Brill

Deep True Self: Image of God

(Mystical Experience: Union with God and other persons from within)

Ultimate Self: Cosmic Wisdom, Absolute, Authentic, Union with God

In Memoriam, W. Norris Clarke, S.J.

My Three Great Relationships

One only becomes an authentic person only when one comes into self-awareness and self-acceptance of one's unique true self. A unique person lives a moral theory of liberty, of free self-determination towards one's ultimate true self, to become an authentic *I*. To develop one's unique individuality as a person does not mean that one has to act differently from everyone else, but that whatever one does comes honestly from within one's own internal commitment to understanding this deep true self. During the lifetime of a person, that person develops a unique self-identity through a series of relationships. Coming to understand the richness of the unique depth dimension of the human person, allowing himself to *light up* to self-awareness by an implicit, immediate accompanying *out-of-the-corner-of-the-eye* consciousness of himself as acting, and finally by the reflection of the impact of his actions.

There are only three great relationships in a persons life:

- How I relate to myself: *(psychology, sex and sexuality)*
- How I relate to other persons: *(politics, schooling and education)*
- How I relate to my *God*, or ultimate ground of my existence, whether or not I believe in God: *(spirituality)*

These three relationships evolve together. They need to be understood and integrated with an *eye* on your true self. There is no right or wrong. You are who you are, unique, dignified and special. Yet despite the very important nature of these great relationships, the cultish nature of society has done everything it can to damage these relationships. To confuse our journey towards personal authenticity.

We are constantly told to conform and comply. We are taught that it is in our best interest to become part of a group, of a society. We are taught that *we* are better than *they*, and that *they* are out to harm *us*. As we build our ideological wall against cultural assimilation, we lose our emotional and social acceptance, intelligence, self-regulation and empathy.

It is through a perverted use of *psychology* we are ultimately labeled as good or bad as perceived by the group, and not by ourselves. We are too fat, too slow, too lazy, liberal, conservative, agnostic, etc. We are all some type of an *ist* and suffer from some type of an *ism*. We are schooled in the western literary style of the Jeremiad schemes to control personal behavior by breeding intense fear and uncertainty into individuals. We are taught to suppress

our normal human emotions. We concede our relationship of how I relate to myself as a unique person to others, and do not take this responsibility ourselves. My true self is then determined not by myself, but controlled by society. A very dangerous approach. This is a morality of law, not of liberty. This is an illusion of freedom, not *sui dominus*. This is not *living*, but *existing*.

The term *jeremiad* refers to a sermon that accounts for the misfortunes of a society as a just penalty for social and moral evils, but holds out hope for changes that will bring a happier future. It derives from the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, who in the seventh century BC attributed the calamities of Israel to its abandonment of the covenant with Jehovah and its return to pagan idolatry. The term is also used more broadly, according to Emory Elliott: “Taking their texts from Jeremiah and Isaiah, these orations followed—and reinscribed—a rhetorical formula that included recalling the courage and piety of the founders, lamenting recent and present ills, and crying out for a return to the original conduct and zeal. In current scholarship, the term ‘jeremiad’ has expanded to include not only sermons but also other texts that rehearse the familiar tropes of the formula such as captivity narratives, letters, covenant renewals, as well as some histories and biographies” (Cambridge History of American Literature, Volume 1, 257).

As one example, our very first experience of our world is through the prism of our sex and sexuality. Yet, society has created *norms* of sexual identity and expression. Of course I am not advocating hurting anyone, this is obviously immoral, but our Puritan sexual ethic frustrates our most basic understanding of ourselves and subsequent growth. Our self image is based not on

what we are, but rather on the societal norms of how we ought to portray ourselves to others.

In our political relationships, we posture and participate in order to receive our allocation of societal resources. We are taught (and rewarded) to reject any attitude that is willing to question authority and imagine a society that is thoughtful, tolerant and forgiving. We seem relate to others only through confrontation. Remember our comment on how the very poor and vulnerable cannot afford to replace their authentic life with celebrity or a brand. How many wars have been fought over simple economic justice ideas?

Family ought to be our introduction to relating to each other using wisdom, understanding, compassion and forgiveness, but it seems the modern family is in crisis. We are simply too busy in our individual pursuit of the trivial to take notice of what is truly important. We allow society, and specifically school, to teach us those self-righteous *life skills*, like money management, business, vocational skills, and patriotism. We allow ourselves to forfeit dignity and freedom for an illusion of virtue and goodness.

Schooling vs. education.

Here I am keenly aware of the ground breaking ideas of John Taylor Gatto (22) and Noam Chomsky. I agree in the importance of an education for understanding how these three great relationships *fit* together, and how I then integrate my experiences to create my own personal meaning-model of who I am as a unique human person. The reality however, is that we are

not educated, but schooled. The main goal in schooling is not the passionate pursuit of knowledge and understanding, but rather to give up our independence and submit to philistinism and accept obedience and subordination attitudes.

Aristotle once said, “The things we have to learn before we do them, we learn by doing them.” (Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*) Experiential learning is learning by doing, and is often contrasted to academic learning, which refers to the process of acquiring information through study of a subject without any direct experience of it.

Aristotle (384 BCE - March 7, 322 BCE) was an ancient Greek philosopher, a student of Plato and teacher of Alexander the Great. He wrote on diverse subjects, including physics, poetry, biology and zoology, logic, rhetoric, politics and government, and ethics. Along with Socrates and Plato, Aristotle was one of the most influential of ancient Greek philosophers. They transformed Presocratic Greek philosophy into the foundations of Western philosophy as we know it. Some consider Plato and Aristotle to have founded two of the most important schools of Ancient philosophy; others consider Aristotelianism as a development and concretization of Plato’s insights.

An experiential education is the development of character, a quest for values, the raising of visions, not merely the hoarding of facts and honing of skills. It is the creation of a way of life (a way of looking at people and things) not a problem, or an assignment, or a job. It seems to me that experience is the only *true* form of education, but it is difficult to *institutionalize*.

An education should unite and connect people into a celebration of their humanity, not divide them into competing hierarchical world views. “*The sudden assertion of human criteria within a dehumanizing framework of political manipulation can be like a flash of lightning illuminating a dark landscape.*” (Vaclav Havel, *a letter to Alexander Dubcek*, 1991)

In our relationship with *God*, our *american* style fidelity and spirituality, we are taught to *follow* those who speak with *authority*. We are taught the conventional Puritan ideas of sacrifice, orthodoxy and judgment. Justice is achieved provided the process is followed. Only a select few can know truth, and we hope that we have those select few on our side. This is in stark contrast with the understanding our true self as an authentic I, spoken about previously. This relationship is by its very nature, personal. It is through our dignity as an existing person, and with our own voice, that this relationship blossoms. A mature psychological and moral person will reject any *manipulation* of this relationship. The *voice* of the good is obvious to anyone who truly *listens*.

Our three great relationships, which help us to understand our True Self, are instead through the modern tools of perception management, used to control the very lives we claim we freely live and enjoy. As a consequence, we only live an illusion of freedom. Our most basic rights afforded to us as free men and women were *hijacked* by the industrial revolution and the consequent inhuman and savage way we were *taught* to engage in our self-conscious class struggle. When we stopped looking for our own answers, we became victims. When we became innocent victims, we stopped living! So how can we escape this slippery slope, illusionary, artificial life, journey?

On Adventure

As a former instructor with the outdoor experiential education program called “Outward Bound,” Henry David Thoreau was our most popular quoted author.

Thoreau wrote: “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion.” (Henry David Thoreau, Walden)

Perhaps one can make some sense of the inner *psyche* of adventurers, like Henry David Thoreau, if one understands adventure as more than a journey in geography, as a journey

in meaning and consciousness: A process of achieving greater awareness of one's needs in order to fulfill one's potential as a human person, and perhaps a catalyst towards understanding one's True Self. "The mass of men live lives of quiet desperation," wrote Thoreau in *Walden* (Henry David Thoreau, Walden)

The transcendent experience of some great adventure is the vehicle that allows the adventurer to express in sensible form what is beyond all form and expression. The adventure itself becomes a symbolic self-expression of the meaning of the whole of reality and man's place in it. This was Henry David Thoreau's great experiment. "There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star." *Walden* can only be completed by its reader. Adventure is how we regain control of our relationships, our lives, and live authentically.

Despite initial conceptual differences between what will be expounded as a *Spirituality of Risk* and the inner psyche of *Adventurers*, their insight of *authentic* life is fundamentally similar. I intent to show that these views partake a similar *transcendence myth* as well as *eternal* concepts. I took inspiration from Henry David Thoreau, whom I consider the first American author to consider what makes a life authentic, worth living.

The aim of spirituality is to illuminate my experiences in depth and situate these experiences within my articulated vision of reality. It is to make sense out of my experience as a whole, insofar as this is possible by the light of divine reason. It means understanding the three great relationships which link me to the four great wholes or ultimates in reality: *the self*, as the unitary center of all my experiences. Society, as the community of other

human persons like myself, within which I come to understand my humanity. The cosmos or nature, the material universe as the framework of all my experiences in this present form of my life. God, as the ultimate condition of intelligibility of all things (provided I come to the conviction that I can and must affirm His existence). In other words, we all assume a personal definition of life, and our role in life. We embroider a meaningful understanding of life. A process of achieving greater awareness of one's needs in order to fulfill one's full potential as an individual. Existentially, the *stakes are high*. Our spontaneous acts of inquiry and speculation, give rise to the imaginative possibilities and moral passion that help define a *spirituality of risk*. Thoreau, the Harvard divinity student, understood this sense of individual spirituality. Like his mentor, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thoreau writes:

“Why level downward to our dullest perception always, and praise that as common sense? The commonest sense is the sense of men asleep, which they express by snoring. Sometimes we are inclined to class those who are once-and-a-half-witted with the half-witted, because we appreciate only a third part of their wit. Some would find fault with the morning red, if they ever got up early enough. “They pretend,” as I hear, “that the verses of Kabir have four different senses; illusion, spirit, intellect, and the exoteric doctrine of the Vedas”; but in this part of the world it is considered a ground for complaint if a man's writings admit of more than one interpretation. While England endeavors to cure the potato-rot, will not any endeavor to cure the brain-rot, which prevails so much more widely and fatally?” (Henry David Thoreau, Walden) (Kabir, 1440 - 1518, was a mystic poet of India. Kabir's poetry draws on both Hinduism and Islam, though he was critical of

certain aspects of both faiths. Kabir is considered both a Sufi and Brahmin saint.)

What makes life valuable, real, complete, authentic? What makes life authentic vis-à-vis God? A spirituality of risk responds to these questions in terms of the *tension* between individual passion and communal good. Thoreau asked that exact question in his now famous Walden thesis statement: “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.” I never get tired of reading that passage. It resonates like a perfect orchestra.

Consider the spirituality of Soren Kierkegaard. Life is full of obstacles, severe tests or trials; your experiences are crucibles that prepare you to make a *Leap of Faith*. For Keirkegaard, this Leap of Faith establishes the basis for religious commitment and, to him, authentic life.

Consider Keirkegaard’s use of the *Abraham Myth*. Start with an ordinary worldview that strives for order, structure and a special sense of holiness. The Abraham myth places Abraham on Mt. Mariah asked by God to sacrifice his oldest son (the oldest son allegorizing a link to the past, to God and order). The absurdity of believing, yet Abraham broke with tralatitious morality and followed God’s commands. How are we to re-act to this story? How much of Abraham’s experience could we assimilate as *ours*? Abraham’s moral passion enabled him to make a *leap of faith*, and in doing so defined his existence in a completely new way. Thoreau states the same idea:

“Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.” (Henry David Thoreau, Walden)

What makes life valuable, real, complete, authentic? What makes life authentic vis-à-vis the cosmos? A spirituality of risk responds to this question in terms of the *tension* between natural science and spirituality. Again Thoreau: “Every man is the builder of a temple, called his body, to the god he worships, after a style purely his own, nor can he get off by hammering marble instead. We are all sculptors and painters, and our material is our own flesh and blood and bones. Any nobleness begins at once to refine a man’s features, any meanness or sensuality to imbrute them.” (Henry David Thoreau, Walden)

Teilhard de Chardin asks how do you know yourself. In 1959, there appeared the English translation of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin’s *The Phenomenon of Man* (2), followed one year later by *The Divine Milieu* (1). In these books Teilhard de Chardin stressed the point that the future growth of man as a moral and religious person depends on his relationship with the world (the cosmos). The experiences that man has with the world not only may, but also must be integrated into one religious experience, if religion is to say anything significant. Engagement with nature contributes to the growth of the human person, not only as a citizen of the world but also as a spiritual being destined for an eternal life. Man’s involvement in worldly activities constitutes a religious value; man must develop a cosmic piety and a respect for

the cosmos, and this outlook must be integrated into spirituality of nature and of the human person.

Again Thoreau: “I delight to come to my bearings—not walk in procession with pomp and parade, in a conspicuous place, but to walk even with the Builder of the universe, if I may—not to live in this restless, nervous, bustling, trivial Nineteenth Century, but stand or sit thoughtfully while it goes by.” (Henry David Thoreau, Walden)

A spirituality of risk does not have a distinctive subject matter, but it does have a distinctive point of view. It considers that the illumination of authentic life happens when one takes risks; when one makes the commitment, at least implicit and in hope, to the radical intelligibility of reality.

In our attempts to illuminate our experiences we must *say* something that is recognized by ourselves, and perhaps by society. A myth speaks about societies most important things. A transcendence myth, a *koan*, a *journey*, is recognizable as a rite of passage from our present experience of the aforementioned four great wholes or ultimates in reality to a deeper a sense of completeness or wholeness concerning our lives.

A transcendence myth also implies intentionality. The purpose of life is to guide oneself freely toward this deeper a sense of completeness from within. It means seeking some sort of integration of our lives’ multiple goals around a central question: what is the real thing? The interesting theme to be found in spirituality of risk and among adventurers is that this process towards authentic life does not *happen to us*. Rather it

involves action on our part; an experience, and if the experience is *strong enough*, possibly to be followed by a transformation, a transcendence, to some deeper illumination or understanding about our life. Consider the relation of the pre-interpretation of a *significant* experience, the experience, and the post-interpretation of the experience. How can we intellectually account for the radical discontinuity in our interpretation of this experience? What implications does this have for a substantial change? Our lives are forever changed! Again, Thoreau's Walden thesis statement eloquently states this *essential fact of life*.

How do we live a *fully human* life, under any circumstance? How ought we to conduct our life, possibly opening us up to a *world of transformation and transcendence*? Thoreau would argue to engage in life as an active participant, not a docile spectator. "As I have said, I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up." (Henry David Thoreau, Walden)

We introduced a spirituality of risk in terms of a *tension* between individual passion and communal good and again the *tension* between natural science and spirituality. In order to make sense of this inner tension; to make sense of the theme of journeying and meaning; to make sense of completeness or wholeness about one's life, they transcend a *normal* interpretation of their experiences and experience an eternal aspect of what they are doing in the temporal world.

Keirkegaard's *moral passion* which leads him to the *leap of faith* as the basis of religious commitment and authentic life; Teilhard

de Chardin's sapience that every being is beautiful if we can penetrate to a concrete vision of its inner splendor; Henry David Thoreau's insight into confrontation, direct experience, simplicity, solitude, non conformity and nature; the adventurers insight that there exists some eternal greatness in the passage of temporal events, all bespeak a similar transcendence myth that help illuminate their understanding of their life and their relationship with the before mentioned four great ultimates in reality.

Their experiences are not only illuminated, but become pedagogical as well: Experience the eternal aspect of what you are doing in the temporal world; Have the courage to accept your life; Do the best you can under all circumstances.

Thoreau writes: "We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep." (Henry David Thoreau, Walden)

The nineteenth century German philosopher, Fredrich Schleiermacher, speaks of world consciousness and God consciousness as two complementary facts of human existence that have to grow in relation to each other. This *tension* as the basis for an understanding of authentic life seems to differ in intentionality. The transcendence myth seems to be more God consciousness in a spirituality of risk, and perhaps expectantly, more world consciousness with our adventurers. But what does this mean. Is it fair to address the same type of questions to both *groups*; should one talk about authentic life, transcendence myths, and pedagogical and eternal concerns with adventurers. It seems to me that the answer is yes. We can address similar questions. The world

of the spirituality of risk proponents and of the adventurers is one and the same. However the ordering and consequent intelligibility of these *worlds* seems from different *directions*. One seems to be reflecting on the convergence of particular experiences until some insight helps illuminate their understanding of authentic life. The other seems to reflect on some *hidden* intelligibility suddenly *made known*. Henry David Thoreau seems to bridge both groups.

“To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust. It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically.” (Henry David Thoreau, Walden).

We started this discussion by proposing there was no difference in the vision of authentic life between a spirituality of risk, as envisioned by Kierkegaard and Teilhard de Chardin, and adventurers, like Henry David Thoreau. We argued that Henry David Thoreau’s Walden experiment bridged the *gap* by understanding life as both a journey and experiment. Focus on this life; past and future are things that distract you from living now. Adventuring is not only a journey in geography, but also a journey into consciousness, a search for the real thing, for authentic life.

Finally, from Walden: “I have learned this, at least, by my experiment: that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish

themselves around and within him; or the old laws be expanded, and interpreted in favor of a more liberal sense, and he will live with the license of a higher order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundation under them.” (Henry David Thoreau, Walden)

When I sat down to start this section, I had in mind to reflect on why I enjoy so much being a pilot, a mountaineer, an adventurer. I wanted to identify those things by which I explain to others why people live such deliberate lives. What I discovered is that adventuring is not just a journey in geography, but also a journey into consciousness. It is my vehicle towards understanding what makes my life authentic and worth living. I would hope that all people partake in some adventure during their lives. The end result may be surprising. Where is your Walden Pond?

The Illusion of Power

Words have meaning. Taken with an eye on their historic, geographic, social, political and economic context, the language of words both represents and describes the shared myths of a group of individuals. Myth, of course, being not something that is false, but rather how the group defines who they are, what is important.

The words listed are organized into two columns. They represent, as I shall argue, two very distinct and often contradictory world-views in modern America. I'd argue in the entire world, but I'll speak from what I know, as an American. Each column has a word that horizontally opposes it. This is done to illustrate the deeper tension between the groups. Re-read the list again. Granted, not a typical way to express a problem, but it thrusts you into the reality of these myths.

All people *solve* problems by use of power or by reason. The words listed in the left column describe the myths and consequent world-view of the power solvers. Alternatively, the right column describes the myths and consequent world-view of the reason solvers. The roots of this ever-widening ideological schism are evident in our everyday lives.

POWER

Power
Control
Purity
The godly
Evangelical
Dependence
Sacrifice
Jeremiad
Ideological
Oppressive
Mindless
“Party Line”
Utility
Tension
Ritual
Revivalism
Conversion
Religion
Theology
Providence
Orthodoxy
Judgment
Persecution
Process
Class
Commodification
Sacrifice
Allusion
Judge
Trial
Intervention
Authority

REASON

Love
Intellect
Assimilation
Honest
Beautiful
Free-Spirited
Balance
Freedom
Thoughtful
Community
Justify
Tolerance
Nature
Personal
Reflective
Humanity
Individual
Meditation
Spiritual
Knowable
Rational
Forgiveness
Pacifism
Self-Expression
Equality
Conscience
Insight
Poetry
Transformative
Joy
Epiphany
Imagination

These two *groups* are philosophically contrary to each other. Their antipodal world-views become apparent when we examine their solutions to some universal topical themes. There are social consequences to personal decisions. There is always a balance, a dynamic, of what we gain as a group being offset by what we have lost. A fear of cultural assimilations often means a social cohesion based on a mindless ideological *fight* against a *common* enemy. Today we have several *wars*, with the consequent *enemy*, against terrorism, drugs, poverty, and illiteracy, just to name a few. The perception management skills of those with power perpetuate the old American Puritan ideas of obsessing, being vulnerable and being a target. The *battle lines* between those who think personal behavior can only be controlled by intervention, fear and law, vs., those who imagine a world where personal behavior based on conscience and insight is self controlled, were being drawn in the very beginning of our American experiment.

Power creates organizations. All organizations then tend to institutionalize. The original organizational precept is usually replaced by the perpetuation of the institution as the primary goal. As though by some unspoken agreement, today's governmental and non-governmental *hallowed* institutions, complete with their inevitable self-congratulatory pomp and circumstance, persecute and criticize those thoughtful, free-spirited, pacifist intellectuals and other vague *enemies*, for their failures, then take no real action to solve the necessarily increasing abusive social morass. To the extent that these institutions use power to control people and solve problems, and not reason, they are unrepentantly flawed.

1. The power myth continues to establish an ideological wall against the idea of assimilation.

2. The power myth asserts that community and mutual dependence results in a *need* for sacrifice and cultural control.
3. The power myth relies on perpetuating a corporate culture and control. It is essentially arguing for the ancient community of God above the individual. The enemy is original sin. The problem to be solved is personal salvation. The power myth positions itself to be uniquely qualified to be the intermediary. Thus, the continuation of our modern day social mentality: *your either with us or against us*.
4. The power myth maintains providential will (*everything that happens in this world is determined providentially*) and is against negotiating, religious tolerance and assimilation.
5. The power myth rejects antinomianism (*a belief that people are not bound by man made moral law*). This early American idea suggested that people can reflect on their own and God can *touch* or transform the individual directly. No surprise that a personal relationship with God caused Puritan John Winthrop (*among others*) to consider such teachings an “attack on the rigid moral and legal codes of the Puritans” of New England, as well as the “authority of the Massachusetts clergy”. We continue to appreciate this tension between the individual experience and obedience to the *party line* that was crucial to Puritan and to modern political control.
6. The power myth rejects an attitude that is willing to question authority and imagine a society that is thoughtful, tolerant and forgiving.
7. The power myth continues the conventional Puritan ideas of sacrifice, orthodoxy and judgment. Justice is achieved

provided the process is followed. Only a select few can know truth, and we hope that we have those select few on our side.

8. The power myth uses the literary style of the Jeremiad schemes to control personal behavior by breeding intense fear and uncertainty into individuals. (*Compare with a reason based conception of a knowable universe, epiphany, personal experience, nature and individual conscience*).

Institutional thinking does not work. We are human persons (*Tim, Matt, Alex, Cody*), *sui dominus*, masters of ourselves. We are not simply a what (*teacher, pilot*), an object to be defined, manipulated and controlled. It is interesting that when asked who they are, most individuals respond by stating what they are, or alternatively, what they are not. The power solvers have used this quirk of human nature to exercise their version of social vision and control. Only the submission of the institution will truly solve problems. Individual responsibility and morality cannot be legislated. We must promote and defend individual freedoms, individual consciousness and personal responsibility. People are predisposed towards reason (*genetics and evolution*). We have evolved by use of reason, not power. Consider the following:

“Think: to think: (1) the mind’s process of asking and answering questions, identifying and resolving contradictions.

Compare that definition with the nebulous and useless dictionary definitions of the word, think.

Therefore understand why Americans continue pondering, reflecting upon, calling upon, judging,

evaluating, analyzing, remembering, being certain, inventing, believing, forming opinions, devising, conceiving, considering, viewing, reviewing, inferring, anticipating, advising, weighing, simulating, intending, challenging, envisioning, imagining, regarding, fancying, speculating, deliberating, and doing everything except asking and answering questions that identify and resolve contradictions to therefore solve problems.

Ignorant of how to think, because they were not taught the process, or even the useful definition, the government people, their think tanks, experts, school teachers, professors, and the legions of non-self questioning (unthinking) citizen organization leaders they produced, cannot and will not solve the human-caused problems resulting from that ignorance.” (Doug Buchanan, Fairbanks Alaska)

In the beginning of our American experiment, Benjamin Franklin’s embrace of enlightenment philosophy, demonstrates a distinct shift from power to reason. With Franklin we begin to see a shift in the worldview itself. I do think that Franklin’s conviction was ultimately flawed because his resolute belief in rationalism inevitably becomes the new power, and it fails to address what we now know of as the enlightenment contradictions. (read John Locke, 1632 - 1704, David Hume, 1711 - 1776 and Immanuel Kant, 1724 - 1804, who states: *“Enlightenment is man’s emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one’s own understanding without the guidance of another.”*) The enlightenment contradictions deal with the ideas of freedom or

justice, does reason replace faith as the basis for understanding the physical and moral world).

What is missing in Franklin's worldview is humanity and the person. The universe is more than well-tuned clock. The universe is a spiritual, living entity. Zero is not empty, it is the *pregnant zero* from which all other numbers flow. Just as rationalism replaced the world views of myth and magic, someday a forceful new worldview will replace rationalism, and include the dignity of the person as its core value. (*Walter Brueggemann, "The Prophetic Imagination"*).

Franklin, with his faults in reasoning, was a pioneer in a process of thought that instantly made power solutions obsolete, and began a revolution that is still prevalent today. His creation of the Junto displays his enthusiasm for open debate, the basis of any true democracy. We continue to articulate the ideals of freedom and liberty for all, but I do not think we quite believe them, as our current paranoia demanding *security* demonstrate they are still just beyond our grasp.

Franklin's conviction of the individual as someone who is in control of their own life and destiny, and not subject to some arbitrary state, law or providential plan, has proven to be more worthy than any system of social control. From a utilitarian standpoint, Franklin works.

We began by claiming these two distinct world views or myths were part of the beginnings of our American identity, and would manifest themselves in ever widening animosity. Our modern day challenge is to demand understanding and healing

between these groups. Ultimately, power will lose the battle. Our ultimate dignity is based on love. The correlation of all our great relationships (*self, others, God*) makes best sense with benevolence, compassion, and love. Love is the most perfect of all human activities and will end human suffering. Love is the absolute power.

On Making Moral Choices

The ability to tolerate and deal with ethical ambiguity is a sign of maturity. Ethical issues are seldom black and white, but come in all shades of gray. Two deeply held values may pull the same person in opposite directions—does a family respect Grandma’s freedom or her safety in determining whether or not she should be placed in a nursing home? Or the same value may lead persons of good will to opposite conclusions—does the sanctity of life suggest that we support or oppose the death penalty for murderers? Likewise, ethical decisions are sensitive to the philosophical and religious commitments each of us brings to life.

Ethical decisions are a matter of public discussion as well as of private conviction. Some of us are persons of religious faith and will follow the ethical values of that tradition. Others of us may be secular in our orientation and be concerned that such religious values will be imposed upon us. In either case, one of the things to be learned is how to deal with this public market place of values: to listen to and appreciate the force of opposing points of view, to engage in and learn from the give and take of public discussion, and to reach and articulate our own decisions.

Of course, in our modern society where false flags define our debates and *morality* is the new business of mass propaganda, it becomes difficult to reach and articulate our own decisions. We simply just allow ourselves to be told how to think, what is important and why. Our inaction supports the very despotism we then claim we are against. Morality becomes just another empty word. In our modern society power defines what is moral. Pursuit of the *good* becomes a myth, often ridiculed and then despised. We allow ourselves to be indoctrinated to follow a label or brand as the basis of a moral decision. Here is great example and perspective, The War Prayer by Mark Twain:

“It was a time of great and exalting excitement. The country was up in arms, the war was on, in every breast burned the holy fire of patriotism; the drums were beating, the bands playing, the toy pistols popping, the bunched firecrackers hissing and sputtering; on every hand and far down the receding and fading spread of roofs and balconies a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun; daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenue gay and fine in their new uniforms, the proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheering them with voices choked with happy emotion as they swung by; nightly the packed mass meetings listened, panting, to patriot oratory which stirred the deepest deeps of their hearts and which they interrupted at briefest intervals with cyclones of applause, the tears running down their cheeks the while; in the churches the pastors preached devotion to flag and county and invoked the God of Battles, beseeching His aid in our good cause in outpouring of fervid eloquence which moved every listener. It was indeed a glad and gracious time, and the half-dozen rash spirits that ventured to disapprove of the war and cast a doubt upon its righteousness

straightway got such a stern and angry warning that for their personal safety's sake they quickly shrank out of sight and offended no more in that way.

Sunday morning came—next day the battalions would leave for the front; the church was filled; the volunteers were there, their young faces alight with martial dreams—visions of the stern advance, the gathering momentum, the rushing charge, the flashing sabers, the flight of the foe, the tumult, the enveloping smoke, the fierce pursuit, the surrender!—then home from the war, bronzed heroes, welcomed, adored, submerged in golden seas of glory! With the volunteers sat their dear ones, proud, happy, and envied by the neighbors and friends who had no sons and brothers to send forth to the field of honor, there to win for the flag or failing, die the noblest of noble deaths. The service proceeded; a war chapter from the Old Testament was read; the first prayer was said; it was followed by an organ burst that shook the building, and with one impulse the house rose, with glowing eyes and beating hearts, and poured out that tremendous invocation

God the all-terrible!

Thou who ordainest,

Thunder thy clarion and lightning thy sword!

Then came the “long” prayer. None could remember the like of it for passionate pleading and moving and beautiful language. The burden of its supplication was that an ever-merciful and benignant Father of us all would watch over our noble young

soldiers and aid, comfort, and encourage them in their patriotic work; bless them, shield them in the day of battle and the hour of peril, bear them in His mighty hand, make them strong and confident, invincible in the bloody onset; help them to crush the foe, grant to them and to flag and county imperishable honor and glory.

An aged stranger entered and moved with slow and noiseless step up the main aisle, his eyes fixed upon the minister, his long body clothed in a robe that reached to his feet, his head bare, his white hair descending in a frothy cataract to his shoulders, his seamy face unnaturally pale, pale even to ghastliness. With all eyes following him and wondering, he made his silent way; without pausing, he ascended to the preacher's side and stood there waiting. With shut lids the preacher, unconscious of his presence, continued with his moving prayer, and at last finished it with the words, uttered in fervent appeal, "Bless our arms, grant us the victory, O Lord our God, Father and Protector of our land and flag!"

The stranger touched his arm, motioned him to step aside—which the startled minister did—and took his place. During some moments he surveyed the spellbound audience with solemn eyes, in which burned an uncanny light; then in a deep voice he said:

"I come from the Throne—bearing a message from Almighty God!" The words smote the house with a shock; if the stranger perceived it he gave no attention. "He has heard the prayer of His servant your shepherd, and will grant it if such shall be your desire after I, His messenger, shall have explained to you its import—that is to say, its full import. For it is like unto many of the prayers of

men, in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of—except he pause and think.

“God’s servant and yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused and taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two—one uttered, the other not. Both have reached the ear of Him Who heareth all supplications, the spoken and the unspoken. Ponder this—keep it in mind. If you would beseech a blessing upon yourself, beware! lest without intent you invoke a curse upon a neighbor at the same time. If you pray for the blessing of rain upon your crop which needs it, by that act you are possibly praying for a curse upon some neighbor’s crop which may not need rain and can be injured by it.

“You have heard your servant’s prayer—the uttered part of it. I am commissioned of God to put into words the other part of it—that part which the pastor—and also you in your hearts—fervently prayed silently. And ignorantly and unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard these words: ‘Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!’ That is sufficient. the whole of the uttered prayer is compact into those pregnant words. Elaborations were not necessary. When you have prayed for victory you have prayed for many unmentioned results which follow victory—must follow it, cannot help but follow it. Upon the listening spirit of God fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!

“O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle - be Thou near them! With them, in spirit, we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody

shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it - for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts.

AMEN.

After a pause: "Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak! The messenger of the Most High waits." It was believed afterward that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said."

Mark Twain - The War Prayer (1905)

Rather than develop into a mature moral person, we allow ourselves to live in a world of increasing isolation, self delusion and hatred, where any individual moral voice has been labeled as a freak, or worse yet, a threat to the national security of our self-proclaimed democratic, moral and just society. We remain quiet and numb to all the pain we cause. It is not *our problem*.

Why should I *get involved*? My eyes are *shut*. My voice is *silent*!
What have I become?

We allow ourselves to live in an age of authoritarianism. Government ruled by some puppet politician class, people who are taught to subordinate themselves to the interests of the state, all seemingly for the good of the corporations and the elite. We allow ourselves to descend into madness, where confrontation, and war, is the new *modus operandi* for many of our relationships. Where is our moral outrage? Where is our voice? How can events like the holocaust (now seemingly an economic holocaust) continue to happen?

Fundamental to the arguments for our *just war* is our absent moral reflection regarding how a society best distributes its wealth and resources? We all assume our economic philosophy is the *envy of the world*. In America, as a society that seems to adore possessions above all else, this question seems central to the understanding of our national morality, or lack thereof. This is the ongoing debate of economic justice. How do we allocate resources? This problem could easily be *solved*, if we had the moral courage to do so.

Do we give an *equal share* to each individual. This seems to be the basis of the communist philosophy. One of the many *ism's* and *ist's* we as a nation found to be uncomfortable, labeled *evil*, and consequently fought for over 50 years. Of course, does that imply the 5 year-old boy receives the same amount of food as the 35 year old athlete? Pure communism does not seem to work on all levels. So, do we then begin to allocate resources according to need? But who determines this need? Or do we let some *ruling*

body, like a government, distribute the resources (*presumably according to need*). This, of course, is fundamentally the socialist philosophy. Or do we allocate resources based on effort and accomplishment. This, the basis of capitalism, and also fails on many levels. Do we base this capitalistic wealth distribution on actual accomplishment (group or individual), or some potential to accomplish, or some combination of both? Should there be a *level playing field*, or is deceit and treachery part of the *game*. The crony capitalist mantras, *whats in it for me* and *win at all costs*, becomes terribly immoral when we subsequently treat the individual person as an object to be used. We are strategically schooled to assume that a democracy will minimize cronyism and fraud, but of course this is not true. Democracy requires a *level playing field*, an empty word in our modern society. The schism between the rich and the poor is increasing. We have created a crony capitalist economy that uses the government to further enrich the wealthy at the expense of the majority of the people. Our *preemptive warfare* is morally indefensible as an excuse to control wealth and resources. Our morally bankrupt society has decayed so far as to now preemptively criminalized what some call *homeless behavior*, that is, eating! This is not due to any philosophy of economic justice, but due to greed, materialism and our repugnant ideology of exceptionalism.

In fact so integral is our thinking of economic justice to our myths about humanity, that we have created an entire hierarchical universe of God above, the kings, the nobles, the rich and then the rest of humanity in some providential primordial squalor. We are taught that *they* are better than *us*, and we ought to strive to become like *them*. We have adopted this concept to brands and now to countries. America is above all (*except presumably*

God), flaunting its pomp and circumstance, flags and pageantry. We continue to believe this myth of an elite class with superior societies and individuals. *(Compare that myth with the modern Christian myth of Ascending and Descending Christology. I'm sure there are similar myths in all religions).*

As we grow and develop as a person, our personal morality ought to evolve and mature. We first adopt the moral standards of our parents and family. We then typically adopt the moral standards of our society at large. Most individuals stop their moral growth here, and never critically question their beliefs. It is only when we articulate our own individual moral decisions and voice, do we become a mature moral person. Now, I am not saying that we need to reject all societal moral norms, but we must accept those norms based on our own critical reflection of *our good*, and not as an unthinking acceptance or reaction to mass media perception management techniques and hype, replacing individual dignity and freedom with celebrity and a corporate or nationalistic brand.

“Unthinking respect for authority is the greatest enemy
of truth.”: Albert Einstein

Perspectives on Peace and Justice

(The Illusion of Choice)

Shalom is the human being dwelling at peace in all his or her relationships: with God, with self, with fellows, with nature. . . . But the peace which is shalom is not merely the absence of hostility, not merely being in the right relationship. Shalom at its highest is enjoyment in one's relationships. A nation may be at peace with all its neighbors and yet be miserable in its poverty. To dwell in shalom is to enjoy living before God, to enjoy living in one's physical surroundings, to enjoy living with one's fellows, to enjoy life with oneself.

—Nicholas Wolterstorff,
Until Justice and Peace Embrace (14)

Peace will prevail when people are free. Real freedom, not the illusion of meaningless choices. Freedom will exist when every human person is lovingly encouraged to understand their deep true self, to understand their three great relationships, to understand their ultimate good, by use of their reason. This is the love of benevolence, a morality of liberty, not the desire of

possession and the whats-in-it-for-me! True freedom, and hence peace, cannot happen in any institution or country that suppresses the normal human emotions of solidarity, collective interests and the collective good. True freedom cannot happen when any individual person is *schooled* to be obedient, passive, compliant, rewarded for a narrow perspective and encouraged to migrate away from independent thought. Freedom cannot happen when the motivation is fear.

In our Puritan and similar modern mind, justice is said to be served provided the lawful process is followed. In this world-view, justice is black and white, there are no shades of gray. We are continuously told that in matters of great importance, it is prudent to concede our desires to a select group of informed *experts*. When the machine is perfectly oiled and tuned, a place for everyone and everyone in their place, then peace can be had for all. We have created this *doom loop* for ourselves. These *masters* of our society create problems, then *agree* to compromise for a *solution* to the problems they created. Our motivation is always fear. Imagine what could happen if we were not afraid?

If we are free, then we have the moral capacity, the moral obligation, to refuse to be a victim or executioner. But we currently live in a culture that no longer values truth and beauty, but rather power and wealth. There is no passionate pursuit of knowledge, only the philistinism of our new aristocracy and the illusion of meaningless choices. We are indoctrinated to accept we need to be educated *the right way*. That means obedient and passive, with a narrow perspective and distrustful of independent thought. How can we possibly dream of peace when our own thoughts are not free?

Humanism would argue that reason would compel each individual to do the right and just thing. Peace is a higher virtue than war, and as a result all minds would desire it as their ultimate goal. But, the current political Junta's created out of our American 9/11 experience is expanding their agent provocateur to secure our modern corporatocracy. It will fail, as will all solutions derived from power. Reason, and love, will ultimately prevail.

Peace and justice can only come from mature, moral persons. Peace will never come from the pathological creatures we have become. Capitalism's massive campaign to undermine our collective understanding of the common good, and instead focus on private gain, makes any meaningful peace unattainable. When solidarity, empathy and mutual respect are introduced as dangerous thoughts, then peace and justice is only a dream. But, I believe that modern times is not "The End of Ideology," (*The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*, by Daniel Bell) but an opportunity of will and choice.

"I am in Birmingham because injustice is here."— said Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail," written on April 16, 1963. In his letter, Martin Luther King Jr. declared:

"We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial "outside agitator" idea. Anyone who lives in the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere in this country . . . Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the

issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored . . . We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed . . . You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern . . . One may well ask, “How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?” The answer is found in the fact that there are two types of laws: there are just and there are unjust laws. I would agree with Saint Augustine that “An unjust law is no law at all.” . . . Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust . . . I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and willingly accepts the penalty by staying in jail to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the very highest respect for law . . . We can never forget that everything Hitler did in Germany was “legal” and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was “illegal.” It was “illegal” to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler’s Germany. But I am sure that if I had lived in Germany during that time I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers even though it was illegal . . . It is the strangely irrational notion that there is something in the very flow of time that will inevitably cure all ills. Actually time is neutral. It can be used either destructively or constructively. I am coming to feel that the people of ill will have used time much more effectively than the people of good will . . . But as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a bit of satisfaction from being considered an extremist. Was not Jesus an extremist in love—“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that spitefully use you.” . . . Was not Abraham Lincoln an extremist—“This nation cannot survive half slave and half free.” Was not Thomas Jefferson an extremist—“We

hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” So the question is not whether we will be extremist but what kind of extremist will we be. Will we be extremists for hate or will we be extremists for love?”

“Humankind has not woven the web of life.
We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the
web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together.

All things connect.”

- Chief Seattle, Duwamish (1780-1866)

The Problem of Evil

(reflections on the Sermon on the Mount)

Why do bad things happen to good people? Is this the best of all possible worlds? How do we account for moral evil, or sin, in this world, the good creation of a good God? If we cannot say *why*, what do we do when we encounter suffering or evil?

Earlier we spoke about solving problems. The power myth would argue that evil was due to a some providential plan. You need surrender your individuality to the representatives of the state, who may then defend you against the perils of hell and damnation. Reason would argue that your success, happiness and progress are a process that you control. Sure, sometimes you may be unlucky, but fortitude and determination will generate a positive result.

Perhaps a better understanding (*or hermeneutic*) is made by a plea for social justice. What can we do when we encounter evil, as found in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 - 7). Now, I'm not making a statement for any specific religion, but I am saying the Sermon on the Mount is an amazingly insightful passage,

grounded in the idea that all being is good, hence valuable and beautiful. This idea of being as valuable and beautiful is shared by every spiritual and religious group in the world!

Every being, insofar as it is a being, is active, is one, is intelligible and good. Many myths hold that every being is also beautiful (*following neoplatonism in western thought and many similar concepts in eastern thought as well*). Keep in mind that myth is not to be understood as something that is not real, but in the sense of how a group attempts to understand and explain who they are, what is important to them. The beautiful is that whose contemplation (*being as known*) gives delight (*being as good*). Every being is beautiful if we can penetrate to a concrete vision of its inner splendor (*Aquinas*).

The *good is what we seek or love*, and as such it is a circle to say that we seek the good, for the good is simply whatever we seek. Hence the question arises: is something good (*or called good*) because we seek it, or do we seek it because it is the good? Is the good a purely subjective aspect that we confer on things precisely by our seeking them, without it being objectively grounded in the thing sought itself? Or does the good signify something intrinsically in things which makes them worth valuing by us or the valuer in question?

The Jewish-Dutch philosopher, Baruch Spinoza (24 November 1632 - 21 February 1677), may had thought that things are good because we seek them, but the gospel writer, Matthew (the dishonest tax collector), like most contemporary Jewish and Christian thinkers, would argue that all being is intrinsically good because it is made by a good God in His image.

This concept derives partially from Old Testament revelation (*Genesis 1:31*) and partly from philosophic reasoning, trying to show how reason confirmed revelation (*this reasoning was probably not Matthew's, seems to begin with Augustine of Hippo, 13 November 354 - 28 August 430*).

So, in summary, the good is that which is valuable, possesses some positive quality (*or perfection*) that renders it apt or worthy to be valued by some valuer (*some appetite desiring it or loving it*).

Now there are two main grounds for valuing something as good: (a), as something perfective for the valuer, to be possessed by the valuer: the good-for-me. Or (b), as something to be admired, approved, esteemed in an objective and disinterested way: the good for another. The love appropriate to (a) is the love of possession or concupiscence. The love appropriate to (b) is the love of benevolence, wishing well to another for its own sake. It is this love of benevolence that is at the foundation of the Sermon on the Mount (and in the Bodhisattva in Buddhism. Buddhists consider Jesus to be a Bodhisattva).

This love of benevolence, this kind of self-forgetting love, is possible only when man rises above his biological drives, oriented towards his own self-perfection, to live with his intelligence and will in a *higher realm*, becoming able to recognize and approve the good wherever and whomever it is, taking a supra-subjective viewpoint of being itself, sharing in the all-embracing viewpoint of God himself. For just as the only adequate object of the intellect is being itself (*Aristotle, Aquinas*), the only adequate object of our free will is *the good*, in all its fullness and participation. Since the goal or object of man's will is this universal, unrestrictive good, to

love whatever is good, for itself, is the highest self-fulfillment of man. As stated earlier, the deepest (*or highest*) True Self, the hidden spiritual self that is the ultimate center and unity of all the levels of the human person, requires bring the *lower* self-conscious deciding ego into explicit awakening with the *higher* self. This is the point of our existence where the person becomes pure spirit, outside the barriers of time and space, transcends substantial change: no barriers, no distances or gaps, present, absolute, authentic, eternal. Immediately present to the spiritual self at this level, as it reaches out with love, transcending its own depths dimensions and forgetting itself, is the ultimate great self, the infinite self, the ground of the soul and of all being. What we in the west call *God*, the Hindus “the Atman who is also the Brahman,” etc. This is the mystical level where the Ultimate Real reveals itself directly to our soul, to our ultimate self, I to Thou, beyond all image, concept or expression, by direct *touch* of the divine to me. Hence the paradox that the highest self-perfection for man is precisely to go beyond his own particular finite self and its immediate concerns in universal self-forgetting love. “Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.” (Matthew 10:39)

In addition to the various types of human or personal love, love ranges over a wide spectrum, from the conscious free love of persons at the top, down through the conscious but non-free, instinctual love of animals, to the unconscious blind striving of plants all the way down to the sheer natural drive of inanimate entities toward their unique self-expression in action. Every action is governed by a final cause as a goal, and every goal has the nature of a good. Since the final cause is at the root of all action of any

kind, perhaps Dante is correct that, “Love makes the world go round.” (Dante, Divine Comedy)

When love is of an absent good, it has the character of desire. When love is of a present good, it takes the character of fruition or delight of the good possessed. Note the existential, extraverted character of love as compared to knowledge. Knowledge draws its object into itself, into its own mental world. Love draws the lover out towards the object of his love as it is in itself in the real world. The Sermon on the Mount challenges us to seek this higher level of fruition, or love, or perfection, in our real world through love.

“Persona significat id quo est perfectissimum in tota nature, scilicet subsistena (elsewhere distinctum subsistena) in rationali natura.” (Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I, q. 29, art 3.) “The person is that which is most perfect in all of nature, namely that which exists in its own right as an ultimate individual subject of existence and action and possessing a rational nature.” The person is the unified center of its own actions.

A human person is an imperfectly self-possessing being, through self-awareness of its presence to itself and through self-determination of its own action, will and freedom. A free responsible agent (*sui dominus, master of itself*). A person is an incarnate (*embodied*) spirit, an interpenetrating synthesis of soul and body. Who is a self-symbolizing being, expressing to itself and others in ever unfinished, imperfect visible symbols the invisible reality of inner self, the nature, meaning, and destiny of its self, its final goal and life as a journey towards this final goal. A person is a goal oriented being involved in a dynamic process of growth or self-development and self-fulfillment, from an initial

stage of empty but infinite potentialities, towards self-fulfillment through the dynamic integration and ordering of the many levels of psychosomatic drives within us, guided by a stable, ordered, integrated set of values towards a final goal. A union on the order of knowledge and love with the infinite Good. Hence whose deepest true self is to be an image of God, in a process of development from Him as source toward a transformation and final personal union with Him as its goal.

As we deal with the problem of evil, we can get mired in deeply philosophical arguments concerning the nature of evil. How does it occur? Who is responsible? It seems to me that when we desire, attempt to possess, the good-for-me (*the basis of our current capitalist philosophy*), what we call evil is more prevalent. But perhaps most important is how we respond when we encounter suffering or evil?

The Sermon on the Mount is instructional. It deals with issues of peace, violence and justice, and concludes each issue with a re examination of the dignity of each human person. It seems apodictic, although I think if understood only as such we're missing the point.

The point seems to be that we as human persons are called to know and love that most precious gift of all: life itself, in all its magnificent forms. The fact that beings exist at all is truly amazing, and often taken for granted. All being, especially human persons, are in fact valuable and perfective in the existential order. The concern of the Sermon on the Mount is whether we ought morally to seek the beauty in all creation or not. Here, Matthew

argues yes we should, and lists a list of what ought to be done here and now by free responsible persons. He establishes a social ethic based on benevolence and love. What steps should we take in aspiring after this goal?

Transcending My Rationalism

Rationalism replaced Myth and Magic as our *modern* way of thinking. Myth explained who a people were, or what happens in nature. Myth gave a degree of control and understanding. Magic enabled select individuals to control nature. Rationalism blew myth and magic *out of the water*. One need just look at the Spanish Conquistadors conquest of the peoples of South America to understand how powerful was this new rational world view. Rational thought is a hallmark of modern man, but is also flawed with inherent limitations.

That same rationalism that creates humanities sweetest dreams, also defends many of its worst nightmares. Rationalism creates Psychopathy, Machiavellianism and Narcissism. Rationalism nurtures people and societies towards a lack of empathy, self-centeredness, deviousness and self-regard. Rationalism divides people into competing hierarchical world views. Rationalism defends privilege and exceptionalism. Rationalism defends orthodoxy and a routine of obedience. Rationalism generates fear, distrust and the hedonism of a consumer society. Rationalism uses power to solve problems. Rationalism *attacks the messenger* of change. Rationalism

perpetuates a myth of prevailing orthodoxies and control. Rationalism demands doctrine and principle as the nexus of *civilized* society, and therefore limits our ability to understand our Deep True Self. Rationalism creates mass self-delusion and collective insanity.

Rationalism is a tool, a very important and useful tool. But like myth and magic, will someday itself be replaced by some paradigm-shifting discovery or insight. This new world view will have the dignity of the human person, and all of creation, at its core. This new world view will focus on a spirit of charity, assimilation and love, not narcissistic indifference. Only then will we be free. Only then will we know shalom. Only then will we known peace.

“The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells the Great Spirit, and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us.”

(Black Elk, Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux, 1863 - 1950)

Implications for Americans

Isn't it so silly the things we American's spend so much time pursuing: Possessions, entitlement, Credit Scores, Nationalism, Patriotism, Wars. We will all die, undergo some substantial change. This is a fact. Yet, we spend so much of our live denying this simple fact of life. Most of us will never come close to understanding our Deep True Self. Most of us have been schooled to be obedient and passive, maintaining a narrow perspective with little time for independent thought. We have surrendered to the facade of our postmodern lifestyle. We are anesthetized by the minions of acolytes, sycophants and prostitutes fabricating their world view by use of their mercenary perception management tactics. We are callous to the harm caused by the obsession of the Wall Street elitists and their Malthusianism ideologies. We are indifferent to our league of fascist governors and their hallow promises to manage the end of protracted hostilities. We mistake a brand for an experience: brand America. We live in a world of increasing isolation, self delusion and hatred, where any moral voice has been labeled as a freak!

We have the ability. We have the vision. We claim to seek the Good. Yet we lack the moral imperative to act. We allow ourselves

to remain numb to our own life. We allow ourselves to live under the illusion of meaningless choices: *paper or plastic, aisle or window, Republican or Democrat*. Sure, we follow the *rules*. We work hard, we aspire to do minimal harm, we retire, and we will eventually die. But where is the life in all this? Many of us are fearful of going out on that limb, afraid of failure, afraid of the condemnation of following our heart. Yet, that's where the sweetest fruit grows, on the limb! We allow ourselves to live in a dystopian society, where in modern America, corporations dominate. We pursue the spirit of the age: to gain wealth, to desire, to possess, the good-for-me. We allow ourselves to live in a high-surveillance, technically advanced police state, where people are *collateral damage*, and we impose severe persecution on downtrodden and vulnerable people. We continue to believe in our *leaders*, who through their artificial crises and problems, nevertheless cannot then solve any of these problems that they create. We never become morally autonomous. As a consequence, freedom and peace are never attained, just empty promises. We have created a culture of fear and intimidation. Programmed from early childhood and schooled to fear the state, to fear the police, to subordinate ourselves to the interests of our masters.

In fact, no truth in American politics is more conclusively proven and more assuredly predictable than the results of casting a vote for a Republican or Democrat: more government bureaucracy, more government regulations, more government spending, more government debt; and a more bleak future for the working citizens who support that machine. Those leaders have all done the opposite of what they say they would do, so consistently that it is a foolish person who believes any of them. Those political parties always blame each other for the increasing failures within

our government, and in that regard they are both right. Neither will take action to reduce the government morass. In modern America, we are taught that government statements have a unique authority. Truth has no relevance. Only agendas are important. But overextension, corruption and the inability to reform is now pushing us into a bleak future.

For two hundred years Americans have been indoctrinated with a mythology created, imposed and sustained by a manipulating cabal. Money has become the new form of social control. Our society has become addicted to debt (*Michael Snyder, The Beginning Of The End, 16*). We are now the land of the serfs. Crony capitalism continues to destroy our concept of the common good. The focus of capitalism is on private gain: how am I making out? (*Noam Chomsky, Crony Capitalism, 17*). Capitalism is thus geared towards security, consumption and materialist competition (*Gui Rochat, Rational Totalitarianism, 18*). Capitalism has led to globalization, staggering inequality and catastrophic environmental change. Capitalism is against the idea that we ought to care for each other and for our mother Earth: for those are dangerous thoughts. Our rational argument for modern capitalism simply has to change. The financialization of world economies and the idea that any bad fortune is a result of not working hard enough, indeed that being poor is somehow a disapproval by God himself, is an assault on free men and women by the current self-proclaimed masters of mankind. As Christians we are familiar with the narrative of the *Cleansing of the Temple*, of Jesus's provocative political protest against the money changers (Matthew 21: 12-13). In sum: "Jesus attacked the temple system itself," assailing it because it was patently unjust. William R. Herzog II, Professor of New Testament Interpretation at the

Andover Newton Theological School in Massachusetts explains: “The temple cleansing cannot be divorced from the role of the temple as a bank. The temple was, therefore, at the very heart of the system of economic exploitation.” (from Consortiumnews.com, Jesus’s Provocative Political Protest, January 11, 2013). As a result, in the Gospel of Mark (Mark 14: 1-11) and the Gospel of John (John 2: 13-25), the Christian providential plan that ultimately lead to the death of Jesus and the subsequent salvation of mankind was set into motion. In America, we call ourselves *good Christians*, yet we continue to condone the very same economic slavery that Jesus violently fought against over two millennium ago! When will we actually follow Jesus’s example? Only then will we have any moral claim to be *good Christians*.

While our modern economists preach the importance of material wealth, maximizing profits and individual gains (a debased practice of capitalism), a more moral approach (as found in Buddhism) is to minimize suffering for all living and non living things. Karl Marx envisioned a society where goods and services would be distributed “to each according to his need, from each according to his ability.” (a slogan popularized by Karl Marx in his 1875 Critique of the Gotha Program. “Jeder nach seinen Fähigkeiten, jedem nach seinen Bedürfnissen!”) Of course, history demonstrated the collapse of the USSR. Jesus it seems, just got angry! For perspective, it is the only account of Jesus using violence in any of the biblical narratives. What did Jesus know?

The industrial revolution has deprived people their basic rights as free men and women. We are motivated by fear, and constantly engaged in a self-conscious class struggle. America was created to celebrate humanity, but instead now only celebrates

itself. As long as we allow the corporations and banks to control the world through debt, there will never be any authentic democracy, no authentic freedom, and consequently no authentic peace. Peace can only follow as a consequence of being free, not the other way around.

Companies have replaced countries. Violence is our new drug of choice. Celebrity gossip and our romantic vision of war and violence is the new business of mass propaganda. False flags now define our debates. So how do we reconcile this plea for humility and service, for the poor and disenfranchised, for dignity and authenticity, with a culture that seems to glorify celebrity and greed, excess, power, deceit and hypocrisy. There is no real freedom. There is no real peace. Only the illusion of the one based on the hope of the other.

Clearly, a question of will and choice, or we will eventually shape a world in which we no longer wish to live. Some final thoughts.

“It seems to me that the real political task in our contemporary society is to criticize the workings of institutions, particularly the ones that appear to be neutral and independent, and to attack them in such a way that the political violence, which has always exercised itself obscurely through them, will finally be unmasked so that one can fight against them.”

~ Michel Foucault

“There are two intellectual tasks: one . . . is to try to create the vision of a future just society. Another task

is to understand very clearly the nature of power and oppression and terror and destruction in our own society. And that certainly includes . . . the central institutions of any industrial society, namely the economic, commercial and financial institutions and, in particular, in the coming period, the great multinational corporations . . . Those are the basic institutions of oppression and coercion and autocratic rule that appear to be neutral. After all, they say: “Well, we’re subject to the democracy of the market place.” . . . If in those areas where the legal system happens to represent not better justice, but rather the techniques of oppression that have been codified in a particular autocratic system, well, then a reasonable human being should disregard and oppose them, at least in principle.”

- Noam Chomsky

(This Chomsky-Foucault debate was removed due to copyright, from ROAR Collective On May 10, 2013)

Final Thoughts

LET GO!

We began with “What’s life all about.” We end with the same question. It seems the biggest hinderance to understanding our true self, to living an authentic life, to preparing ourselves for that inevitable substantial change we call *death*, may be the very life style and society to which we so tenaciously cling. So vulgar has our modern lifestyle become, where the typical un-thinking *patriot* is found *goose steeping* (*used here as a pejorative term*) behind the symbols of their crony capitalism and modern corporacticy. We allow ourselves to become the *innocent victim*. Where compliance and control are expected as we freely give up our most basic freedoms for the illusion of *safety* and *freedom* and *peace*. Where *terror*, by definition, is “morally and politically loaded. Far from offering to us an objective assessment, it immediately invokes ideas of barbarity and evil” (*Brad Evans, in Counterpunch, May 24 - 26, 2013*). Where cyber surveillance is accepted and privacy in our computer age is denied as a basic human right. We live a fantasy. All the exceptional places I have so far visited, be it Egypt, Greece, Rome, India, Mexico, Peru, Bolivia; a lifetime of preparations made for kings to bring their wealth and glory with

them to the *after life*, and it all sits in the ground. I have yet to read an epitaph stating a persons *credit score*. In the end, pursuit of wealth and prestige is meaningless and without any true value. The myth we have created based on our concepts of economic justice is likewise a lie. Most of what we seek in our lives, is a lie. Power is a lie. Exceptionalism is a lie. Being *extra compliant* with authority, *as if that were some badge of honor*, is a lie. War, violence, hatred, poverty, they are all lies. They all distract us from being fully human. As a result, many people die angry, empty and scared. What did we do with that most precious of all gifts, our life? What did we do with our moments of joy and despair, anger and love? We existed, yes. But do we actually give that fact any notice? We need, we have a right, to become authentic to who we are to become. Our voice needs to be heard and is important. We are, “master of itself” (*sui dominus*). But if we never open up to these possibilities, the meaning of our life is mute. We let *life* happen because we cannot imagine any other way. For most of us, our life is a *roller coaster* ride. We just hold on with no real control. We go through all the accepted motions, pretending to live a productive life, but most of us merely subsist, not live. We are always the innocent victim of questionable events. Yet, only you can control who you really are to become. Only you can take responsibility for your actions and thoughts. Only you can know your True Deep Self, the Good, your three great relationships, and what makes your life as a unique human person authentic.

What would you do if you only had 30 days to live? Or 24 hours? Or 1 hour to live? What would be important to you? Credit Scores? Patriotism (*maybe*)? What would you like to understand, to know, about yourself? What gives you joy? What is your passion? What single-sentence message would you want your

family and friends (*those closest to you*) to know about you? What would you want to tell them? Who am I as a unique person?

Let go. Write that single sentence message. Take that chance. What is stopping you (*besides yourself*) from being authentic to who you are to become? Why is communication with yourself, with others and with your God (*If you must affirm His existence*), so difficult?

We must get back . . . We must re evaluate every aspect of our life. We must seek that authenticity that defines us as the unique human person we are and we are to become. One authentic, absolute, experience (or adventure) is enough to change your outlook forever.

We are all the same. Made of the same basic *stuff*. We should celebrate our uniqueness amongst our similarities. Our collective human voices should sing in beautiful harmony, not some wretched discord. Our universe will (*presumably*) exist forever. Yet we typically impose self isolation. Why? What are we so afraid of? We are a unique manifestation of the spiritual energy that comprises our known universe. Our very existence enriches the fabric of that universe. Our voice proclaims I exist, I am here!

I am a human person. I am more than the sum of my parts. I command an ultimate dignity that can never be taken from me. As I embrace myself, I begin to understand myself as multi-dimensional, capable of extraordinary passion, empathy and love. I ultimately understand myself as being connected to all the beings of my universe. My deep true self is authentic, timeless, absolute and eternal.

It was not my intention to so heavily politicize these essays, but in terms of our three great relationships, specifically politics, how we relate to others, is disproportionately emphasized in our modern society. We have abandoned control of our own lives to some brand or symbol. Humanity is its own best symbol. The individual is its own best advocate. Politics, morally should advocate for each individual, especially those who cannot advocate for themselves, and not advocate for some manipulating cabal. Shalom is the only authentic goal for politics, as well as for myself and my relationship with *God*.

Life is not tidy, neat, quiet, and wrapped in a bow. Life is raw, emotional, dirty, meant to be experienced, meant to be lived! Pursue an adventure, that transcendent experience that thrusts me into the arena that is authentic life. Physical or emotional, why not experience them all. Embrace you. Embrace your sexuality. Embrace your relationships. Embrace your passions, your joy, your fears, your anger and hurt. “Suck out all the marrow of life.” This is your life. No *do-overs*. Why be so afraid to live? What is stopping you? Remember Lao-tzu: “A journey of a thousand miles begins beneath one’s feet.” Live with wild abandon and get moving!

Remember along your journey that Intellect and Love will always overcome Power. Power is a serpent biting its own tail. It will ultimately consume itself. Power, by its very definition, is finite, deficient and incomplete. You, as a unique human person, guided by love, is infinite, perfect and whole. Those guided by power will never understand their deep true self, their shalom, because they never truly lived. Their pursuit of meaningless orthodoxy, wealth and judgment, their life, is a lie.

Without Shalom, authentic freedom and ensuing peace is an illusion. Evil, which hinders our journey towards an authentic life, will exist. We can choose evil, or we can create a social ethic based on benevolence and love. We are a self-transcending, morally autonomous being. Immediately present to me, as it reaches out with love, is the Good, is freedom and peace. What steps can we take to choose the good?

But to reach that goal humanity needs a new paradigm-shifting discovery or insight. A new world view that will have the dignity of the human person, and all of creation, at its core. Where all of our resources, physical and intellectual, are free. Where nation-states, brands, control and misery become obsolete. Where war and evil become only historic footnotes. In America, when we again celebrate the individual, not a corporate brand.

You cannot, in good conscience, support this dystopian world in which we live. Nor do you really have the power as an individual to outright oppose Live with passive resistance against the status quo and, most importantly, just live your own life. If you ask why so many historical empires just vanished (like the former USSR or British controlled India), they simply became irrelevant to the people who lived there. With no one to follow, the leaders had no one to lead. A non violent, passive resistance has many times changed the trajectory of history.

Living does take a life time, your life time. It is sometimes difficult and painful. Most often, you will only have an out-of-the-corner-of-your-eye glimpse of where you want to go. Society is pushing you from *behind*, directing you towards their arbitrary goal. But, keep moving towards your good, towards your light.

Spend your time with your family, enjoying your life. Share your love and enthusiasm with strangers. Be child like in your wonder. Along the journey, stop, make friends and embrace all life has to offer. Cook, play and sing. Don't be so serious. Get dirty. Laugh at yourself. Don't worry if you make mistakes. That is how you learn. Failure only happens when you give up and quit. Question everyone about everything. Reject brands on face value. Help others along their journey. Be an exceptional human person. And at the end of your life you will minimize your regrets. You may not have control over amount of time in your life, but you do have control over what you do with the time you have

“So live your life that the fear of death can never enter your heart. Trouble no one about their religion; respect others in their view, and demand that they respect yours. Love your life, perfect your life, beautify all things in your life. Seek to make your life long and its purpose in the service of your people. Prepare a noble death song for the day when you go over the great divide. Always give a word or a sign of salute when meeting or passing a friend, even a stranger, when in a lonely place. Show respect to all people and grovel to none. When you arise in the morning give thanks for the food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies only in yourself. Abuse no one and no thing, for abuse turns the wise ones to fools and robs the spirit of its vision. When it comes your time to die, be not like those whose hearts are filled with the fear of death, so that when their time comes they weep and pray for a little more time to live

their lives over again in a different way. Sing your death song and die like a hero going home.”

Tecumtha (March 1768? - October 5, 1813), usually known as Tecumseh, was a Native American mystic, warrior and military leader of the Shawnee, As quoted in A Sourcebook for Earth's Community of Religions (1995) by Joel Diederik Beversluis.

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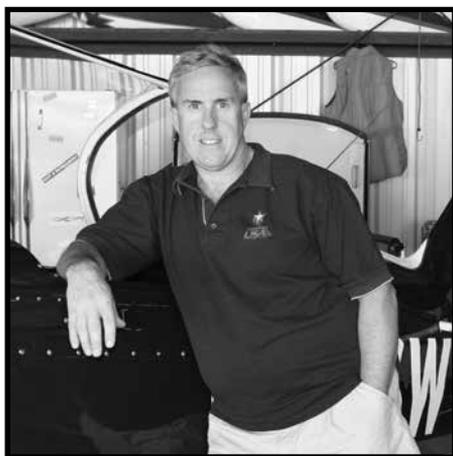
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“Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.”
(Saint Augustine of Hippo).

About the Author



Timothy J. Brill owns and operates a flight school, where he teaches aerobatics, unusual attitude recovery techniques, and test flies airplanes. He spent three years as an infantry officer in the US Army, traveled extensively as an international mountaineering guide for ten years, ran for the US House of Representatives, and has been imprisoned for civil disobedience. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Fordham College and also holds an MA in theology. He currently lives in Reno, Nevada.

