

E G O **=FAILURE**

Learning to become more
egoless and humble.



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Neville Berkowitz - PersonalEmpowerment.co

PREFACE

I welcome you to this my 18th book self-published on personalempowerment.co and guidespeak.com.

I believe that EGO is at the root of many of man's failures and the resulting damage to not only the person with a rampant ego and their immediate family but to those in a larger orbit as well.

In this book I spend the first part identifying some of the causes of failure where ego is directly responsible and in the second part of the book I focus on how to become more egoless and humble in your life and the positive impact that will have on you, your immediate family and those in your orbit and beyond.

As with all my books this is a free e-book found on personalempowerment.co.

I wish you a more egoless and humble future.

Best wishes
Neville Berkowitz

Tamarin
Black River
Mauritius
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Introduction

If you have read any of my other books on PersonalEmpowerment.co or GuideSpeak.com, then you will know that my definition of EGO is Edging God Out.

Not everyone reading this book will believe in God, and so I will define EGO in another way:

EGO = FAILURE

OK, that's it for this book, you can go back to watching TV or checking your Social Media!!

If you want to carry on reading, then I will spend the rest of this book proving that EGO = FAILURE to you. That's the Part 1 of this book. Part 2 is showing you some of the ways to become more egoless and humble.

After that, you can decide whether you are going to make your EGO or your SOUL/LOVE your North Star to guide you in your life.

PART 1 - UNDERSTANDING WHY EGO = FAILURE

Begin with the end in mind

The late author, Steven Covey taught millions of people the maxim "begin with the end in mind" in his famous book *The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People*.

So let's take a trip into the future and stand at your funeral or cremation service as the person leading the proceedings reads out your eulogy as prepared by your loved ones or those who knew you.

Let's not listen to those words but let's rather listen in to the real thoughts of those standing or sitting there. What do you imagine your spouse/partner/ ex-spouse/ ex-partner will be thinking about you and how you treated them throughout your relationship? What thoughts are your children thinking about you and the way you brought them up and treated them throughout their lives? What about other family members and their thoughts? Now let's move to your good friends supporting your family at their time of bereavement and their thoughts? Moving a bit further back, your other friends and acquaintances, what of their thoughts? Now we get to the people who came out of duty to your funeral or cremation as they felt it was the right thing to do because they were connected to you and/or your family in some way. What of their thoughts about you? Usually, there are a few people at the back who came to make sure you were dead! What of their thoughts?

Three thoughts come to my mind:

Firstly, is whether the memory that these people have of you is based on your Ego, or your Soul/Love.

Secondly, what makes you think they are thinking of you at all? Most likely, they are pre-occupied by their thoughts of their own lives wondering how soon they can leave because they have so much to do!

Thirdly, some are thinking; I wonder how much money he/she left and whether I am in the Will?

So all that energy and effort you put into making sure you looked the best you could in every circumstance; that you climbed as high as you could on the totem pole of life; those risks you took to achieve what you set out to do, and even more; the pushing and shoving; the pleading, bargaining and negotiating; the morals and ethics you sidestepped as a means to an end; the times you crossed the legal line and got away with it; all that you amassed and held onto, did it count for anything?

Does your shroud you are buried in, or cremated in, have any pockets?

What is likely to happen to all those trophies, money and power you amassed? As the worms devour your body, or the fire creates ash of your body, so the people left behind will devour what you left behind and claim it as theirs.

The King is dead, Long Live the King!

As religious and spiritual texts accurately state, the only thing of value you leave behind is your good deeds as a memory to those who benefitted therefrom. And those memories fade in time, too.

So, as they would say in the Bronx, New York, during the middle of last Century, in the long run, you got BUPKES - which is a Yiddish word which means NOTHING, in its literal translation.

What is the meaning and purpose of your life?

Looked upon in earth terms, the meaning and purpose of your life are what? I will let you decide what it is.

Measured in material terms, it is quantifiable by your Executors of your Estate. Measured in non-material terms, it will depend on how you treated yourself and others? What legacy have you left to show for a year, or for a decade or two, while you remain in people's minds?

Throughout the millennia people have sought to create meaning for themselves about their lives, and they have believed that there is an Afterlife where their deeds are recorded, and the rewards and punishments are meted out by a God who sits in Judgement and their eternal lives are affected by such Judgements.

This is a belief and, as such, is unproven. Otherwise, it would become a provable fact and no longer be a belief.

I chose to believe some of this assumption, but not those of a judgmental God, because it suits my purposes to do so and I believe it creates a guideline for me to live by. Regarding the moral and ethical codes I live by, I use my past performance as a benchmark to attempt to meet, and preferably eclipse, being the best version of myself I can be. It makes me a happier person to do so.

In essence, my motivation is selfish and self-centred - it makes me happy! I prefer living with the maxim - "What would Love do now?" because it makes me happy to do so. Sure, other people are likely to benefit too, but my happiness motivates me as much as the joy I bring to others.

The parts of the assumption I don't choose to believe in is where a Judgmental God decides on rewards and punishments. I believe that God is Love and, as such, is not judgmental. I believe that we live in a causal world on the earth plane and that cause is followed by effect, much like a stone dropped into a pond creates non-judgmental ripples.

I can't tell you how to live your life. I have no right to do so under any stretch of the imagination. It's your life. You will determine how to live it, and the consequences of those choices you make will be visited upon you and maybe on your loved ones too. These consequences may be even more far-reaching and affect a wider circle of people where your choices and actions rebound.

I have determined that the meaning and purpose of my life is to be "God's Hands", on the assumption that God has no hands but ours to show His/Her beneficence. I consider that whatever wealth I have created is "God's money" and I will administer it as a Steward ensuring that people benefit from that stewardship. All my books and discussions/speeches I give are for free as I believe that the information, knowledge and wisdom comes from the Universe and I am simply repackaging it and returning it to the Universe via people like you.

As incorrectly ascribed to St Francis of Assisi, the prayer below, traced back to 1912 in France, (Source: Wikipedia) which begins ... "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.....", is the yardstick I use to benchmark my life's meaning and purpose.

I hope I am not coming over as "holier than thou" as I do not intend to do so. I am being vulnerable in opening up to you and exposing my "inner self" to ensure that my ego is not at play and covering over any emotional wounds with its bravado of showing a face to the world which puts me in a better light. My ego can use my CV and portray a different person to you, showing you an accomplished, successful, global businessman, sportsman, speaker, father and author. That is what I have accomplished, not who I

truly am. I have preferred to show you my "inner self"- my egoless self. The self that simply wishes to be "God's Hands".

What yardstick do you choose to determine the meaning and purpose of your life?

Is it based on your ego's needs or your Soul/Love's needs?

What is your ego?

I don't want to belabor the point and use Freud, psychologist's mumbo-jumbo terms, etc. to attempt to explain what your ego is or the person next to you's ego is. Simply put, your ego is when you have a distorted view of your importance which comes across with inflated self-importance, arrogance, conceit and naked ambition to be better than someone else.

Ego is the need to feel superior to another and to laud that feeling as if it's your Divine Right to do so. It is the sense of entitlement that the world owes you their ear and their applause at your every word and gesture. When you are right, and everyone else is wrong. When your inflated opinion about yourself distorts reality and negatively affects your relationships at a level where trust is replaced with fear of reprisal, and the acquiescence of the other person is demanded, not earned, or given willingly. Ego is about control and fear and expresses itself in arrogance, obstinacy and manipulation. Ego is a bottomless pit of need and greed and remains insatiable in its demand to be better than, more than and recognised and applauded as such by all.

Ego is a sickness, and in a more balanced world where values were correctly appraised and accepted by all, ego would be recognised as the mental illness that it truly is and treated accordingly. The trouble is that the Jailer is driven by ego and he/she currently has the keys to the Kingdom!

Many people aspire to be better than the next person and usually would step upon their neighbour to get above them, whereas giving them a helping hand is the Soul/Love approach and seen as "soft" or weak.

The fundamental issue is one of perception. As a hunter, man needs to get to the food before his fellow man but also needs to get his fellow man to help him capture, kill and transport the food home to his family. So, man, the hunter, decides to incorporate and allow his fellow Hunters into his group and for them to share the spoils in a prearranged manner where fairness may come after the power of leadership and control. The change in perception of leadership and power to one of the democratic choices based on what is good for the group not for one man is the fundamental issue.

Man is hardwired for competition whereas women are hardwired for co-operation as their role is to be gatherers and nurturers of families.

The patriarchal society has emerged, and ego has flourished due to man's need to be better than, more than and superior in strength, brainpower and resources than his fellow man. Today, man sees the earth as his hunting ground and does not understand the symbiotic relationship between all the parts of Nature that create a balanced world. Man's ego could feasibly destroy Nature's delicate balance and with it, man's survival as a species.

Ego chooses to separate itself from others and constricts the natural law of synergy where $1+1 = 3$. Ego chooses to be only no.1 and damn the rest. Ego creates a delusion, and its insatiable lust needs to feed the delusion in a vain attempt to make it a reality. Ego does some very strange "moves" to convince all and sundry that its delusion is, in effect, the reality. Insanity is usually at the end of this delusional road.

From a spiritual viewpoint, ego is the separation from Oneness, and I will go into this in more detail later on.

Ego is a seducer

Ego is very seductive, and it plays you like a fiddle. Ego's two arms are hope and fear, and it knows when you need hope most and then it takes its revenge by submitting you to fear.

You are the puppet and ego is the puppet master.

In spiritual terms, the ego can only exist in the past and the future as the present moment of Now is the place where God is and, in my various books, I call this God's Space. In this moment of Now ego is obliterated by the Light and Love of Oneness/Source/God, or whatever other labels you want to use to describe the Omnipotent Power of our Universe and countless other Universes.

Your ego needs you to be emotionally visiting your past or projecting into your future where it has the power to control your emotions.

On the subject of power, my definition of POWER is, Present Only When Ego (is)Removed. This is true power, and it is only available in the present moment of Now, as God has all the POWER and it's only accessible in God's Space, the NOW.

Ego, the Seducer, may project a time when all will be rosy in your garden, and you will feel very happy with that picture in your imagination. Once you find your Prince or Princess Charming, you will know bliss forever more. Once you get that promotion at work, you can afford that sports car you always dreamt about. Once you get your degree, the world will open up for you and the sky is the limit. Once cancer goes into remission you can get your old life back again. On and on Ego the Seducer creates a web of possibilities. Ego also makes you believe that you are very important and superior to all the others and it takes a small accomplishment and balloons it to infinity and beyond. Ego makes you believe that you will never put a foot wrong so go for all your dreams and make them all a reality.

Ego, the Seducer, waits until you are well and truly hooked and then it turns around and bites you hard in places where you didn't think such emotional pain was possible. You have built your dreams without the proper foundations and ego undercuts you, and you come tumbling down very hard and very fast. Now ego unleashes its other arm, fear, and you feel the wrath that will shake your emotional world as you see all you have being taken away from you and your future looks bleak and barren. And your ego smiles and says to itself "another one bites the dust!"

What's the solution to ensuring your ego is controlled and managed correctly?

I am going to tell you, but you are going to say to me - but that's too simplistic it must be more than that.

Ok, so here is the solution: humility; kindness, gratitude, graciousness, Godliness and fortitude.

Humility to know that whatever happens you are part of Oneness/Source/God, who is Love and that so are others Love at their essence. This humility makes you all aware and conscious of the Grace of God and that whatever befalls you all, whether considered, "good or "bad", is for the highest growth of your eternal Souls. Being conscious of this fact makes you all humble and accepting that what is happening now is for your growth and that you need have no fear of anything because God is your Co-Pilot.

"Kindness is my religion", says the current Dalai Lama. Kindness as a solution to keeping your ego in check is done by being kind to yourself, to everyone and everything else in your life. This keeps you conscious that a Loving God shines His/Her Light and Love on you always and in all ways.

Gratitude means that you take nothing for granted. Gratitude to your Source/Oneness/God for everything that occurs now in your life, and now and now. Being grateful for waking up in the morning as countless others may have passed away in their sleep during the night. Grateful as you open your curtains and thank your Deity for the day ahead. Grateful for the water in your tap to clean yourself and to drink its goodness from as some 70% of your body and brain is made up of water. Grateful for the food on your plate, for having your family around you and for the home you live in. Gratitude for your ability to get to work or school by transport that works and that you have work or school to go to. As your day progresses, you are grateful for all the things most people take for granted. If all you ever say is "Thank you God", then your ego cannot enter this space, God's Space in the Now.

Graciousness adorns you as you meet with success due to your grateful attitude towards all that life blesses you with. Success cannot go to your head and make you believe that you are omnipotent and all powerful, as ego is want to do, if you are gracious in accepting your success and incorporating all who participated in that success as your partners in such accomplishment. Everyone includes those unseen people who work below the visible radar, but without whom your life would be less enjoyable. For example, the person who cleans your work space or school before you arrive at work or school. The garbage man who takes out the trash so that you are not inconvenienced at best by not having to do it yourself and at worst because rotting garbage could be a severe health risk. This all breeds humility and keeps a rampant ego at bay.

Godliness means that you are consciously aware of the role of God in your life as your Co-Pilot. Sticking to the rules of a moral and ethical code which can be summed up in the Golden Rule of most religions and spiritual belief, *"Do unto others as you would like done unto you"*. This Golden Rule breeds humility too.

Fortitude develops resilience and gives you inner strength and self-belief to cope with the times that failure occurs in your life. Knowing that God will never give you something you can't cope with and overcome gives you this fortitude to keep your head down as you get stuck in to resolve what needs to be done. God has given you this because first He/She gave you the inner knowing and ability to overcome the issue and now it's your turn to prove that you have the inner strength, knowledge, ability and self-belief to overcome and grow through this process. Be grateful for this opportunity and grasp it willingly with both hands and grow.

With these five attributes, there is no room for an ego to make its seducing appearance and keep you in hope and fear in the past and the future as you consciously remain in the Now in humility, kindness, graciousness, Godliness and fortitude.

Newton's Third Law of Motion

Newton's Third Law of Motion states that "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction."

In simplistic terms, when you sit on a chair the pressure you apply to the chair sees the chair supplying the equal pressure back to you. Action and reaction, force meets force with an opposite flow to balance in equal measure.

Pay a compliment to someone, and you feel good about yourself. Insult someone, and you feel bad about yourself. But what about the other person? They will also give you feedback in some form or other when you do good or do harm to them. Depending on the circumstances, and where power rests, these interactions could be verbal, physical or non-verbal.

At a non-visual level, there are forces at play, such as magnetic forces, vibrational forces, etc., which are affected by non-verbal feelings. When you walk into a house of mourning you can sense the heaviness in the air as people come to pay their respects and are quiet, respectful and somber. Conversely, at a party people are happy, and the mood is uplifting and even raucous.

So when you allow your ego to become rampant and you laud your superiority over someone, usually when power rests with you at that time in this interaction, then the submissive other person is thinking, "what an #*\$% you are", all the while smiling at you and sucking it all up. The resentment energy they feel goes into the ether and energy is never lost, it simply changes composition. For example, water as energy becomes ice, liquid and vapour and retains all its essence throughout these changing properties.

Somewhere and somehow these energy vibrations of resentment are agglomerated and according to Newton's Third Law are revisited upon you as the creator of the initial resentment. This is the Law of Cause and Effect or the Law of Karma as some people prefer to call it.

Conversely, when you give upliftment to someone, in some form or other, then you receive the positive counterbalance of this energy as its causal motion.

In the Bible, the term "begets" is used to describe the succession of parents and their offspring. This genealogy describes the acts of reproduction and the resulting creation of children. Well, ego begets resentment, so the next time you want to bring your ego into play be conscious that you are about to "beget" something in equal measure back to you and "it ain't going to be pleasant!"

Emotional wounds and the role of your ego

Emotional wounds are those that cut the deepest and usually never heal properly. The emotional wound remains infected, and your ego uses this opportunity to come to your rescue and cover the wound with an ego protection to comfort you.

Whenever you are similarly attacked emotionally, and your infected emotional wound is picked at by someone's verbal, physical or non-verbal abuse, then your ego jumps to the emotional wounds defense and becomes rampant in its protection.

The irrational emotional response of the ego in its defense of the emotional wound sets off another causal reaction, and the explosive reaction of events further inflames the infected emotional wounds, and your ego becomes even more entrenched within you.

Be conscious of what you think, say or do to yourself and anyone or anything else because any negative process sets up Newton's Third Law. Conversely, any positive process to yourself, another or something else, brings you the causal rewards of your efforts.

Are you getting the picture any clearer now why the title of this book is:
"Ego = Failure - learning to become more egoless and humble"

Ants building anthills

The ant is very industrious. In GuideSpeak.com - *The Book of Understanding Animal Spirits* - I detail the attributes of an Ant and the people who have Ant Spirits as their admirable characteristics.

I reproduce the section here:

"ANTS

Architects and Builders, Community-Minded, Discipline and Order, Focused, Hard-Working, Honour and Respect, Patience, Persistence, No Ego, Unconditional Love

Architects and Builders: *Ants design and build their creations turning them into realities.*

Community-Minded: *Through self-sacrifice and true service to the community, each ant will do its assigned role to ensure the survival, health and growth of the whole colony or community.*

Discipline and Order: *Knowing your place in your assigned role with discipline and order working for the communities greater good.*

Focused: *Ants focus on the task at hand.*

Hard-Working: *The ant is very industrious and hard-working creating success through effort.*

Honour and Respect: *Although there is a caste system in place within the colony or community, each ant, selflessly, will persevere with patience harmoniously to do its assigned role honouring and respecting itself, and all of the other ants for the benefit of the colony/community.*

Patience: *Ants will show infinite patience in waiting for their hard work to end up in the creation of their dream, their reality that they have created.*

Persistence: *Ants will continually persist in the drudgery of repetitive workloads until success is achieved.*

No Ego: *Each ant within the caste system operates without ego, aligning itself, with honour and respect for itself and all ants, with the integrity of one for all and all for one, the virtue of equality.*

Unconditional Love: *By operating without ego and for the benefit of all, the ant shows unconditional love, honour and respect for all, including itself. The lowly ant deserves the highest praise. To emulate the ant is to ensure success in your life."*

And so those pesky little creatures that invade your home and garden are the best examples I can think of for you to emulate if you want to lead an egoless life.

While man has experimented with all types of structures of control from patriarchal, authoritarianism, communism, democratisation and the like, the lowly ant has been colonising our world under our noses!

Imagine the folly of an ant proclaiming that "my anthill is bigger than yours", or that "my Queen is more productive than yours", or the soldier ant doing more press-ups than the other soldier ants!

If we could only see the folly in our protestations that our home is bigger, our car is fancier; our spouse is prettier, our children are cleverer, our holidays are more exotic, our countries are better, we are stronger

than you, and so on. To what end other than feeding the cancerous ego that hides within us protecting our emotional wounds while eating away at us from the inside.

Admire the lowly ant and wherever possible become an ant person in its attributes and characteristics.

Be objective, unbiased, independent and detached in your self-assessment

It's easy to fool yourself, and your ego will be a willing participant in this regard. In fact, your ego will soon take centre stage and direct you to believe anything you want to, in either hope or fear, of both the past and the future.

It takes a strong mind and an even stronger will and determination to remain unbiased, independent and objective about your abilities, skills and talent. Do not sell yourself short but also do not allow your ego to hijack your imagination too.

You are capable of achieving any goal you set yourself if you have the talent, skill and ability to do so, as well as having a strong will to succeed against all odds.

Dream big and take small steps repetitively to reach your goal, but it's the steps that count, not so much the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Let me assure you that the steps will be a lot harder at the beginning of your journey than at the end. This is often the case to separate the men from the boys, the talkers from the doers, the tortoise from the hare. Let me also assure you that most of the work will be 'grunt' work. The back-breaking, monotonous, repetitive, boring work that has to be done as the seed planted in the ground comes through the dark soil and eventually makes it into the sunlight. You need the roots to go down deep if you want to grow tall and not be blown over by adverse conditions once you get above the ground.

A solid foundation is essential for growth. Never underestimate the need for a solid and deep foundation. Too many people want the sunlight and don't realise that the darkness of the soil is a pre-requirement for growth.

In a previous book, I showed what happens to many of the winners of the lottery and how they ended up more impoverished than before winning the lottery. Without the foundation to handle their sudden good fortune they floundered and sank into a financial morass.

Similar things are experienced by most 'get rich quick' people and businesses who rise and fall with regular monotony when the tide turns against them, or their ego convinces them they are invincible and omnipotent.

This rise and fall occurs at a personal level as well as at a country level. In *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* by Paul Kennedy, the same pattern of demise occurs when countries wallow in their wealth, and the basics of prudence and conservatism are ignored at the expense of hubris. A major cause of the fall of nations is the greed of conquest and the need to fund an army to protect the conquered territories as well as the home base. Taxes are raised at home, and those leaders who are enjoying the spoils of success become fat and lazy. As egos are inflated with self-importance, the gap between the rich and the poor widens until there is usually an uprising from the starving masses who overthrow the now much weakened fat and lazy leaders.

The solution is always to be objective and to assess your prospects as an impartial adviser would. Be unbiased and independent and advise yourself from a place of detachment of the results. See yourself as an unbiased, independent, objective Watcher of you.

"To thine own self-be true" as opined by Shakespeare in Hamlet. Think about it for a minute or two. By lying to yourself and believing your ego's lies, you are simply shooting yourself in both feet merely for appearance sake. Who is kidding who?

Be prepared to cut your losses because your first loss is usually the least expensive blow to befall you. Allowing the process to continue while lying to yourself will simply compound the problem, and the subsequent losses will be greater. The issue about losses is that we somehow believe that a miracle will occur and we will escape this mess, once and for all. At these times, your ego is in full flight creating wisps of hopes coupled with cold dashes of reality. Your emotional roller coaster ride is in full flight as you oscillate between fear of loss and hope of gain manufactured by your ego, the puppet master.

Self-integrity and authenticity are the only two things that will help you out when your ego hijacks your reality.

Where does stress come from?

People often tell me that they are stressed. Sometimes they wear it as a badge of accomplishment as if being stressed means that they are important and having to carry the weight on their shoulders.

Being stressed implies that you are out of balance with your life as it currently exists. Your outer balance and your inner balance is out of control, and you are toppling over in some fashion.

Off balance, toppling over, falling and fall are the stages of such imbalance. At which stage are you?

Stress is ego based. Yessiree, that's what it is - your ego telling you that you are about to lose something you value. It might be something small like a wager on a flip of the coin, or it may be your livelihood, your spouse, your family, your home, your financial solvency and it could be losing your well-being through ill health, all the way to your possible death/passing on from this life.

The hidden fear of stress is LOSS - Leaving Our Self Sad.

Now that you are aware of the hidden, and sometimes not so hidden, fear of loss you can attend to analysing, quantifying, and assessing the real likelihood of such a potential loss. Most times simply doing this exercise is sufficient to stop this fear in its tracks when you realise that it is unlikely to happen and even if it does that you have the wherewithal to handle what comes as its fallout.

To date, you have handled 100% of all issues that have frightened you in the past. That may surprise you as some of those 3 a.m. heart poundings, staring at the ceiling moments are probably indelibly in your memory bank. I know mine was from my past when I feared the loss of marriage, due to a wayward spouse. This loss did occur and I even lost my children for a few months before they came home to their dad. I also experienced those fears of loss when my business had cash flow problems due to over-expansion a few times in over 40 years, and it seemed that all would be lost. In the events of my failed 20 year marriage and my cash flow issues the solutions that emerged were far better than I could have ever imagined. As a matter of fact, I am so happy to have had those problems because the growth and new opportunities that emerged were beyond belief.

So back to your stress and the fear of loss of something that your ego determines very important for you to have - is it irreplaceable? What would happen if it went "poof" and simply did not exist any longer? Come on, be honest now to yourself, that which you fear to lose is now gone forever never to return. Is it the end of the road for you? Should we get out a gun, a knife, a hangman's noose? Can you no longer see yourself wanting to live with such a loss? It may surprise you to learn that The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that each year some 1 million people commit suicide or one every 40 seconds and what is even scarier is that they expect this to become one every 20 seconds by 2020!

So stress is a killer! Of course, medically speaking, stress is a killer when you take the consequences of living with continual stress and its impact on your mind and bodily functions.

Let's see what the world-famous Mayo Clinic says about stress:

Stress symptoms: Effects on your body and behaviour

Stress symptoms may be affecting your health, even though you might not realise it. You may think illness is to blame for that nagging headache, your frequent insomnia or your decreased productivity at work. But stress may be the culprit.

Common effects of stress

Indeed, stress symptoms can affect your body, your thoughts and feelings, and your behaviour. Being able to recognise common stress symptoms can give you a jump on managing them. Stress that's left unchecked can contribute to many health problems, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity and diabetes.

Common effects of stress on your body

*Headache
Muscle tension or pain
Chest pain
Fatigue
Change in sex drive
Stomach upset
Sleep problems*

Common effects of stress on your mood

*Anxiety
Restlessness
Lack of motivation or focus
Feeling overwhelmed
Irritability or anger
Sadness or depression*

Common effects of stress on your behaviour

*Overeating or under-eating
Angry outbursts
Drug or alcohol abuse
Tobacco use
Social withdrawal
Exercising less often*

What do they recommend you do about your stress:

Act to manage stress

If you have stress symptoms, taking steps to manage your stress can have numerous health benefits. Explore stress management strategies, such as:

*Regular physical activity
Relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, meditation, yoga, tai chi or getting a massage
Keeping a sense of humour
Socializing with family and friends
Setting aside time for hobbies, such as reading a book or listening to music
Aim to find active ways to manage your stress. Inactive ways you may use to manage stress — such as watching television, surfing the Internet or playing video games — may seem relaxing, but they may increase your stress over the long term.*

And be sure to get plenty of sleep and eat a healthy, balanced diet. Avoid tobacco use, excess caffeine and alcohol intake, and the use of illicit substances.

When to seek help

If you're not sure if stress is the cause or if you've taken steps to control your stress, but your symptoms continue, see your doctor. Your doctor may want to check for other potential causes. Or, consider seeing a professional counsellor or therapist, who can help you identify sources of your stress and learn new coping tools.

Also, if you have chest pain, especially if it occurs during physical activity or is accompanied by shortness of breath, sweating, dizziness, nausea, or pain radiating into your shoulder and arm, get emergency help immediately. These may be warning signs of a heart attack and not simply stress symptoms.

So there you have it - this ego induced self-importance “cancer” we call stress, and sometimes wear as a badge of honour, can be identified, analysed, assessed and a game plan decided upon to overcome it and restore you to outer balance and inner balance no matter what turmoil is raging about you at any time.

This book and my 17 other free e-books found on PersonalEmpowerment.co and GuideSpeak.com are all designed to assist you in finding your outer and inner balance and enjoying your life to the full.

Feedback - the only food you can really indulge in

We all know that parts of the Western World are suffering from an obesity problem of too much food, too little exercise and rising associated health-related risks which are exacerbating already sky high medical costs in these countries.

The one “food group” you can indulge in to your heart’s delight is feedback! Ask for feedback and seek it out from genuine people as constructive criticism. Your motivation is self-improvement and with it self-empowerment. By absorbing and correcting yourself, you hone your skills and abilities, and you develop well-founded self-esteem in your ability to handle more and more of both expected and unexpected issues that life throws across your path.

Of course, those with ego issues cannot be vulnerable and ask for constructive criticism as they are threatened when someone criticizes them, and they retreat into their protective shell lashing out at any attackers. This modus operandi leads to lack of growth and, in fact, retrogressive growth, or as we call it in this book, failure. Ego people court failure and as they sow, so shall they reap!

Getting feedback is vital but if you don’t put in the ‘hard yards’ to improve yourself then receiving the feedback could be detrimental to your self-belief.

ABL - Always Be Learning - is an acronym you can tattoo on your forearm! Be a continual student of self-improvement and creating self-empowerment. Life can be compared to a slow rising hill. The moment you stop climbing you begin to fall back down the hill. You never stop learning and applying what you learn. Look for opportunities for growing your knowledge, skills, abilities and the opportunities will present themselves to you in a synchronistic fashion. The saying, “when the student is ready the master will appear”, will become evident. Look for opportunities to learn and grow and your ego will take a backseat in your life. Fortunately for you most other people are too lazy to always be learning, and so the competition for self-improvement and self-empowerment is thin. This will be to your advantage when you can marry your advanced knowledge, skills and abilities with the countless opportunities that will present themselves to you. Others will call you lucky, but you will keep your head down and allow yourself an inner smile as you continue being a student.

Armed with feedback and acquiring the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform to the best of your ability will see you rise to become part of the 1% of the population that knows uncommon success and wealth. At this stage, you will not require your ego to tell you falsely that you are great and create a delusional picture of success. Your thoughts, words and actions will have proved to you that you are great, but your humility will stop you from celebrating that fact as you know it and you won’t care what others think about you. You are only answerable to you and your standards that you set yourself. You don’t have to measure up to anyone else’s standards when you have authentic self-empowerment. Ego is not required, you have the facts to back you up, and your performance for yourself creates self-satisfaction. There is no one to impress, only your egoless self.

Feedback - the breakfast of champions!

And what of those ego-based people who flee from feedback, believing that they are perfect and above anyone else’s assessment and judgment of them? They are doomed to reap the consequences of their ignorance. In life it’s usually not what you know that gets you into trouble, it’s what you don’t know about what you don’t know that causes failure to occur.

And all you had to do was ask someone for feedback?!!

Albert Einstein on ego - *the more the knowledge the lesser the ego. The lesser the knowledge the more the ego.*

Being Vulnerable

The one thing that your ego is very afraid of is you being vulnerable and exposing yourself to some form of attack by opening yourself in vulnerability.

Your ego will never allow you to admit that “I Don’t Know” because that will allow someone else to become more dominant over you and by telling you what you don’t know the other person becomes superior to you. This is hell for your ego!

However, in reality, being vulnerable is real strength because you are trusting someone to inform you and to not take advantage of you because you don’t know. This trust requires real strength and is mostly rewarded by someone informing or showing you what you need to know. And why do they do that? Because their ego is inflated when you ask them for their advice and assistance!

When an ego shows strength, it is, in fact, inviting a challenge to that strength. The biblical story of David and Goliath is played out daily, and the ‘man in the street’ is invariably always rooting for David. The picture of a bully is never a pretty one, and we all know that a bully is, in reality, a scared little person masquerading as someone powerful. Most bullies have been bullied themselves, and they suffer from an inferiority complex masked as a superiority complex.

Opening yourself up in vulnerability shows your human face and people do not fear you. The ability to be vulnerable is a Soul/Love approach to life, and other people feel comfortable in trusting you as you have trusted them by being vulnerable.

When it comes to romantic relationships vulnerability and trust are essential to form a bond between two people. In other personal relationships whether in business, social, school or other places, knowing that someone has your back and you can trust them forms a bond that has its roots in vulnerability of both parties towards each other. The self-protective ego guard has been let down and you have invited each other into a more vulnerable and trusting inner sanctum where the bonds of friendship are formed.

The ego-based person prefers to keep their emotional distance and does not form lasting friendships but usually form relationships based on benefit, either for one party or both. These are more ‘commercial’ arrangements that have a short shelf life and are usually terminated when gain or benefit has been acquired.

Once again we equate the ego to failure in choosing not to be vulnerable and thereby avoiding creating meaningful, lasting bonds of friendship.

Surrendering

The term surrender implies submission and allowing someone to control you and your movements. Of course, to the ego, surrender is the last thing it would countenance as ego claims superiority and submission is the opposite of that.

However, when surrender is used in a spiritual or religious sense, it means to become submissive to the will of a Divine Being. By surrendering to the will of one’s Deity, you trust that you will be guided in the right way. What this thinking does is make one conscious that there is a Power greater than oneself to rely on. This POWER I describe with this acronym meaning; **P**resent **O**nly **W**hen **E**go (is) **R**emoved.

The removal of ego enables one to think in non-ego terms where Soul/Love dominate one's thoughts, words and actions.

It becomes clear that when using one’s ego then submission to a Higher Power is not possible and, in my book, that means ego equals failure.

Ego is a major stumbling block in negotiations. Having written *How to be a Great Negotiator*, found as a free e-book on PersonalEmpowerment.co, which is based on my over 40 years of negotiations locally and globally, I intimately know how many times I have succeeded in a negotiation simply because the other party was ego-based in their demands.

They are so easy to read and to pander to as their ego is simply dying to be stroked and they fall into line with all my demands.

Ego-based negotiators are like lambs to the slaughter in the right hands, and I am always surprised to see them believing that they got the best out of the negotiation simply because their ego was stroked positively. They don't even realise how much they left on the table for me simply because their ego was satisfied.

I always approached these ego-based negotiators like children in the sandpit who demanded their bucket and spade and then they were happy holding these "trophies". Meanwhile, the other kids played using their hands and having much more creative fun emerged in sand and building sandcastles without a bucket and spade, which was tightly held onto by the ego-based bully in the sandpit.

When I witness business people, politicians, show business people, sports stars, medical people, lawyers, academics etc., playing their ego games, it is like children in a sandpit.

Arguably, the most important person in the world today is Donald Trump, President of the USA and leader of the free world due to the USA's economic, political and military dominance in the world. To have such an ego-based person with his hand on the nuclear arsenal of the USA is more worrying than even the President of North Korea's hand on their nuclear arsenal. At the time of writing this in mid-October 2017, the world is holding its breath to see how President Trump is going to respond to North Korea's shooting rockets capable of being fitted with nuclear warheads over Japanese airspace.

Ego is not the strategy to be adopted in facing nuclear war nor in business deal-making nor by academics who have one-upmanship in their arsenal in dealing with academic progress nor by a whole host of people in their specific fields.

One can justifiably claim that ego is the enemy of such progress and once again points to the failure of ego as a solution for growth and progress in a meaningful way.

Listening - the forgotten art

Have you ever witnessed an ego driven person in a conversation? It's probably generous of me to call it a conversation because if the ego-driven person had their way it would be a monologue!

Not only are they resenting that someone else is talking, and they are being forced to listen, but they are usually listening without hearing. They are waiting for an opportunity to interrupt and grasp control of the conversation to state what they have to say, which they believe to be the sole facts in this case.

What ego driven people don't understand is that you only learn when you are listening and hearing, not when you are talking because you already know what you are going to say! Listening and reading are the forgotten arts en-route to learning something of value to improve one's life. Choosing to talk and not to listen or read, condemns an ego driven person to have limited if any, growth. They simply entrench their views by repeating them ad-nauseam to all who will listen to them. Where is the growth in that process?

The words listen and silent have the same letters and silence is a great starting point for listening, reading and, for those so inclined, to meditate. It is often stated that prayer is you talking to your Deity, while meditation is you listening to your Deity.

To have the ability to be a great listener is a Soul/Love based approach to life and the benefit is that you get to learn from other people's experiences and you don't have to make the same mistakes as they have made, while you can emulate the successes they have had.

Listening comes from a place of respect, and you benefit far more by listening than by talking. The bonus of listening is that people assess you as being smart simply because you listened to them as they think themselves to be smart too. Appearances can be deceiving!

Once again we see that the ego-driven talker is failing in their learning progress proving, once more, that ego is failure.

Stubbornness

Today I received a WhatsApp message that depicted a road sign that stated "This year thousands of men will die from stubbornness" to which someone had overwritten "no we won't!"

Stubbornness is such an unpleasant trait, mainly of people too lazy to think beyond their viewpoint. Stubbornness is ego based as these people believe that "it's my way or the highway." They feel threatened by anyone else's viewpoint, and their superior attitude is based on inferiority of their deep-seated feelings about themselves, their intellect and their abilities to perform.

Being stubborn in their approach keeps the other party at the stubborn person's level where they feel comfortable to "trade blows" of various descriptions, verbally and physically.

Stubbornness is based on the inability and unwillingness to investigate the viable alternatives to their viewpoint on the matter at hand. It's this lack of vulnerability and openness to other's opinions that usually see them stuck in the sand, and sometimes that sand becomes quicksand, and they disappear, metaphorically, without a trace.

Ego-based stubbornness is not what Dale Carnegie would claim to be "*How to win friends and influence people*" as his 30 million best-selling book written in 1936 is entitled. Stubbornness breeds many negative traits for both the stubborn person and those with whom they conflict.

Once again this ego-based stubbornness provides a failure to communicate properly and retards the growth of this type of ego driven person.

Myopia

Myopia is good nearsightedness but poor long sightedness. The inability to see beyond the obvious close at hand. In psychological terms, this inability to be conscious of longer-term issues causes these myopic people to become obstinate, claiming that what they see is all there is to see. Hence the saying, "*there is none so blind as those that will not see*". A further relevant quote here is from Helen Keller, (1880-1968), who was the first deaf and blind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree, "*The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.*"

Myopia is a physical eye condition whereas the psychological myopic person chooses to be blind to other people's opinions and insisting that what they see is all there is to see.

In ego terms, this blindness to all the facts has, once again, its roots in a superior attitude, believing that the ego-based person is right and everyone else is wrong.

This need to be right and the other person or people to be wrong is such a limiting option for one's growth in the world. Being right creates a smugness and feeds the ego person's self-righteous attitude further alienating them from the rest of the people who believe that they are right and the other ego-based person is wrong.

This psychological person's myopia could be based on a failure to be accepted by other people and to be alienated from the group. This alienation is retarding the ego-based person's growth as well, and so the failure of ego creates more damage to the ego-based person.

My Way or the Highway

Continuing on this theme of stubbornness and myopia we come to the abusive, arrogant, ego-based person who usually has the so-called power in a relationship - the "My way or the Highway" type of person.

The authoritarian parent, usually an abusive parent, who has the power over their children and maybe even over their spouse or partner, who uses this term ad nauseam, to get their way.

Bosses who have so-called power over their employees or subordinates may also fall into this ego-based category.

This rule is usually found in the armed forces. Here discipline is invoked over subordinates, and perhaps in this role, the instructions of the superior ranked armed forces person understands that the need for such discipline is called for in battle as the superior ranks usually have a wider vision of the battlefield from their off the battle vantage point.

The ego-based person insisting on the “My Way or the Highway” credo is negating the abilities, skills and intelligence of the people who are their subordinates. A leader will take cognisance of the added value that the people they lead can bring to the table and then choose the correct course of action based on this potentially invaluable input. A boss is usually the dictatorial type ignoring the potential invaluable input of their subordinates and insisting the task is done their way.

Obviously, the dictatorial approach does not engender loyalty from the subordinates, and the people who remain are usually “yes people”. Usually, the better quality and or more capable people who refuse to work for such a dictatorial person leave and look for a leader rather than a boss as illustrated above.

The “My Way or the Highway” person is limited in their approach to life as they choose to ignore and reject anyone else’s opinion or contribution. It is not possible to be right all the time and with growth comes uncertainty and uncharted waters and the inability, at first, to know which is the right path to follow.

The failure of this ego-based “My Way or the Highway” type of person is inevitable and when they stumble and fall they can’t expect that many willing hands are waiting to pick them up, due to their arrogance and abusive manner in which they have treated those people around them for so long.

Ego is separateness from Oneness

At its core, ego is being separate from Oneness. Oneness is a spiritual understanding that we are all part of The One, who is All There Is. We are part of this Oneness as is everyone and everything we acknowledge to be reality on the earth plane.

I don’t want this to be a spiritually based book but rather one based on choosing Soul/Love as the alternative conscious choice we make with every thought, word or action. A choice where we can see and define the ego, and that it is rooted in failure, as an option when we have to consciously make such a choice. When we make such an ego-based choice unconsciously, then we need to reprogram our sub-conscious to understand that cause and effect ego is predicated on ultimate failure, even though there could be short-term successes first experienced as a seducer of ego-based people.

Being part of Oneness entitles you to be everything and everyone and so experience all of physical life. We may consider that successes are wonderful and failures are terrible but it is all meaningless in the realm of an eternal life in Oneness.

Where are the successes and where are the failures of time gone by? Who won the Olympic Games 100 metres men’s butterfly race fifty years ago? Who won the potato sack race at your primary school fifty years ago? Who failed to pass their school leaving certificate exam fifty years ago and whose business failed fifty years ago?

What have you done with the cups and trophies that may have adorned your bedroom growing up?

The bottom line of all these perceived successes and failures is that nothing matters in this world - except love.

Another quote from Helen Keller, *“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart.”*

Love is Soul/Love based, and it is all that remains of your memory of your life and the life of everyone else. Did you give and receive love to yourself and others or was it ego-based fear that you will be remembered for?

If you are part of Oneness, it will be love and if you are part of ego separateness it will be fear.

Once again being remembered for fear is a failure of a life and the result of an ego-based person.

True happiness can never be ego-based

If we conducted a worldwide survey of millions of people and asked them if they could have one thing which would be permanently in their lives, what would it be?

I venture to suggest that people would want to be happy more than anything else. Happiness is a feeling and although some 20% plus of the world live on less than US\$2/day having permanent happiness would imply that they would then have sufficient income for their daily needs. For those who chose to be loved by someone permanently, the result would be happiness and so on.

Happiness is an emotive feeling, and when you have such a feeling, you automatically want to share it with others. Happiness, when shared, becomes synergistic where $1+1=3$.

Seeing people enjoying themselves and laughing together sees the uplifting of souls and the love evoked from these souls creates a love-based environment shared by those exhibiting that happiness.

True happiness begins the journey to joy, and from joy bliss is then in reach. Bliss is the inner glow of love that your body cannot contain, and it spills over into your world. During this process, your soul based life enjoys the unconditional love of Spirit, and in sharing your happiness, joy and bliss, you create an environment where Oneness is experienced by those participating in this uplifting process, commencing with your happiness.

This true happiness now becomes Oneness and as Oneness is unconditional Love and Light, there is no place for ego to exist because ego is selfish and is separated from Oneness.

For an ego-based person to be happy implies that their happiness is generated by feeling superior to another in some way or form. Driving their new car or parading their trophy wife or going on exotic holidays, or beating someone in some form of competition and so on is what makes ego-based people happy. This is very far from the true happiness described above when sharing happiness, joy and bliss with one or more people is involved.

True happiness is success in life whereas ego-based happiness is selfish success and when looked upon from a community viewpoint can be described as failure as it benefits only one person at the expense of the community at large. If the ego-based person used the money they have spent for their selfish happiness in uplifting selected members of their community, then this sharing of happiness could be deemed true happiness.

In truth, happiness is an inside job because you are born infused with unconditional Love and Light as a part of Oneness/Source/God and happiness is within that infusion. The solution you seek is to find out how to let the happiness within become the happiness without!

Kindness requires an egoless approach to life

To be kind to yourself and to others requires someone who comes from Soul/Love and not from ego. Kindness is usually deemed to be doing something that requires no compensatory action as a result. Doing something from the kindness of one's heart implies that the person initiating the kindness is coming from Soul/Love and not from selfish ego.

Where ego is involved this is not kindness but words or action where some form of payback is expected at some future date. This is a trade, not a kindness.

When you express kindness to someone, you benefit as much, if not more, than the beneficiary of your kindness. You feel good about yourself, and this enhances your self-esteem, or put another way, the way you feel about yourself has been enhanced through this act of kindness.

Everything we do we do for ourselves. This is not a selfish attitude but rather one of self-centredness. It can still achieve its objective of kindness based on unconditional love but you, the giver, benefit as much, if not more than, the beneficiary of your kindness.

The kindness you give resonates in happiness for you and if sustained can result in both joy and eventually a feeling of bliss for you too.

The spirit of kindness is infectious, and people willingly join in, and the chain of human kindness can stretch a long way. There are recorded instances where one person buys a cup of coffee for themselves and a cup for the next person in the queue who is a stranger to them. When ordering their coffee, the Barista says *"your coffee has been paid for by the person ahead of you."* The beneficiary keeps the kindness coffee chain going to the next person in the queue, and the chain goes on for a long time. In reality, except the originator who paid for two coffees, everyone else in the chain is still paying for a cup of coffee as they intended to when they joined the queue but they are receiving a "free" coffee and paying for the next person in the queue. Everyone feels uplifted by this generosity in which they are participating, and they all smile a bit broader for some part of their day.

This is simply a change in action from doing something selfish, such as buying your own cup of coffee, to something selfless and charitable such as buying a coffee for a stranger behind you in the queue. Nothing much has changed as far as you receiving your desired cup of coffee but the manner in which this kindness is done changes your emotional state for the better.

The movie, *Pay it Forward*, had this as its theme and was highly acclaimed by virtually all who watched it and were positively affected by its message. Only an ego-based person would refuse to participate and accept a free cup of coffee without buying another cup of coffee for the next in line. Can this ego-based person be considered a success or a failure as a human being?

Empathy and compassion - the passion that gives with kindness

Seeing a fellow inhabitant on the earth plane suffering in some form or another and offering to help them with a kind word or action opens your heart to Soul/Love. Empathy and compassion can also be shown to the earth, animals and humans and all require an open heart filled with Soul/Love.

An ego-based person, is likely to ignore the needs of another as it does not affect them directly and in their self-obsessed world, the other entity does not merit their attention. However, if the ego-based person could benefit in some way from assisting the other party by showing them empathy and compassion, then they would see this trade as well-meaning, but we know that it is based on selfish merits.

Empathy and compassion is not a bottomless pit of giving as the affected party must be encouraged to help themselves get back on their feet and fend for themselves.

Maimonides (1138-1204), a famous Rabbi, has written a treatise on Giving.

Maimonides lists his famous Eight Levels of Giving (where the first level is most preferable, and the eighth the least) (Source: Wikipedia)

1. Giving an interest-free loan to a person in need; forming a partnership with a person in need; giving a grant to a person in need; finding a job for a person in need; so long as that loan, grant, partnership, or job results in the person no longer living by relying upon others.
2. Giving charity anonymously to an unknown recipient via a person (or public fund) which is trustworthy, wise, and can perform acts of charity with your money in a most impeccable fashion.
3. Giving charity anonymously to a known recipient.
4. Giving charity publicly to an unknown recipient.
5. Giving charity before being asked.
6. Giving adequately after being asked.
7. Giving willingly, but inadequately.
8. Giving out of pity.

The role of Soul/Love is found throughout these eight steps of giving, and by choosing not to give or to give for recognition purposes is where the ego-based person is found. The world will look upon an ego-based person as a non-giver, or a giver seeking recognition for their giving, as possibly a failure as a human being.

Tolerance is understanding with a capital T!

"Seek first to understand then be understood" another Steven Covey classic statement.

What a simple instruction and how powerful it is to first seek to understand the other party and only then strive to be understood by the other party.

We are all guilty of having little tolerance and wanting to ram our idea or concept down someone's throat and for them to convert to our belief system on the matter at hand.

Our world of both ego-based conceit that we are always right and of needing instant gratification forces us to be intolerant and to initially ram our opinions into the conversation expecting the other party to simply agree with us and concede that we are right. This intolerance is ego-based and puts up a barrier that is unlikely to be taken down even though we may be proved incorrect.

The problem of erecting barriers is that instead of building bridges of understanding we are building walls of defense and defiance. Whether we can dismantle these barriers and admit our mistakes is the real question to be asked? How many times have you erected such barriers, and of those times, how often have you willingly taken them down and apologised for being wrong?

Having tolerance implies that you are open minded and are prepared to consider another's viewpoint. This is already pointing you in the direction of being egoless. If you hear their viewpoint, are you simply hearing or are you listening and understanding? At that point are you prepared to consider their viewpoint or are you preparing your counter argument? If the former, then are you prepared to amend your viewpoint to incorporate some or all of their views and inputs into your previous viewpoint?

If you have done so then, you are both tolerant and wise. It is not possible to know everything, and there are always likely to be cleverer people in the room with you or else you are in the wrong room! If you want to be a person among intellectual pygmies then stay in the same room but if you want to learn, move to a room where you can look up to cleverer people than yourself.

Tolerance is a starting point to becoming more egoless than you currently are at present because you acknowledge that you have more to learn from others. Intolerance is the reverse. You are limited in intelligence, pig-headed, insecure and easily threatened by other people's viewpoints. An intolerant person will dig their heels in and refuse to budge. Conflict is inevitable, and co-operation is off the table.

Now let's discuss the most contentious subject of all - religion - as it relates to tolerance and intolerance.

With few exceptions, we are born into a religion. The religion we follow is usually the religion our parent/s followed, and they followed it in turn from their parents and so on. There are some converts to certain religions, either for purposes of marriage, fervent beliefs or because that was the trend at the time.

All religious faith is based on a belief. There is no finite, indisputable proof that any of the many religions are 100% true, irrefutably. A belief is exactly that, an unproven thought process which we want to believe is the 100% truth.

So now we mix the intolerant person with a belief system that they believe emphatically to be true, and you have the world today in all its gory, instead of all its glory, if tolerance reigned supreme.

Intolerance is the wall builder whereas tolerance is the bridge builder in life. Intolerance is a foundation stone of failure as a human being.

The duality of life

Life on the earth plane of existence is based on duality as we have ego and egoless, empty and full, happy and sad and so many other opposites which create the tension of balance.

I often use the analogy of a see-saw to illustrate this duality and balance. Every emotion should be experienced fully to create an understanding and a tolerance for others who also experience similar emotions.

Quite often the experience of one side of the see-saw of emotions sees the opposite side come to visit us too, to balance our books as it were. How we respond or how we react to that emotion is up to us because the emotions themselves are neutral. The measure we place on, say, happiness or sadness is coming from

the base of our expectations. All these emotions are relative to this expectation base. If a spoilt child gets an expensive present, they may turn their nose up at it whereas a child unused to getting any presents will be ecstatic at getting a broken doll or a plastic soldier figurine to play with. Sadness too is relative, as an example, and if you go through the usual human emotions, that relativity is common throughout.

The one example I can think of where duality becomes a oneness is giving and receiving. If the giving is done in the true spirit of giving, without wanting anything in exchange, then the Giver receives as much, if not more, than the Receiver. The Receiver, in fact, becomes the Giver to the Giver who then becomes the Receiver! So in this instance giving and receiving is interchangeable and an oneness occurs.

Ego and egoless are opposites and are poles apart, which usually describes the distance from the North Pole to the South Pole to illustrate that expression. The defiance and rigidity of ego and the willingness and suppleness of the egoless explains why large trees become uprooted in storms while the reeds bend in the storm and soon after that regain their uprightness.

Rigidity and defiance lead to being uprooted for those who cannot bend and adjust to prevailing changing conditions.

Democracy implies allowing all to speak and be heard

For better or for worse the call for one man one vote has been the hallmark of most of the world's countries over the past 100 or so years. We have moved from monarchy to democracy while the playing fields favour the entitled rich over the more populous poor. The inequality of the world's wealth has been well documented by me in previous books and by people far more qualified than me to do so. The now infamous 1% - 10% controlling more than half the wealth in the USA and elsewhere cannot persist for too long. I say that as a person who falls into this financial category.

Like many other wealthy people, I have announced in my other books my intention to create a bursary fund to provide a tertiary education to people from underprivileged backgrounds. Together with the money will come a mentorship programme to assist them while they study and into the workplace to ensure that they get the experience and network connections of their mentors.

I am not certain that democracy via voting alone is the answer for uplifting the masses. I think providing and ensuring equal opportunities for all, in all areas of education, skills training, access to all resources and network connections would enable those who shine to do so and those who don't want to put in the effort to fall by the wayside. Those incapable of participating, for whatever reason due to ill health or any other form of incapacity, should be protected and cared for by the society who receive their funds via progressive taxation, general sales tax and the like.

This is theoretical, but I am implying that changing from a monarchy to democracy via the voting booth is not enough to balance the scales between the haves and the have-nots. Equality, which is what the purpose of democracy stands for, is more applicable to equal opportunities than it is to a once in five-year ballot box where one man one votes occur.

The Internet could become a major input in creating equal opportunities but, for now, the have's must reach down and uplift the have not's, not only with tax-deductible charities but with an empowerment of all resources, including mentorships.

I have a business that provides a free mentorship software programme to school children in South Africa. It enables the older pupils to mentor the younger ones on a formal, structured, reportable basis in all areas of scholastic life including academics, sporting and cultural pursuits. We also train the mentors and the mentees in developing those skills which enable their leadership skills as well as their listening skills.

The surest way to create economic, social and political stability in a country is to ensure that everyone can become the best version of themselves in an as egoless way as possible.

When someone flaunts their wealth with large homes and fancy cars and drives past homeless people begging for small change and considers themselves to be immune to such hardships, the scene is being set for ego = failure. If you believe, as I do, that you live countless lives and you experience all the range of emotions throughout these lives, and you do not relate emotionally to the hardships of the poor and needy, then it's likely that that experience is still to come in either this life or another one.

If you cannot experience being kind, compassionate and empathetic to someone in need of daily food and shelter, it's probably because, to date, over countless lives, you have not experienced those emotions. It's coming and you may or may not remember in that lifetime how you felt in this lifetime when you knew opulence and didn't care about the ones much less fortunate than you.

If you can now acknowledge that your ego is preventing you from showing kindness, compassion and empathy to those in need of daily survival items and you can remedy that by your actions, not your words, then perhaps your eternal soul may not have to subject you to such painful hardships in this lifetime or in another lifetime. I can't guarantee anything, but it makes sense to me that your eternal soul is partially experiencing the hardships of the poor and the needy now, so the need to experience it in another lifetime is much reduced.

There is a story told of a poor, destitute family of six who was cutting grass on the highway when a fancy luxury car pulled up on the kerb. A prosperous, well-dressed man opened his window and asked the father what they were doing. He answered that both he and his wife had no work so the only thing he could afford to feed his family was grass and they were cutting grass for their next meal. The wealthy man said you must all get into my car. The father's face lit up with excitement and anticipation of a well-meaning benefactor looking after his family. The wealthy man said, "come on over to my house, the grass there is six foot tall and needs cutting!"

Who is your competition?

There will always be people who are better or worse off than you. If you compare yourself to another, you allow your ego to take charge of your life and use that competitive spirit to continually judge and compare yourself to another. It's a bottomless pit and comparisons will always leave you either elated or disappointed. There are over 7 billion people on this planet, and thinking that you are great, wonderful and the best there is, simply means that you are a very big frog in a very small pond.

If there is no one for you to look up to and for you to raise your performance to match theirs to, then you are in the wrong room!

The only competitor you have is who you were yesterday. If you can improve your performance today to that of yesterday's, then you are winning the game of life. Worrying about beating your brother or sister, neighbour, friend, enemy or whoever is such a waste of your life-giving energy. By simply being better than you were yesterday, can make happiness a decision under your control.

In all my endeavours in the various parts of my life from child rearing, business, social, sports and spiritual pursuits, I have considered that the only competitor I have is my ignorance. To know what you don't know is the starting point of wisdom.

Socrates, the famous Greek Philosopher, stated, "I am the wisest man because I know that I know nothing".

If you adopt a daily philosophy that states "I either win, or I learn, but I never lose" then you remain open to surrendering yourself to saying "please teach me" to everyone you come into contact with. To be open to learning, to hold your tongue when you do know and allow others to give you their knowledge and their wisdom is the egoless path to wisdom and success in all of your life's pursuits. Be an eternal student, and everyone is your teacher in some form or other. If you can say "thank you for teaching me that" then people will love to teach you more and more because their ego need is being fed by being needed by you. It's seldom that you learn by talking but invariably you learn by listening. That is why I often repeat that silent and listen have the same letters!

Desiderata

When I set up my first apartment after leaving my first family's home at the age of 19, I found the poem *Desiderata* as a poster and placed it on my lounge wall. The words of the author, Max Ehrmann, have stayed with me and I share them with you now:

Desiderata

*Go placidly amid the noise and haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible without surrender
be on good terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and clearly;
and listen to others,
even the dull and the ignorant;
they too have their story.
Avoid loud and aggressive persons,
they are vexations to the spirit.
If you compare yourself with others,
you may become vain and bitter;
for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.
Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career, however humble;
it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.
Exercise caution in your business affairs;
for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
many persons strive for high ideals;
and everywhere life is full of heroism.
Be yourself.
Especially, do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love;
for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.
Take kindly the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.
Beyond a wholesome discipline,
be gentle with yourself.
You are a child of the universe,
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.
Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive Him to be,
and whatever your labours and aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul.
With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.
Be cheerful.
Strive to be happy.*

Max Ehrmann, Desiderata, Copyright 1952.

In previous books and more recently in *Unfolding Your Child* I discussed the importance of the poem *IF* by Rudyard Kipling in my life as my father hung it on a metal plate on the back of my bedroom door when I was little. I still have that metal plate with the words emblazoned on it, but more importantly, the words are emblazoned on my heart and in my mind. As I recall, I published the poem *IF* in *How to be a Great Negotiator* as the last entry.

Both *Desiderata* and *IF* are about finding your ego balance, and I recommend you read both frequently when you are emotionally down, and up, and some perspective of ego balance will be returned to you at these critical times.

Depersonalising people through ego

Ego-based people tend to look past people and treat them as commodities to achieve their ambitious goals of self-aggrandisement. A boss who is not taking the time to know their staff and treats them as production machines for bottom line profits invariably ends up reaping the whirlwind of limited loyalty, sufficient to keep their jobs but not adding to the bottom line through the innovation they have but will not use for an ego-based, ungrateful boss.

In some instances, a Medical Specialist, and usually a Surgeon in a hospital, tends to treat their supporting staff with disdain and their patients with impatience and lack of information.

There is a story told of a lady in hospital who called the reception and asked how the patient in room 101 was doing. The receptionist asked the nurses, and the lady was told she is recovering well and should go home in a few days. The caller said thanks for telling me because no one will while I am in this hospital bed!

Parents too busy with their lives to attend to their children's needs are also guilty of this depersonalisation process, but they will pay the price for this when their child acts up due to this lack of attention. At that point, the parents will be forced to deal with the negative attention sought by their child when they could have simply given them some positive attention earlier on.

Each person is an equal soul and is an equal part of Oneness/God/Source. No one soul is more important than another, only ego of the mind creates that illusion. Arrogance, self importance and boastfulness are not traits to be admired. They are usually feared because the ego-based person has some control of power over the others who cower in fear.

Today is the 21st of November 2017, and I have been watching CNN as the 37-year-old rule of a despotic dictator, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, comes to an end with the Zimbabwean Army forcing him to resign or face impeachment.

In 1975 Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, was rated the world's top producer of selected agricultural products in the United Nations Food and Agricultural 1975 Year Book. Today, Zimbabwe is beyond bankrupt and rated one of the poorest countries on the planet. Robert Mugabe stole billions of dollars and ran a corrupt state for nearly four decades. The dancing in the streets by the local Zimbabweans as well as the some 4 million Zimbabweans who were forced to leave the country to find employment elsewhere was palpable as the news of his resignation was announced in Parliament.

Mahatma Gandhi said *"When I despair I remember that all through history the ways of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it – always."*

Once again this illustrates why ego = failure!

The need to be right

The need to be right or proven right is an acid test for an ego-based person. But let's take a step backwards and ask what is right?

Right is the common consensus of the prevailing morality, understandings and behaviour of the time. There was a time when it was right to burn witches, crucify people, hang horse thieves. There was a time when people believed that the world was flat and if you sailed to the end of the earth, you fell off.

Possibly one of the most famous scientists of all time, Galileo Galilei, was under house arrest for ten years because he dared to suggest that the world revolved around the sun and not the other way around, as the Catholic Church at the time, some 400 years ago, believed to be the fact.

Being right can sometimes be wrong. What is wrong is believing that you are right and not leaving any shadow of doubt that maybe there is another viewpoint that could also be right. This pigheadedness is when one's ego becomes entrenched in the discussion, and it is likely to lead to more aggression by sticking to your guns and being convinced that you are right. This is another version of "my way or the highway".

An ego based person can also believe that they have the only answer and because of this narrow-minded and obstinate approach they ignore, what afterwards history will reflect on as common sense, and they fail at their task. Napoleon and Hitler going into Russia in mid-winter are obvious examples, Business failures usually have at their core the inability to ask and seek outside expert advice and to continue to do what they have always done while the world around them is changing.

Right now, electric cars and self-driving cars are going to change the way people get around and in the foreseeable future changing transport and communication modes are going to alter the way people live, work, play, shop and communicate with each other. At present this new form of electrical power for motor vehicles and self-driving vehicles are in their infancy but this is a trend likely to grow exponentially in time. Major car manufacturers globally are announcing the phasing out of the internal combustion engine and the adaptation of electrical vehicles and, in time, self-driving vehicles. Sticking to what has always worked is an ego-based shortsightedness that has failure written all over it.

Another area of business short-sightedness is what is being termed “quarterisation”. This is the focus of the media and investing public for three months, or quarterly results from huge publicly quoted companies. With executive remuneration focused on showing profits at certain deadline dates for their share options and the like, the long-term nature of proper investment policies is being sacrificed at the altar of quarterly returns.

It could take three months to survey and investigate in order to change the brand of coffee served in the canteen let alone make a multi-billion dollar investment or acquisition within three months to meet the next quarter's deadline. Expect more spectacular business failures due to this three months blindness to show results and keep the share price from falling due to missed earnings results.

In spiritual terms, we have a saying that you can either be right or you can be happy but only one thing at a time. The need to be proved right is usually not only a function of the facts but is a much deeper psychological need to be powerful and respected accordingly. This is like using a sledgehammer to crack a nut! Can you see the ego here?

So let's focus for a moment on this psychological need to be powerful and respected. The weaker ego-based person will choose being powerful over being respected because as one person recently told me, “if violence is not working then you are not using enough of it!”

Respect is earned and not forced upon someone. If respect is forced then it's fear based which is a first cousin to the ego. Respect is such a psychological trigger for most people. It is usually the foundation stone for most people to base their lives around. Most of us want to be respected, and somehow this makes it all worthwhile. For those who cannot earn respect, they turn to power to enforce respect, but it's not respect, it's fear of the consequences of failing to show respect to a powerful person who can easily create a loss in your life. And the ego is all about the fear of loss. These powerful people fear the loss of their power more than the respect they require.

So back to needing to be right. It's fear based and as such ego-based. How is it possible for you to learn anything if you are always right? So people who are always right actually stop learning from others' viewpoints and that is a slippery slope to ignorance and stupidity.

With such an ego-based approach to life, failure is inevitable.

Smile

The one thing I have noticed about ego based people is that they don't smile much and when they do it's usually a power based malicious smile of one upmanship. Smiling with another person implies a form of mutual camaraderie where one's guard is let down, and one becomes vulnerable to a degree. Two ego based people can smile with each other but it's usually at the expense of a third person or people.

The ability to smile allows laughter to come through and the old saying “laughter is the best medicine” is a truism.

Once again I turn to the world famous *Mayo Clinic* for some of the health benefits of laughter:

Stress relief from laughter

A good sense of humour can't cure all ailments, but data is mounting about the positive things laughter can do.

Short-term benefits

A good laugh has great short-term effects. When you start to laugh, it doesn't just lighten your load mentally; it induces physical changes in your body. Laughter can:

Stimulate many organs. Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the endorphins that are released from your brain.

Activate and relieve your stress response. A rollicking laugh fires up and then cools down your stress response, and it can increase your heart rate and blood pressure. The result? A good, relaxed feeling.

Soothe tension. Laughter can also stimulate circulation and aid muscle relaxation, both of which can help reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.

Long-term effects

Laughter isn't just a quick pick-me-up, though. It's also good for you over the long term. Laughter may:

Improve your immune system. Negative thoughts manifest into chemical reactions that can affect your body by bringing more stress into your system and decreasing your immunity. In contrast, positive thoughts can release neuropeptides that help fight stress and potentially more-serious illnesses.

Relieve pain. Laughter may ease pain by causing the body to produce its own natural painkillers.

Increase personal satisfaction. Laughter can also make it easier to cope with difficult situations. It also helps you connect with other people.

Improve your mood. Many people experience depression, sometimes due to chronic illnesses. Laughter can help lessen your depression and anxiety and may make you feel happier.

Improve your sense of humour

Are you afraid you have an underdeveloped — or non-existent — sense of humour? No problem. Humor can be learned. In fact, developing or refining your sense of humour may be easier than you think.

Put humour on your horizon. Find a few simple items, such as photos, greeting cards or comic strips, that make you chuckle. Then hang them up at home or in your office. Keep funny movies, books or comedy albums on hand for when you need an added humour boost. Look online at joke websites. Go to a comedy club. Laugh and the world laughs with you. Find a way to laugh about your own situations and watch your stress begin to fade away. Even if it feels forced at first, practice laughing. It does your body good.

Consider trying laughter yoga. In laughter yoga, people practice laughter as a group. Laughter is forced at first, but it can soon turn into spontaneous laughter.

Share a laugh. Make it a habit to spend time with friends who make you laugh. And then return the favour by sharing funny stories or jokes with those around you.

Knock, knock. Browse through your local bookstore or library's selection of joke books and get a few rib-tickers in your repertoire that you can share with friends.

Know what isn't funny. Don't laugh at the expense of others. Some forms of humour aren't appropriate. Use your best judgment to discern a good joke from a bad, or hurtful, one.

Laughter is the best medicine!

Go ahead and give it a try. Turn the corners of your mouth up into a smile and then laugh, even if it feels a little forced. Once you've had your chuckle, take stock of how you're feeling. Are your muscles a little less tense? Do you feel more relaxed or buoyant? That's the natural wonder of laughing at work.

Non ego-based people can benefit from laughter while ego-based people deprive themselves of these health and psychological benefits of laughter.

Ego-based people take themselves and their life seriously and the enjoyment factor of friendship, laughter, serving others without a reward and camaraderie eludes those filled with their own serious self-importance.

Anger - the underlying tension of ego-based people

Anger comes from a hostile approach to life. Believing that you are right and the other person is wrong and once provoked you can cross this barrier and become hostile. From this hostility, violence is not far behind, and this violence can be verbal and or physical.

Medical journals are replete with articles on the health risks associated with anger, hostility and violence. None of the findings is pleasant reading for anyone coming from an ego-based approach to resolving conflict via anger, hostility and violence.

Hypertension, cardiac arrest, diabetes, bulimia nervosa and car accidents feature prominently in this research. Many of man's ailments occur due to the imbalance caused by real or imaginary threats in the hard-wired reptilian brain of fight or flight response to life.

Our primordial ancestors faced real physical threats from strangers with ill intent, wild beasts and nature's occurrences and the fight or flight response was necessary for those times. Clad in silk pyjamas, lying in a comfy bed with all the modern conveniences of life in the 21st Century we still knee-jerk back to fight or flight responses which sets pulse rates soaring, adrenal surging and the imbalances of life are kick-started for ill health.

It is considerably easier to come from a non-ego base in life and enjoy good health and happiness and to get above the friction level of existence than to come from an ego-based approach, with all its intended consequences including ill health, unhappiness and loneliness?

Road rage- ego behind the wheel

The AAA in the USA is the authority on motoring in that country, and they have surveyed road rage and its causes and consequences and it's not a pretty picture. The AA in the UK concur with similar, if not worse, results for the UK.

Some 80% of all drivers have experienced road rage either by their own initiative or as a recipient of someone else's road rage. People who are considered law-abiding, relatively peaceful citizens get behind the wheel of a car and turn into inconsiderate, intolerant, abusive and law-breaking citizens. The power of a motor car as physical protection for the driver and the relative anonymity of not being recognised, allow and enable the alter ego to emerge and for one's ego to run riot.

The fight or flight response referred to in the previous section gets reignited when some 80% of drivers get behind the wheel of a car. Here is what they get up to in the USA and, no doubt, the same figures could apply in most countries of the world. (*Source AAA*):

Purposefully tailgating: 51 percent (104 million drivers)

Yelling at another driver: 47 percent (95 million drivers)

Honking to show annoyance or anger: 45 percent (91 million drivers)

Making angry gestures: 33 percent (67 million drivers)

Trying to block another vehicle from changing lanes: 24 percent (49 million drivers)

Cutting off another vehicle on purpose: 12 percent (24 million drivers)

Getting out of the vehicle to confront another driver: 4 percent (7.6 million drivers)

Bumping or ramming another vehicle on purpose: 3 percent (5.7 million drivers)

In 2010 *The World Health Organisation* estimated that 1.25 million people died that year in road deaths. "Half of the world's road traffic deaths occur among motorcyclists (23 percent), pedestrians (22 percent) and cyclists (5 percent) – i.e., "vulnerable road users" – with 31 percent of deaths among car occupants and the remaining 19 percent among unspecified road users. Males were 77% of all deaths caused on the road."

To put that into perspective it's a death on the road every 25 seconds - 24 hours of the day, seven days a week.

Since 2010, mobile phone usage and texting while driving has increased the accident and death rate for all road users but especially for drivers of vehicles.

Every 25 seconds there is soon to be a knock on the door from the police to inform a family that their breadwinner is not coming home again - ever! This is a life-changing moment as the remaining spouse or partner is now a single parent, and the children's dreams of getting a good education are likely to go up in flames. The emotional trauma faced by the remaining family members is heart-wrenching as their lives are changed for the worse through this loss of a parent/spouse/child.

Could the fatal accident have been avoided? In virtually every instance the answer is a resounding yes!

The Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT) produces these figures for global road related accidents:

Annual Global Road Crash Statistics

Nearly 1.3 million people die in road crashes each year, on average 3,287 deaths a day.

An additional 20-50 million are injured or disabled.

More than half of all road traffic deaths occur among young adults aged 15-44.

Road traffic crashes rank as the 9th leading cause of death and accounts for 2.2% of all deaths globally.

Road crashes are the leading cause of death among young people aged 15-29, and the second leading cause of death worldwide among young people aged 5-14.

Each year nearly 400,000 people under 25 die on the world's roads, on average over 1,000 a day.

Over 90% of all road fatalities occur in low and middle-income countries, which have less than half of the world's vehicles.

Road crashes cost USD 518 billion globally, costing individual countries from 1-2% of their annual GDP.

Road crashes cost low and middle-income countries USD 65 billion annually, exceeding the total amount received in developmental assistance.

Unless action is taken, road traffic injuries are predicted to become the fifth leading cause of death by 2030.

The last word on this topic is from *Huffington Post*:

Below are the most common causes of car accidents in the United States. Read carefully to find out what actions you can start taking today to prevent them

1. Distracted Driving

Distracted driving becomes a larger threat every year and has been the leading cause of car accidents for the past decades. Please pay attention to the road while you are driving. That means no calls, no texting, no eating, no reading, no grooming or application of makeup, and talking while behind the wheel.

2. Drunk Driving

Drunk driving is one of the most dangerous causes of accidents in the U.S. and is the most deadly. If you have had anything to drink, take a taxi or give your keys to a sober friend. It is not worth the risk.

3. Speeding

Although it can be tempting to push the speed limit when you are running late, speeding is the second most common cause of accidents, so you should resist the urge and stay within the legal limits.

4. Reckless Driving

Changing lanes too quickly, speeding well over the limit, and acting aggressively on the roads can lead to horrible accidents. It is important to take your time and remain calm while driving to avoid needless accidents caused by simple carelessness.

5. Rain

While you can't always avoid driving in the rain, the slippery, treacherous road conditions caused by heavy rains should be avoided when at all possible. If visibility is too low to drive or the roads seem particularly slick, you should pull over and wait until the storm passes.

6. Running Red Lights

It may seem obvious, but it bears repeating. Red always means stop. Even if it seems like no other cars are coming, you can cause a serious accident by running a red light, and you will be breaking the law. We've heard several excuses from busy entrepreneurs trying to run through red lights while thinking about work, from those legal contracts to investor relations, and at the same time trying to answer work emails. Understand that life is more important than all these issues combined and it's best to be safe than sorry.

7. Night Driving

Lack of visibility makes hazards more difficult to see at night. Make sure that you are extra alert on the road at night, and use your full lights when on an abandoned road without streetlights.

8. Design Defects

Sometimes accidents are caused by flaws in the car itself. While you cannot always avoid this, make sure to take note of any recalls in the news and take your car in for regular maintenance.

9. Tailgating

There is never an excuse to get too close to the car in front of you, no matter how frustratingly slow they seem to be going. Keep a safe distance from other cars so that you will have time to react to sudden turns or uses of brakes.

10. Wrong-Way Driving/ Improper Turns

Everyone makes mistakes, but lapses in judgement while driving a car can cause horrible accidents. Be aware of street signs warning of one-way streets or other irregularities, especially in unfamiliar areas.

When people don't get in the proper lane to make a turn, use signals properly, or follow traffic signals, accidents happen. Always look out for traffic signs and obey the proper right-of-way when you make a turn.

11. Teenage Drivers

Teens don't have the experience to know what to do in unsafe conditions and that naiveté causes accidents. If you have teenagers, make sure that they have had a defensive driving course, do not permit cell phone use while driving, and limit the passengers they can take with them in the car.

12. Drugs:

While alcohol is the culprit, we usually associate with DUIs, drugs, including marijuana, prescription pills and other illegal drugs also cause terrible accidents. Never drive if you are under the influence of any drug, prescribed or not.

13. Potholes:

Potholes are very frustrating for drivers because sometimes they can't be avoided. Try to drive around potholes to avoid damaging your car, when you can, but do not swerve into another lane if cars are coming. Despite the fact that there are some laws that could work in your favour, don't take chances, especially with the heartbreaking car accident statistics from previous cases.

14. Tyre Blowouts

If you get a flat while driving, it can cause you to swerve unexpectedly. Try to stay calm and keep control of the wheel while pulling over as soon as it is safe. Call for help if you cannot change the tyre yourself safely.

15. Animal Crossings

Anyone who has ever heard someone tell about hitting a deer knows that this is a big danger. For this reason, take extra caution when you see an animal crossing sign and always use your high beams when traveling in rural, woody areas where wild animals are common.

16. Construction Sites

Sometimes the way a construction zone is set up can be confusing. Follow the cones as well as possible and be aware of other drivers who may be confused. It is especially important to drive slowly in these areas to avoid even the smallest accidents from occurring.

Before you drive, think about how wonderful life is, your loved ones (even if you've sorted your estate planning), your business and the other great dreams you still have to achieve in life. Be pro-active by taking precaution and removing all forms of distractions that might hinder your focus along the way. Life is worth living!

So we revert to the title of this book EGO=Failure. Road accidents and road related fatalities are laid squarely at the door of ego because somehow we believe that behind the wheel of a car, motorbike, cycle or even walking as a pedestrian we become invincible. We believe that the laws of common sense, good behaviour and physics don't apply to us - until we become a statistic!

To end this lengthy section with some humour:

A lady was driving behind an elderly driver and she was frustrated at the slow pace they were driving at. She honked her horn/hooter and gesticulated with some rude hand signals, opened her window and screamed unpleasant words at the elderly driver. Unknown to her, a plain clothed policeman in an unmarked police car was behind her and he put on his flashing lights and pulled her over and arrested her. She was handcuffed, thrown into the back of his car, charged at the police station and put in a holding cell. When her Lawyer arrived and complained about the way his client was treated the policeman said he was sorry but when he saw the bumper sticker which read, "What would Jesus Do?" and the other bumper sticker which read "Follow me to Sunday School" and the silver "fish" emblem of the New Born Christian on her back window, he could only assume that the car was stolen!

Let's revisit what ego is in the context of this book

Ego is an imbalance in our belief system that we are far more important than we actually are. The reality is that everyone is replaceable. The death of a husband, partner, father, mother or child is replaceable with another husband, father, mother or child. Perhaps the death of a child is the least replaceable as the other changes could be economically based or functionally based whereas the loss of a child and its love and potential as a human being growing up to become who knows what is likely to be the hardest to swallow.

Ego is arrogance and from this arrogance flows the seeds of its own destruction. Arrogance is not admired by anyone affected by such arrogance. What arrogance does is create a more determined equal and opposite reaction from the negatively affected people as illustrated earlier on as Newton's Third Law of Motion.

Ego is self-centred ambition, and it is seen as naked ambition usually at the expense of other people. It is very difficult to undertake everything oneself. Usually, other people are needed to help one achieve one's objectives. Unless we are talking about slavery or paid workers with little loyalty, self-centred ambition requires a more subtle approach to be inclusive ambition for all participating in the endeavour. Self-centred ambition is invariably a win:lose alternative and inclusive ambition is a potential win:win alternative.

Ego acts like the child who wants everything and won't stop whining until they get it. No one can stand this type of whining and whinging child and eventually one gives in to stop the incessant moaning and groaning. When this child is an adult who is petulant in their approach to life, it becomes even uglier than a child who can perhaps be forgiven due to its immaturity and inexperience.

Ego has the unwarranted air of superiority that the person is better than anyone else, has more to offer the world and deserves recognition far more than their achievements. It breeds arrogance, obstinacy and reckless abandonment of the acceptable rules of society. Somehow "I am special, and the rules don't apply to me" becomes their calling card.

As I write this on 25 November 2017, there is a slew of well-known public figures from show business and politics being exposed for being paedophiles, sexual harassers and similar. Here is ego running rampant and believing that they are above the rules of society and untouchable for their actions. Well, fame turns to notoriety very quickly in these cases and living with the consequences for them and their families for the rest of their lives is only one of the prices they will pay for their rampant ego.

End of Part 1

While I am certain there are countless other examples I can find to explain EGO = Failure, I think the point is well made. I would prefer to use Part 2 as an instructional guide to help you become more egoless and more humble and with it happier, healthier, more prosperous in all your endeavours and more loving as a human being.

PART 2 - THE MORE EGOLESS AND HUMBLE YOU

Where to start?

I have written 17 books before this one, and each one has at its central theme, becoming more egoless and humble through thinking, saying and doing "What would Love do now?"

Rather than going back and repeating what I have said before, as taking it out of its context may be not as effective, I am going to create an additional list of attributes to become more egoless and humble. If these attributes are insufficient for your purposes, then please revisit PersonalEmpowerment.co and GuideSpeak.com for my other books.

So let's start at the very beginning. You are a Soul occupying a body for your current trip to the earth plane. Your Soul is a part of Oneness/Source/God who is Unconditional Love, and your Soul is also Unconditional Love. Your Soul is connected to your Higher Self/Soul which is connected to Oneness/Source/God. Your Soul is eternal and immortal and grows with the lessons learnt on the earth plane via your five senses of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting. These five senses are unique to earth. When you are back "home" in Spirit, these sensuous delights are hankered for, and continual visits to earth are prized for these pleasures.

Earth is a school, and its lessons are tough to learn as you experience them first and only then get the lesson of the experience as a continual self-improvement of your Soul. You chose everything you are experiencing on earth as your Soul needs to experience this growth regarding the Soul Contracts you made with your Soul Group in Spirit.

The meaning and purpose of your life on earth, this time around, as in all your visits here, is to become more Godlike in your thought, words and actions. You are seeking these experiences for your Soul's growth and as a part of God, for God's growth too via your experiences.

You are not in this alone; you are supported and guided by Unseen Entities as Guides, Angels and the like. However, you have free will, and if you want to break your Soul Contract and go off on a tangent and do something else, no problem, you have eternity to fulfil these Soul Contracts.

Your Soul in your body now has a mind as well and it's this mind that houses your needs, desires, aspirations, hopes and fears - and we call that your ego. Sometimes the "good" ego is necessary for self-survival and growth and most times it's your "bad" ego based on fears and hopes that rears its ugly head. When your good ego remains as part of your Soul and acts out your soulful intentions then usually all is well in your life. It's when the "bad" ego, which I will refer to as ego from now onwards, separates from your Soul or separates from God if you prefer, that the issues and problems are grown and develop in your life. I call EGO - Edging God Out and the consequences of that in your life are usually not pleasant!

As you will remember from Newton's Third Law of Motion stated earlier on in this book - for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Every cause creates an effect. What you sow, you reap. You, and not some God in heaven somewhere, create the circumstances of your life. You have signed up for the journey you are on, initially by your Soul Contract and thereafter by your causal thoughts, words and actions.

The most powerful tool at your disposable is the power to choose your thoughts, words and actions. Drive fast and recklessly and it's likely you will be involved in an accident. Drink excessively, and you will be dangerously drunk and possibly an alcoholic over time. Take illegal drugs and face the consequences of a life falling apart or even jail-time. Choose to have sex with someone, not your partner or spouse and face the possibility of a marital or relationship breakup and the partial or whole loss of your children. Choose to uplift someone with kind and encouraging words and feel the uplifting of your Soul and the feel-good chemicals naturally released from your brain. Exercise daily, drink plenty of water and eat healthily and you will enjoy a healthy life. Study hard and work well and enjoy the financial benefits of an enjoyable life.

Meditate and pray daily and develop a relationship with your Soul, your Higher Power and the Unseen Entities supporting you on this journey to the earth plane.

Now that was a quick summary of what you are doing here and the meaning and purpose of your life!

If you haven't stopped reading because all this spiritual stuff is not to your liking, then let's continue identifying some attributes to leading a more egoless and humble life.

I have assembled the attributes in an alphabetical sequence for way of reference.

Abundance

Abundance, in this instance, does not mean having sufficient material wealth to be comfortable but refers to an abundant mentality of sharing whatever you have in whatever ways you can.

True abundance begins by knowing what is described as my personal prayer on the home page of PersonalEmpowerment.co:

"God will give me what I need, (not want), when I need it, for the highest growth of my soul. God's timing is always perfect, trust God now, live in the Now and be Godlike."

I am egoless enough to say that I forget this often and have expectations, hopes, aspirations and fears come home to roost in my mind. Only when I become mindful and consciously aware that these thoughts are ego-based do I remember my personal prayer.

Abundance is seeing the Divine in everything and everyone and expressing gratitude for that vision. Everything we believe to be ours is not ours but belongs to others. If you were to pass on from this world right now whatever you believe to be yours will be fought over by your inheritors and the "Tax Man".

The things you need are few. In my case, a comfortable bed to sleep on. A chair and table to work at. A refrigerator to store food in, a stove and microwave to prepare food, a working toilet and shower, wifi, internet connection, my laptop, mobile phone and a TV, plus books to read. Drinking water and healthy food are a prerequisite. Perhaps a car or a good transport system can be added to the list. Everything else is a "nice to have" not a "have to have."

What does your "have to have" list look like?

Kahlil Gibran in my favourite book, *The Prophet*, asks "...and tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the over prudent dog burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims..."

Nothing truly matters, except love. All the possessions we cling to for lack of faith in our ability to create and produce what we need in the future will simply clog up our freedom as we become slaves to our possessions and fear and guard them when, in reality, they belong to our inheritors and "The Tax Man".

What good is wealth without the health to enjoy what you have?

Getting the picture now?

Abundance begins and ends with gratitude. If you cannot express gratitude to your Higher Power and to those, who have helped you accumulate your abundance in its myriad forms then it's a selfish, possessive way of living. You have to sleep with one eye open in case you lose what you prize. Being grateful is more egoless than simply hoarding what you have and not giving thanks for your abundance.

Abundance is sharing with a capital S! Sharing a smile, sharing a compliment to another, sharing an encouraging word, sharing the load in its various forms, sharing a laugh, sharing a meal, sharing your belief system, sharing whatever you have as a mentor, sharing financially when you can and enabling someone's ambitions and so on. Sharing is caring!

Being abundant brings compassion and empathy into play. Understanding that abundance, like life, goes in cycles and that by sharing what you have now should see the other person sharing what they have with you, if and when the cycle of abundance should turn against you.

Being abundant in your thoughts, words and actions is a more egoless and humble way of approaching life and your fellow man.

Acceptability

Are you acceptable to yourself? This may seem a silly question, but it is one of the most important questions that can be asked of you.

If you are acceptable to yourself then nothing you say and do needs to be questioned by you, and, at this same time, you are unafraid to question anything you think, say and do.

If you are acceptable to yourself, then you do not need to think, say or do anything that requires the acceptance or approval of anyone else. You need only satisfy yourself. Do you have any idea how liberating this is? This is probably the most freedom you will experience, not caring about what other people think, say or do about you. Obviously, this pre-supposes you are not emotionally or mentally imbalanced and not caring what people think, say or do about you is not a pathological issue.

Being acceptable to yourself and not caring about other peoples' opinion about you is not only liberating, but it's also egoless, providing your standards of self-acceptance are at a level considered normal by society.

Driving a car you are comfortable in, living in a home you are comfortable in, wearing clothes you are comfortable in, having friends you are comfortable to be with, making a living you are comfortable doing and earning an income you are comfortable banking are some of the major external guidelines to being comfortable and acceptable within yourself. If how your appearance, your physical body's condition, your mental state, your education level and your enjoyment level in life are acceptable to you, then these are some of the internal guidelines of being comfortable and acceptable to yourself.

Why is this so important? Well, the egoless person, or at least a more egoless person, who is comfortable in their own skin and who does not need external validation of who and what they are in their lives does not have to use so much energy to ensure their acceptability to others. This energy I speak of combines all the energy, including money, that ego-based people expend to become acceptable to others for their validation.

An ego-based person is not acceptable to themselves, and they expend inordinate amounts of energy, including money, in order to becoming acceptable to others who they are trying to impress. Somehow, these ego-based people believe that if they are acceptable to others whom they are trying to impress then they will become more acceptable to themselves.

It's illogical!

It's like trying to brush your own hair by attempting to brush the hair you see in your bathroom mirror. No amount of brushing the mirror will move one hair on your head! No amount of impression you are making on another will improve your self-acceptance needle one millimetre. In fact, each time you attempt to impress another you are taking a step further away from self-acceptance. The harder you try to gain external acceptance the further you move away from self-acceptance. This is an ego-based need that is a bottomless pit of unacceptable self-acceptance, unacceptable self-like, unacceptable self-respect and unacceptable self-love.

Very few people who are impressed by your self-adornments actually like, respect and love you. They may admire you but they are most likely to be jealous of you and subconsciously secretly hope you fail.

There is an old Jewish joke about a clothing manufacturer, in the days that clothing manufacture made money in the USA(!), who made a fortune and bought himself a boat with a regular Captain and crew manning the boat. He invited his old immigrant parents to witness his success on the launching of the boat.

He proudly puffed up his chest and dressed in a Captain's uniform; he said, "So tell me, Papa, how do you like your son, the Captain?"

To which the Papa replied, "To your Mother, you're a Captain, to your Father you're a Captain, but to a Captain you ain't no Captain!"

The need to gain acceptance from others remains a psychological injury that cannot be repaired by adulation by others. It can only be repaired and healed by self-acceptance, self-like, self-respect and self-love. This is an inside job and can commence at any time you choose to become acceptable to yourself.

Most people's needs for acceptance stems from being told verbally or non-verbally that they were not acceptable when they were young. Non-acceptability may also have been shown to them in some physical form or other when they were young. It could have been something as innocuous as not being selected for a team in the neighbourhood park's pick-up game. It may have been feeling rejected by a parent or sibling or family member or friend. It may even have occurred by your parent dying while you were young. Although you may not even have a memory of them, the feeling of being rejected by them through not being in your life creates a hole that cannot be healed unless by consciousness/awareness at a spiritual level or lots of psychotherapy.

One of the most ego-based people I knew lost his father when he was 18 months old. His mother struggled to support the two of them, and he received a bursary to become a lawyer. He was one of the most difficult people I knew, and his technique was to befriend you and shower you with promises and good times, and once he had you where he wanted you, he would then reject you before you could reject him. It was a pathology I witnessed many times for over 15 years.

One day in a meditation, I "received" a message from his late father explaining this rejection process and how it occurred initially and the damage it had done to his son for some 65 years as he led this ego-based pathological existence of rejecting people he apparently cared about before they could reject him. His father requested that I write a letter to him from his own father, the Entity I was channeling, informing him of this background and explanation of his pathology and requesting him to be consciously aware of it and to begin a repairing process so he could enjoy a more egoless life.

I followed this Entity's instructions, and while he was shocked to receive this news, I could see that it struck a cord deep inside him. During the next few years, our relationship was very "tense and edgy" as he knew that I knew his worst fear and he did nothing to change his ways. We eventually parted company as business partners after 15 years and a year or two later he asked me to visit him and he attempted to make friends with me again. We laughed and joked at this meeting, as we had in the past, and then when he told me how he wanted to take action against some of the homeowners in our development who were giving him a difficult time I warned him to be careful as someone was likely to walk into his office and shoot him if he kept up his old ways. This meeting occurred on Thursday 29 April 2010. On Monday 3rd May 2010, a person, who my ex-partner had recently sequestered and made penniless, walked into his office and fatally shot my ex-partner and then fatally shot himself.

His inability to be acceptable to himself as he always had to have the biggest, the best, the latest, the flashiest whatever, was his eventual downfall as his ego-based existence made so many enemies that he carried a gun on him for all the years I knew him. It didn't help him on his last day on earth!

I had time to get to know the real person and he was such a nice guy when he wasn't ego-based but those times were very few and far between. I mourn his loss even eight years later.

Please learn from this real-life lesson and become acceptable to yourself in an egoless way and forget about being acceptable to others through an ego-based existence.

Acceptance of what is now

If your best friend criticised you, would you take it to heart and examine yourself to ensure that they were correct in their criticism and judgement of you? Would you then set about correcting that flaw to ensure you rid yourself of it?

If a total stranger criticised you over the same issue, how would that make you feel?

Criticism and judgement are never easy to take and the source of such condemnation, and perhaps even their motivation behind such condemnation, needs to be discovered as well. Maybe the issue is their problem that they are projecting onto you, similar to a bully who himself/herself is being bullied at home and taking it out on you. Maybe they are genuinely trying to help you absent of any ulterior motive. Whatever the reason, if there is truth in their condemnation, then you owe it to yourself to investigate it, and if you find it has validity then you can decide to rid yourself of that issue. That is an egoless approach to

self-improvement and with it self-empowerment. You humbly recognise and thank them for pointing out the issue, and you correct it via action.

If, on the other hand, someone is trying to degrade you unfairly then have sympathy for them because they are, in reality, degrading themselves by their unjust criticism and judgement of you. Picking a fight to show superiority over such a person simply takes you down to their level, and they are used to that environment and playbook, and they will probably damage you in some way. Be big enough and humble enough to walk away from such a potential fight, through non-resistance, and let their hurled insults fall on your deaf ears.

You cannot save or improve anyone, only yourself, and you have no right to attempt to save or improve them. They must learn to find that need within themselves. If they don't, so be it, maybe the time is not right in their soul's journey for self-criticism and self-improvement. We all march to the beat of a different drummer, and all have our individual timetables for self-improvement and self-growth. That's why its prefixed as self!

Acceptance of what is happening now is the starting point of acceptance of yourself in your march towards self-growth and self-improvement. This acceptance is an egoless and humble approach required to achieve such self-growth, self-improvement and self-acceptance. If you respond with your ego to any insults or condemnation then you simply play the childhood game of "snakes and ladders", and you go tumbling back to the beginning and have to build yourself up again using all your energy to simply get back to where you were before succumbing to your ego. If you use the more egoless and humble approach of acceptance as outlined above, you are likely to use your energy in far more constructive and positive ways in your self-growth path towards to self-improvement and self-acceptance.

Appreciation

The term appreciation has various meanings both regarding personal relationships as well as regarding investment performance.

I will deal with the personal relationships viewpoint here.

Appreciation is recognition, applause and gratitude to yourself or another for a job well done. It can also be used as acknowledgement and encouragement for a job to be done.

Most people do not appreciate themselves enough! Self-admiration, self-respect, self-like and self-love create a well-founded self-belief and good self-esteem. And only you can do it providing it is not done in an ego-based way. Pounding your chest like a gorilla and boasting "I am the greatest" won't fool anyone including yourself!

The process is a lot more subtle. When you have done something that takes you out of your daily comfort zone, and you achieve your objective in doing so, smile at yourself in your bathroom mirror and say "Well done(your name)". This process sets in its wake the self-appreciation that culminates in a good self-esteem as outlined above.

Have you ever said well done to yourself? Waiting for others to give you appreciation puts your esteem in their hands. It's called self-esteem and only you can give it to yourself or negate it within you.

How many times have you got cross with yourself and thought and said: ".....(your name) you fool!"

In my book *How to Live in the Now*, available for free on personalempowerment.co and for free on Amazon Kindle too, I devote a section to the research done by Dr Emoto in his book, *The Hidden Messages of Water*, a *New York Times* best seller. He proves how water reacts to messages placed on the vials containing the water which messages show appreciation or displeasure. Considering that our body is made up of 70% water it's little wonder that the research is accurate in identifying water crystals expanding with appreciation and contracting with displeasure.

You know that yourself. You know how you swell with pride when praised by someone or feel diminished when criticised by someone. Now when you do it to yourself it's even more pronounced. The problem is we seldom praise ourselves and are often self-critical. Wonder where low self-esteem comes from?

Why don't you try the bathroom mirror approach of self-congratulation with a smile as soon as possible and see how it feels.

Appreciation to others and from others is a good way to live your life. Yesterday, December 11, 2017, my son Michael and I were body surfing at the beach in Tamarin, Mauritius. There was a lady of around 50 years old trying to body surf by watching how we did it. When she caught her first wave, I simply raised my hands and clapped her performance. She glowed with pride and surfed with us for the next hour or so improving by leaps and bounds. She was French-speaking, so most of our communication was via gesturing when the next good wave was building up to catch. We applauded each other when we did well. When we parted company our shared experience created a bond, and it all started with a simple sign of appreciation showing encouragement. Unfortunately, most people are too reserved to show outward appreciation to others for fear of being rejected or thought “creepy”. Everyone enjoys being appreciated, and it cost nothing to do so to another and to yourself.

Appreciation opens the door to become more egoless as you praise yourself correctly and when you show appreciation to another.

Be yourself and do your best, humbly.

Many of life’s achievements are team efforts. Every team has a leader, and group dynamics are such that the leader is usually selected for their leadership skills. They may be the orchestra leader who turns his back to the audience and doesn’t play any instrument but combines the talents of the individual musicians who play their specialised instruments to create a team achievement.

The orchestra leader gets the applause and then usually singles out the lead musician of that composition to be recognised for more applause. The remainder of the orchestra benefit from the general applause and humbly go to the next piece of music to be played.

Too often glory seekers want and need the limelight of recognition and applause. Knowing that you have done well and performed to your best abilities should be the only reward you seek. Relying on the fickleness of others to recognise you and applaud you can be a very frustrating way to live.

In one of my other books, I gave the example of Joshua Bell, a world-class violinist, who played incognito in a Washington DC subway station in 2008. He was playing on his priceless violin for some 45 minutes as if he was a street musician hustling for coins. Hardly anyone stopped to listen, and he earned a few measly dollars. What the people who were rushing past him did not know was who he was, and without his “fame” they did not even give him a passing look. A few nights before that he played to sold-out performances with people paying hundreds of dollars for a seat to listen to him play. Such is the fickleness of so-called fame, recognition and applause by others.

Set your yardsticks and perform for your own needs in a humble way. Anything else is a bonus and not to be sought after. This is an egoless way to be.

Using a personal example if I may: I write these books as my passion and love for helping people lead a more rewarding spiritual life. I do not charge for my e-books or attendance at my Person Empowerment Wellness Centre as I consider that it is a gift I have received from the Universe and I am returning it repackaged to the Universe with my unconditional love and gratitude. If no one reads the books, I am fine with that. If a million people read the books, I am fine with that too. My role is to write the books and make them available for free, not to seek applause or recognition for doing so.

On my other spiritual website, GuideSpeak.com, I was anonymous for many years until recently when I decided to link GuideSpeak.com with PersonalEmpowerment.co as they complemented each other. For those who did a little digging, they could now trace me as the Author/Scribe/Channel of GuideSpeak.com.

If you happen to be reading this and you are benefitting from it then so am I because I believe we are all One.

Centre of attraction

An ego-based person, sees themselves at the centre of the world and becomes their own focus as the centre of attraction. Of course, this is a selfish approach to life where friends are limited, and only those in fear of losing something will pay them the attention they crave.

A more egoless and humble person will seek to make the person they are communicating with their centre of attraction as they treat them with courtesy, respect and equality in a warm camaraderie of affection. This is a more selfless approach to life and one in which friends are plentiful.

Compassion

There is a reason that compassion is considered to be amongst the greatest of virtues in all the major religions and philosophies worldwide. Compassion means to suffer with and being able to become egoless, vulnerable and to surrender your feelings to support another's feelings in their time of need. This shows that you are a person who can be trusted to be supportive and a friend in the making, if not a friend already, of the one needing your support.

You will find in life when you need such help a few will truly care, and the majority are simply curious and won't stay the distance with you in your need. Some people prefer to be involved in your drama of the moment as they somehow feel that by helping you they don't have to face their drama of the moment or a long-term drama they keep avoiding facing.

Compassionate people care and are helpful in their caring. They are usually patient and even sometimes have wise words to soothe the pain of the emotionally injured person. They generate kindness and are prepared to persevere to assist the person get back on their "emotional feet". They also generate a feeling of warmth in their caring and are intent on helping the emotionally injured person resolve the issue at hand.

Expressing sympathy is not the same as expressing compassion. Sympathy is expressed with sorrow and concern whereas compassion is expressed with warmth, care and intent to assist in alleviating the issue at hand. To suffer with and to resolve.

Ego-based people cannot be truly compassionate as they are so wrapped up in their own needs they have little, if any, time for anyone else's needs.

Compassion then becomes an attribute of people who are more egoless in their attitude towards life.

Credit Taking

An ego-based person will always attempt to ensure that they take the credit for any achievement, whereas an egoless person will be content to know within that they have achieved their objective and allow the ego-based person to be on the dais of life accepting the credit.

If you don't mind who takes the credit, then life is so much easier and frictionless. Fighting over the credit consumes an inordinate amount of energy and of one's life if you are ego-based.

The person I referred to under the heading Acceptability above, who was shot and killed in his office, was someone who always wanted to take the credit. Even more than that, if you had an idea he would shoot it down in flames to his detriment simply because it wasn't his idea. I witnessed his various business partners and staff realising that the only way they could get him to accept any idea was to convince him that it was his original idea that they had worked on and then he would entertain it!

Any obsession with having to take the credit shows a deep insecurity which was probably formed in childhood. The chances of getting that leopard to change its spots is minimal, at best, and more likely to rate with a snowball's chance of making it in hell!

Focus on sidestepping taking the credit and work for the inner satisfaction of looking at yourself in your bathroom mirror each day and saying, "well-done Champ!"

Let the other person take the credit. It is as meaningless as them buying medals at an antique store and pinning them on their jacket to show how brave they are!

Criticism

To date, no one has erected a statue to a critic!

There are two types of criticism; constructive criticism, whereby the critic is genuinely attempting to assist the person to improve them by offering this constructive criticism as positive advice, and, destructive criticism, whereby someone is negatively commenting on someone or something with the intent of diminishing it or them in someone else's eyes.

I will focus on the latter, destructive criticism. There are gentle and subtle ways to offer any form of judgement or criticism, and there are blunt and hurtful ways to do so.

The real question is, does anyone have the right to judge or criticise anyone else? I would venture to suggest (a subtle approach!) that if you are an employer or supervisor of someone who is being paid to perform a stated task for which they have been employed, and they have failed to perform that task, then you will be entitled to comment or even reprimand that person for such behaviour. How you do it will depend on your management style and your managerial ability to manage, motivate or criticise your employee or underling in the organisational structure, if you are their Supervisor. This style and approach are also dependent on whether you are an ego-based person or a more egoless person.

Any other form of interpersonal criticism may be destructive criticism and may reflect more about the person doing the criticising than the person being criticised. Very few people enjoy being criticised and especially repetitive criticism. Generally speaking, your ability to manage and motivate someone by not resorting to criticism and for their performance to be enhanced by your more humane, gentler approach is the mark of a good employer, manager, supervisor, co-worker, parent, sibling or friend.

Ego-based people will abuse their power and will criticise those over whom they have temporary or even permanent power. They will be responsible for the build-up of enmity in that person and, if it goes on for any period, also for the build-up of ill health of the person being criticised, as they internalise their frustrations of not being able to retaliate for fear of losing something of value to them. Increase in blood pressure, stress-related diseases, neck-ache, backache, headaches and countless other issues will surface as this criticised individual boils within with repressed feeling about the person criticising them.

In my world of equality and the balancing of energies through the Law of Cause and Effect, whatever you do to someone else, either positively or negatively, will be done unto you.

Do you know any happy ego-based critical people as described above? I don't. They seem to infect themselves with the same poison of criticism they levy onto others who they have some power over. That negativity seems to surround them with a cloud, and people tend to fear them rather than admire, respect, like or even love them.

Conversely, more egoless people who have temporary or permanent power over people find a gentler, more humane way to approach their people who have under-performed. They begin by gently enquiring of the person if anything is wrong with them either at home or at work. They further enquire of them if there is any impediment that may be hampering their performance and if they can think of a way to improve their performance as it is below what was agreed to by them. If the person cannot identify any issue then an egoless supervisor or superior should suggest different ways to help the person perform better, and in some cases, get into the trenches with them to lend a hand. These egoless supervisors and superiors manage, motivate and uplift their people resulting in their improvement in performance, which acts like a tide raising all boats. The person being assisted feels better about themselves through their improved performance and the recognition that comes with it by their supervisor or superior and fellow workers. They are now smiling and whistling on their way to and from work, and their health is wonderful as is their disposition.

What most people don't realise is that by criticising someone you infect their whole family who, more often than not, get the brunt of the criticised person's inner anger when they get home. The ripple effect of such criticism could end up in abuse within families and the dissolution of families. Over 80% of homicides in the USA are perpetrated by a spouse or relationship partner or someone known to the deceased. Happy people don't kill others, but unhappy people do.

As this book is focusing on making each of us more egoless and less ego-based, I am going to ask you to become more conscious or aware next time you are tempted to criticise anyone, including yourself, and find a gentler, more humane way to help them improve their performance in life. Lives may depend on it!

Defending your viewpoint

Ego-based people will defend their viewpoint sometimes to their death. They will be rigidly stiff-necked and refuse to acknowledge another view on the subject. They are the “my way or the highway” people referred to in Part 1.

As spelt out in this book there are many truths which are subject to the *mores* of the time. The democratic consensus vote at the time, or the authoritarian rule of the time, determines what is the truth and what is acceptable at that time. The examples used in this book are burning Witches at the stake, crucifixion, hanging horse thieves and so on.

A more egoless and humble person will have awareness that there are numerous viewpoints on the subject under discussion and that all should be heard and each person can then decide to possibly change their viewpoint to incorporate the viewpoints of others in the discussion.

An egoless person will simply state their viewpoint and not look to defend it at all. It's their view and they have the same right to disclose it to the next person. If you disagree then that is your prerogative and if you wish to state your disagreement and the egoless person wishes to then have another viewpoint to consider and amend their initial viewpoint with then that is their prerogative to do. No coercion, no force or any other form of strength to be applied, simply the right to be heard and the right to amend your viewpoint, if desired.

No one is right and no one is wrong, simply the desire for self-improvement is at stake here. Although this may be seen as theoretical, if such a stance was taken then conflict of any sort could simply be avoided and what a world that would be to live in!

Empathy

An empathetic person places themselves in the shoes of the affected party and tends to feel what they feel from within their frame of reference. Empathy tends to be more common with the female gender who have been the nurturers and caregivers since pre-historic times whereas the male gender is more hardwired from a reptilian brain function to be more ego-based and focused on self-preservation.

Understandably, our prehistoric forebears had two different roles with the males as the hunters and the females as the gatherers. Hunters require stealth, silence, patience and cunning to bring home the food whereas gatherers had the luxury of talking amongst themselves while gathering the nuts, berries, and other foodstuffs provided by nature or grown by humans.

Females have focused more on the caregiving roles of nurses, teachers and more recently as medical practitioners among other professions where their more developed empathetic roles tend to dominate those employment sectors.

For a male to show empathy is considered “soft” in certain male-dominated professions, and it takes a strong male to be empathetic and sensitive to the needs of another, including their wife or female relationship partner. I use the term “strong” to describe this empathetic male because it takes a strong mental attitude to override the reptilian brain of “fight or flight” adrenal response of the hunter mindset and to be empathic enough to stand emotionally in someone's shoes and see things from their frame of reference.

Coming from pre-historic males' DNA, the survival instinct of looking after yourself against all other predators, including man, and then being always alert to defend and protect your family, and maybe even your extended family “sharing your fire”, uses up most of the available emotional energy of most males. So when you find a male that is strong enough to have tended to those survival and protective needs and still can be empathetic towards another person's needs, then this is what I term a strong male.

Empathetic males are worth their weight in gold, and they usually teach their children these admirable traits as well. At a primal level, most females require a provider and protector as well as someone with good enough genes to provide children who can be strong enough, in all respects, and to provide for their parents in their later years. Only intelligent females will recognise the additional value of a strong male with empathy and prize that trait as a life's partner.

An empathetic male or female will tend to be more egoless in their approach to life and the people around them. Being empathetic is a basic foundation stone in achieving the Oneness which we are and which we

experience in Spirit much more easily than on the earth plane where our ego separates us from God/Oneness/Source hence EGO = Edging God Out.

Equanimity

This is the desired state in all the major world religions; one of being in balance, immaterial of the surrounding circumstances of your life. Obviously, this is an egoless state, and one becomes the Watcher of events without allowing yourself to become elated or deflated by whatever is happening now. The acceptance of “what is” with equanimity enables you to experience everything, so-called good and bad experiences, with the knowledge that one man’s garbage is another man’s meal.

Knowing that God is All That Is, the so-called good and bad too, makes a person with equanimity acknowledge God in everything as there is nothing God is not.

An ego-based person, cannot have equanimity and only a humble, egoless person can aspire to these spiritual heights of acknowledging and knowing God through these total experiences on the earth plane.

In such a state of equanimity, people will have what has been termed ‘cosmic consciousness’, and they would know and experience God. With this experience, belief is no longer needed because proof of evidence is real. That would spell the end of religions as what they teach and preach as potentially possible is now achievable by those with such equanimity.

Focus

Such a simple word to look at: It’s only five letters but for those who would know egoless success – it’s five vital letters.

The ability to have a simple, workable plan of action and to focus on it exclusively is the recipe for egoless success. Why egoless success I sense you asking? Well, the ability to remain focused on the simple plan of action and to execute it day in and day out requires a staying power and fortitude lacking by many people. To sit and watch others around you chasing their dreams of the latest fad, trying to get rich quickly and not to do anything about it requires strength of character and sound values. It’s so tempting to jump on the bandwagon and find the next gold mine but it’s the stickability to your simple, workable plan that will see you succeed in the long term.

The USA Gold Rush of the 1800’s drew many a swashbuckling person to find “their” gold. Levi Strauss arrived in San Francisco to open a dry goods business in 1853 and together with one of his customers, Jacob Davis, in 1873, they patented the rivet style denim work pants and sold them to the miners panning for gold.

Instead of joining the thousands of miners panning for gold they chose to remain focused on producing the now globally famous Levi jeans and have enjoyed global supremacy for many of their 165 years of being in business.

It’s not easy to remain focused and to be the best you can be when the temptations of “sudden riches” appears to be passing you by. The promoters of Ponzi schemes like Bernie Madoff and others rely upon that greed to suck you in, and for most people, the grass is always greener on the other side.

Find a formula that works and focus on making it the best it can be. Keep it simple, and you will find that there is always room at the top because most other people are chasing rainbows of other people’s makings.

Forgiveness

An ego-based person will usually be unforgiving and be determined to wring their pound of flesh from any encounter. A more egoless person will tend to be more forgiving in certain circumstances as they may value the relationship more than being proved right.

Forgiveness does have an element of ego-base to it as one may forgive but not forget and, in some cases, giving forgiveness may give them the upper hand for future encounters.

If one has an understanding of the entire picture, then you can reach an egoless place of not requiring forgiveness at all. This may seem a little far-fetched for many people, but I will give it to you anyway.

Most people will judge an event on its superficial level. Let's get practical here with an example:

With such a high rate of divorce and relationship break ups worldwide the common thread is usually lack of respect for the other party. The respect that was there for each other at the wedding ceremony or when the couple moved into a home together somehow seems to evaporate as familiarity breeds contempt. Once the relationship gets past the honeymoon phase, the frantic sex is replaced with a more mediocre frequent sexual relationship while "life happens". The politeness, kindness, respect, admiration, like and even love tends to take a back seat, and usually, money issues predominate, especially if there are children to be brought up and paid for. Family issues on both sides also tend to complicate many relationships especially if a family member has to be helped financially or with a place to live. Throw in a difficult boss or cash flow problems of an entrepreneur, and you have a power keg awaiting an explosion!

One of the parties in a deteriorating relationship may consider having a sexual relationship outside of the marriage and if caught out a separation or divorce may follow.

At this point, ego's are in full flight mode, and the injured party becomes emotionally overwrought and logic flies out the window. With a severely bruised and battered ego, the injured party says and does things that are very unloving, to say the least!

At a deeper level of understanding, imagine if the married couple or the relationship couple had made a Soul Contract in Spirit before arriving on the earth plane. In Spirit, the now injured party said that their Soul had to experience rejection and reducing their ego's need to be so inflamed at feeling rejection. The only solution is to experience it once again and come to terms with the deeper understanding of acceptance of life and that nothing matters except love. Additionally, for them not to be so judgmental and to be much more understanding of the "Bigger Picture" as seen from Spirit.

The other party in Spirit agreed to become the pariah on the earth plane as the party who stepped outside the marriage or relationship and had an extra marital affair. This pariah party had to grow their Soul's experience by learning how to deal with being a pariah in society and learning the humility associated with this choice. And so the Soul contract was formed and had to be enacted upon.

The pariah party would know the condemnation of society and be treated as someone not to be trusted especially by their married friends or those in a committed relationship. This pariah party could be deprived of financial resources and financial security and lead a much more impoverished life simply by fulfilling their Soul Contract made in Spirit.

Suddenly, you can look at the pariah party through eyes no longer blinkered by the perception of win:lose or even lose:lose but see that both parties have fulfilled their Soul contracts in a win:win position.

The facts of the extramarital affair remain the same, but now your perception has been widened from a judgmental view to one of a complete understanding of Soul Contracts. You are now able to admire the so-called pariah party for choosing this role as a Soul Mate to assist their Soul Mate learn how to cope with massive rejection and in the process learn to overcome their ego-based position and become more egoless. Additionally, the pariah party had to learn society's rejection and the impoverishment it brings as well as humility that came with these actions and the increase in their egoless attitude towards life.

The road towards becoming more egoless is a painful journey as you first have to be stripped bare emotionally and your ego-based wounds' scar tissue ripped open to expose these raw wounds and show them for the illusions that they are. You will feel very emotionally bruised and battered around as the ego protection is stripped away and you lie exposed for all to see you in your emotional nakedness. The very things that your emotional ego scar tissues have been protecting all this time and that which has shaped your character and personality to date are now stripped away to reveal the real you.

At this point, some people choose to end it all, and they commit suicide as they do not see a way out of this emotional nakedness and exposure. There are over 1 million suicides annually worldwide with a suicide occurring every 40 seconds, 24 hours a day. This is expected to reach 1 suicide every 20 seconds by 2020 worldwide according to predictions from the World Health Organisation (WHO).

For those strong enough to brave it out and to learn that their ego-based self caused this problem, to begin with, they have a chance to rebuild their life now from a base of a more egoless and humble attitude and to appreciate that the only thing that matters is Love, Unconditional Love.

They move from EGO - Edging God Out to LOVE - Let Our Vibrations Evolve. They understand that all we are eternally is energy vibrations and that God/Source/Oneness is the highest vibration achievable.

Becoming egoless is such a rewarding experience because you no longer have to use most of your energy supporting your ego-based illusions and you are free to follow a fun-filled and love filled life.

It all started with understanding replacing forgiveness, and this develops egoless thoughts, words and behaviour.

Fortitude

Now, this is a word that seems to have gotten lost in the passage of the 19th and 20th Centuries and not made it into the vocabulary of the Millennial generation of the 21st Century, who are so pre-occupied with instant gratification and instant everything.

Fortitude means courage in pain or adversity and is derived from the French word Fortis meaning brave.

The ability to "suck it up" and "stick it out" against all odds; the ability to "grin and bear it" under difficult circumstances. Fortitude is a character builder and enables one to bear the losses and to savour the gains of life.

Ego-based people can have fortitude and can stick it out under extreme pressure but you will hear about it till "Kingdom Come"! The stories and the embellishment of how they braved it against all odds will go on and on and on.

More egoless people who value humility will follow the dictum of Rudyard Kipling in his poem "IF".

*If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:*

*If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:*

*If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'*

*If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings - nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;*

*If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!*

Our more egoless and humble hero/heroine reading this book will subscribe to these values of fortitude.

As I wrote at the end of my book *"How to be a Great Negotiator"* available as a free e-book on PersonalEmpowerment.co, this poem has accompanied me every day of my life since my father put it up in on my bedroom door when I was a very young.

Gratitude

All the major religions focus on gratitude as a foundation stone of their belief and behavioural practice. The concept that all comes from God/Oneness/Source/Higher Power and therefore to be grateful for everything you receive, or that is available to you to benefit from, is a common theme in these major religions.

Cicero stated that *"Gratitude is not only the greatest of the virtues but the parent of all others."*

It is interesting to note that psychologists only started using gratitude in a therapeutic fashion from 2000.

"The systematic study of gratitude within psychology only began around the year 2000, possibly because psychology traditionally focused more on understanding distress than on understanding positive emotions. The study of gratitude within psychology has focused on the understanding of the short-term experience of the emotion of gratitude (state gratitude), individual differences in how frequently people feel gratitude (trait gratitude), and the relationship between these two aspects."

(Source: Wikipedia)

Showing gratitude improves your well-being as the expression of being grateful opens up a more egoless approach to life in thanking your Deity or another person or other being for making your life better in some way.

People who express gratitude seem to have more self-control in their lives and are less subject to the whims of others. They experience a life of more meaning and purpose, and their self-acceptance levels improve as the gratefulness spills over to themselves as well.

Grateful people appear to cope better with the vicissitudes of life as they approach both ups and downs with a more positive outlook and expectation level.

Expressing gratitude at least daily, if not throughout the day as well, in addition to writing a gratitude journal has the impact of focusing your life on the things you are grateful for. This written record is a good place to go to reread what you have written, especially if the tide appears to have turned against you at this moment.

Having an attitude of gratitude is a great coping mechanism too. Grateful people are a pleasure to be around as their positive energy lightens the load of life. Once again, more egoless people are grateful people.

Don't take my word for it, try it out for yourself. Send an email/whatsapp to someone who has done something for you in the past and thank them for those words or actions. Have no ulterior motive, just a simple email/whatsapp that says "thinking of how you helped me with..... (the words or actions), and I am grateful to you."

See how that makes you feel? By the way, expect a response from a surprised person! See if you can do that once a week or even once a day and watch how much better you feel about your life and, of course, expect much more interaction from the people you have thanked in gratitude.

Graciousness

A gracious person emanates kindness, courtesy, a generosity of well-being and even a generosity of spirit. Gracious people appear to float through life above the friction level of those who are ungracious and even fractious in their combative stance in life.

In the Judea Christian belief systems, the Grace of a Higher Power is an overall theme to convey a complete covering of oneself and society with an inner peace and tranquillity.

Gracious people are usually humble and open-handed and only wishing well being on another. Ego-based people cannot be gracious in a genuine sense of the word although certain ego based people are gracious as a seductive ruse to entrap someone through this subterfuge or to act in a patriarchal/matriarchal manner implying that they are assisting someone with their experience.

Graciousness is an egoless way of living one's life.

Hardships

Your ego is programmed to protect your emotional wounds and usually does so with an emotional scar. Your ego protects these emotional wounds and scars at all costs. To avoid feeling the pain of this emotional wound, your ego will project some dangerous emotional weapons like anger, jealousy, conflict and the like, usually way out of proportion to the attack it fears.

With your ego protecting you from feeling the emotional hardship you fear, you cannot experience the healing that will come and the closure it will bring if this emotional fear was faced. You called this emotional fear into being regarding your Soul Contract for the very reason of experiencing it and healing it via such closure, and now your ego is protecting you from fulfilling your Soul Contract through your free will choice.

There are scary places that frighten us but as US President Roosevelt said, *"the only thing to fear is fear itself"*. My acronym for FEAR is False Evidence Appearing Real. Welcome the discomfort you feel in confronting your demons with the knowledge that once you face them, they usually reduce in size, like a bully confronted in the schoolyard. Facing these demons and surviving intact you now will know that your ego's protection is no longer required as you gained far more from this action than your fear convinced you that you would lose. As a winner in life, you will now look for the next demon to demolish and your fear induced ego will diminish with every emotional victory. Each victory will entrench you more and more into knowing God's Unconditional Love within you which your ego has hidden from you through fear-based obstacles. As you demolish each fear based obstacle the Light and Love within you becomes brighter and brighter.

In time, you will become free of fear induced ego, and you will become more egoless and humble, experiencing loving kindness, compassion, empathy, equanimity, joy and bliss in your dealings with yourself and all others.

Humility

Humility is a strength and not a weakness as it is often portrayed. Knowing that you are a part of God / Source / Oneness and as such you are Unconditional Love and Light, as this Higher Power is Unconditional Love and Light, then what need do you have to show any other form of strength? With this inner knowledge, how can you be weak in any way and your humility is based on this knowledge and this wisdom.

Being humble simply means that you treat yourself and other people as your Higher Power treats you, with loving kindness and with grace. If treating others with such loving kindness and grace is considered to be a weakness then it can only be the viewpoint of an ego-based person.

An egoless person is naturally humble because of the respect and kindness with which he treats himself and his fellow man. Obviously the same applies to the female gender as well!

Leadership is often characterised by an ego-based, fierce and powerful person showing strength of purpose and resolve in achieving their objective. Is there any reason why such a leader cannot also show an egoless, humble and fierce resolve to achieve their objective. By coming from a respectful place of loving kindness and showing "fierce grace" in attaining their objective, this egoless, humble leader would not only have the

support of their followers but will attract even more followers from all opposing camps when they see they are treated with such humility and “fierce grace”.

The reason for such “fierce grace” is simple. It’s the recognition of Oneness between all the players in the drama and showing them the respect, loving kindness and grace that you would show your Higher Power. All players in the drama will recognise your soul approach and the Unconditional Love behind such an approach. Their soul and your soul will recognise the Oneness of which you are all a part and resolutions will be found to end the drama.

Such humility is based on the strength of your Higher Power working through you and spreading Unconditional Love and Light.

In recent memory, Nelson Mandela had such “fierce grace” with an egoless and humble approach to all, and that was after being imprisoned for 27 years for his political beliefs!

There is a story I have told in one of my other books about a young Westerner who went to Japan to study karate at the highest level. One day during his training he was on a suburban train when a big drunk man boarded the train and started being physically abusive to the passengers. The young Westerner saw this as an opportunity to use his newly found top level karate skills and fell this big man to the floor. As he readied himself, he heard a shrill whistle from a small old man to his left. The drunk reacted to the whistle and looked at this small man shouting, “what do you want?” The old man said, “come and sit with me.” The drunk obliged and the old man asked, “have you been drinking saki,” to which the drunk said “yes because my wife has died and I feel so alone, so I get drunk every day”. The old man said “I know how you feel. I was married for over 50 years, and every evening my wife and I would sit in our little garden and drink saki together. Sadly, she also passed away, and now I drink alone but in her memory.” This large drunk man suddenly burst into tears sobbing uncontrollably and was consoled by the little old man whose small arms were wrapped around the large torso as far as they could go. The young Westerner received his best karate lesson of his life that day, witnessing egoless fierce grace and loving kindness at work.

If you can’t say anything nice don’t say anything at all.

Today is December 20, 2017, and my dear mother passed away 11 years ago on this day, at the age of 84. My mother was an egoless and humble soul and a great teacher simply through her behaviour to those near and dear to her to whom she devoted her life.

From as early as I can remember my mother use to quote “*If you can’t say anything nice don’t say anything at all*”. We engraved those words on her tombstone as her teaching to us.

It’s such a simple life philosophy which she certainly practised daily. Think how the world would be if it adopted this philosophy for one day? Think how your life would be if you adopted this philosophy for one day?

What is stopping you? It can only be your ego. If you choose not to adopt this philosophy, you are, in fact saying, I prefer to have my ego determine my past, my present and my future. Do you want your ego to run your life? It’s your choice; it’s your life.

Impartial

All the major religions of the world value and insist upon impartiality as a core precept:
To not judge someone until all the facts have been unearthed and expressed by all the parties concerned.
To treat poor men on a par with rich men and not let wealth curry favour nor poverty blind one to impartiality and righteousness.

Impartiality is an egoless pursuit and a mark of a person seeking the truth immaterial of how it will affect the outcome and themselves too.

Humbleness requires such impartiality as its foundation stone. Ego-based people cannot be impartial as they have their viewpoint which they believe to be the only point of view and they disregard other viewpoints as unnecessary and a waste of time to even consider.

Impartiality requires any emotional response to be absent and only a logical approach to be used in any assessment and any judgment. So you can see how rare impartiality is to obtain, but we must try and be as impartial as possible and attempt to leave our emotional responses behind in making logical assessments and judgments when called upon to do so.

Input or output

Most people, and by that I mean most ego-based people, are concerned about results or output. What did you score? How much did you make? Who came first? And so on.

Like making sausages in a sausage machine, you are not going to get filet mignon in the sausages as an output if your input was mincemeat!

Egoless people focus on the input and doing it diligently, and they let the output be a causal result of their input. You can't join the gym and expect either muscles or weight loss to come in the mail!

The truth be told, most of the jobs we do are about 90% drudgery, and 10% excitement and most work is routine, certainly at the lower end of the employment spectrum. With robotics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) making its presence felt already in the workplace the "grunt" work is likely to be automated, and the previous workers retrained to supervise the Robots.

Robots will focus on the input only, as they do not have an ego which would be concerned about the output and its performance regarding ranking, size or marks. However, many corporates will soon be boasting that our robots are better than yours!

Focus on the input and the output will look after itself. Make your definition of a job well done based on your input and make that how you define your success - forget about the results. Know that you have done the best you can and that you have been successful in doing that. If someone takes your input and somehow screws it up and a failure ensues, know that you were successful doing your part. Redefine your success methodology to be based on your input, not your output.

Integrity

There is much debate about changing morality and what is considered to be integrity and what isn't. Sure, morality, crime and punishment change over time and even within special interest groups like religions and subsets of religions, but we all have a basic moral code where integrity is defined. This moral code is the Ten Commandments as identified in Exodus in the Bible.

One can spilt hairs about integrity and the passage of time and the changing moral landscape, but the Ten Commandments have stood the test of time for millennia as the basic framework of integrity. Honour God as the only God and don't take God's name in vain. Honour the Sabbath and keep it holy. Honour your parents. Do not kill, commit adultery or steal. Do not covet, or desire with intent to take anyone else's property. That's it! There are no clauses, sub paragraphs, fine print or any other wiggle room to manoeuvre. This is the basis of integrity.

When one tries to justify adultery, murder or theft of any description, there are no grey areas. There are some 450 000 murders by civilians each year worldwide, not including warfare, which in my book also means legalised murder by governments or para military bodies. With regard to theft there are some 2 million home invasions and theft annually in the USA alone. As to adultery, well with some 2.14 million marriages annually in the USA and 813 000 divorces annually (38%), the USA is only ranked 12th in the world in annual average divorce statistics. How many of those are directly attributable to adultery cannot be determined but www.infidelityfacts.com states that 57% of men admit to committing adultery and 54% of women admit to it too in the USA alone.

So fortunately for many people, there is no Judgement Day as talked about in some religions. The court rolls would be backed up for millennia!!

However, what there is, in my understanding, is the Law of Karma or the Law of Cause and Effect. This Law is where you reap what you had previously sowed. If this is the case then deliberately breaking the Ten Commandments will have consequences.

Back to integrity. Whether you believe in the Ten Commandments or not and providing you are not mentally imbalanced, there is a core of acceptance of what is considered operating from integrity or not. Life is a lot easier keeping to acceptable norms of integrity, and an egoless person should find it relatively acceptable to stick to the right side of the law as it applies to having integrity and then applying it on a daily basis.

Investment

In every choice you make ask yourself, is this an investment in me or in my ego? If you focus on the investments that are for you and you are prepared to toil and work hard, then you will qualify for this quotation from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: *"The heights great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight but they, while others slept, were toiling in the night."*

If you see your life as one of rolling a stone up a gentle gradient, then you will not stop rolling the stone daily, or else you will be crushed if you let go and gravity forces the stone downhill and even perhaps over you too.

There are those who do not have the self-motivation to push their stone up the hill, and that is their choice. History is littered with such people who hardly made an impact to reflect their journey on the earth plane and perhaps that was what their journey was supposed to be regarding their Soul Contracts? The ones who did apply themselves and invested in their skills and abilities usually have left an indelible mark on the earth plane, at least for a while after their passing on.

If your investment can be done without fanfare and you simply get on with your work without needing the ego-based headlines, then you will be more meritorious in your accomplishments than the ones who shouted their names from the rooftops.

The only place that success comes before work is in the dictionary! See your investment in yourself as the need to put down roots or a solid foundation from which to soar as Wordsworth implied in his poem.

Invest in yourself, share the credit with your team and be as egoless and humble as you can be. Learn to be patient, remembering that a silk tie began in a silkworm's cocoon. Learn to be innovative and find a way to do things that others won't do or can't do and keep your head down and develop self-pride as outlined below. You are going to have to be brave at some point in your life as your innovations go outside the comfort zones you are used to. Be brave but be cautiously brave and not ego-based foolhardy, throwing caution to the wind. As and when you succeed, be humble in winning and graciously acknowledging those who helped you on your journey to such success. You will also know defeats along the way. Be humble and gracious in defeat and learn what you still need to perfect and invest your time accordingly to ensure success later on.

Jealousy

Now, this is one emotion I have never understood. For me, if someone I loved considered that they would be happier with someone else, in my unconditional love for them, I would step aside and invite them to be happier elsewhere. I know this is not a common or even an easily understood viewpoint, but it has been my viewpoint for as long as I can remember. During my dating years and even in my 20-year-old marriage I made these statements much to the chagrin of my partner. One relationship partner was very offended at this outlook as she considered jealousy to be a positive thing for a loving relationship. I believe in unconditional love in a relationship as well as in my life, and in an egoless way, I simply want the person I love to be as happy as possible. If someone else can make them happier than I can over a meaningful period, then being jealous is, in my book, not an emotion I would want to embrace.

Ego-based people are usually very insecure and jealous people, and they want their happiness first and foremost, and their relationship partner's happiness comes a distant second in line.

Justice

Ego-based people may have a warped sense of justice that allows and enables them to do unjust things that are considered immoral by society but not illegal by the prevailing rule of law. This gap between what a just society will call immoral behaviour, which is not punishable in law, and the line where injustice is punishable by law, is often abused by ego-based people hiding behind their legal advisors. The abuse and manipulation of the legal system creates legal grey areas, and these loopholes are driven through by immoral ego-based people who laugh at the justice system they are abusing.

Here's a list of countries with the highest number of lawyers per capita:

1. U.S. 1 lawyer for every 300 people
2. Brazil: 1 lawyer for every 326 people
3. New Zealand: 1 lawyer for every 391 people
4. Spain: 1 lawyer for every 395 people
5. UK: 1 lawyer for every 401 people

The justice system regarding religious understanding is fairly easy to interpret concerning the laws laid down in the Bible, Torah/Talmud and the Koran as well as other books guiding religions worldwide. These laws form some of the basis for the legal system of a country, but they are usually interpreted as moral laws rather than legal laws in democratic countries worldwide.

A person who wishes to lead a more egoless life would know that the laws of acceptable morality and the legal system of the country they live in have a "spirit of justice" implied, that is based on the Golden Rule of "Do unto others as you would like to be done unto you". By so living their life they can be called "moral and just" people and know that what they sow they will reap. Unfortunately for ego-based people the same Law of Cause and Effect is applicable and ignoring a "moral and just" life by their thoughts, words and actions will see their "chickens come home to roost".

Kindness

Kindness is a charitable behaviour marked by ethical characteristics, a pleasant disposition, and concern for others. It is known as a virtue and is recognised as a value in many cultures and religions.

Kindness towards oneself is the first kindness you should show. Treat yourself gently and with kindness and encourage yourself with kind thoughts about who you are, what you stand for and what you are achieving by being kind to yourself, firstly, and, secondly, to others.

Aristotle defines kindness as *"helpfulness towards someone in need, not in return for anything, nor for the advantage of the helper himself, but for that of the person helped"*. Nietzsche states kindness is the *"most curative herbs and agents in human intercourse"*.

Being kind is directly connecting from your Soul to the other's Soul. Your Soul which is based on Unconditional Love and Light is connecting to the other person, animal's or whatever's Soul which is also Unconditional Love and Light. Unconditional Love and Light now becomes synergistic, and its power spills over and enfolds you both and maybe even those in your surrounding space too.

You can never be too kind. However, be aware that some ego-based people may take your kindness for weakness. Shower kindness on yourself and others and watch how they respond. For example, smile, be appreciative of what they are wearing, doing, saying or whatever and if they respond with kindness and unconditional love then keep that going for as long as practically possible without getting too "soppy". Usually, the spark of kindness from you is sufficient to kindle the flames of kindness from another.

Mark Twain is quoted as saying that *"kindness is something that the deaf can hear and the blind can see."*

Kindness is prized in most of the major religions.

The Christian apostle Paul lists kindness as one of the nine traits considered to be the "fruit of the Spirit" in Galatians 5:22. Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 13:4 he states, *"Love is patient, love is kind."*

The Tirukkural, an ancient Indian work on ethics and morality, dedicates a separate chapter on kindness; Chapter 8.

In the Pirkei Avot (2:1) of Judaism, we learn that: *"The world stands on three things: on the Torah, on the service of God, and upon acts of loving kindness."*

In Buddhism, Mettā (Pali) or maitrī (Sanskrit) means benevolence, loving-kindness, friendliness, amity, good will, and active interest in others. ... The cultivation of benevolence (mettā bhāvanā) is a popular form of meditation in Buddhism.

In Meher Baba's teachings, God is synonymous with kindness: *"God is so kind that it is impossible to imagine His unbounded kindness!"*

The 14th and current Dalai Lama says *"kindness is my religion"*.

According to research on human mating choice, studies suggest that both men and women value kindness and intelligence in their prospective mates, alongside physical appearance, attractiveness, social status, and age.

Three things in human life are important: the first is to be kind; the second is to be kind, and the third is to be kind! The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.

Laugh at yourself

The real litmus test about dropping your ego is the ability to laugh at yourself if you make a mistake or screw something up.

Ego-based people will attempt to be blameless and twist and turn the facts to avoid being responsible for the issue at hand, let alone acknowledge it was their fault. As for laughing at them, do so only if you don't value your life, your relationship with them or the counter measures they will use because you laughed at them!

How serious can it be? It's not a case of life or death at stake here, so laugh at your error and others will laugh with you and it will be over soon as no resistance is offered by you. Remember what you resist, persists. Learning to laugh at yourself allows others to treat you as a more intimate friend as you are non-threatening to them in any way by laughing at yourself.

There is an old saying - *laugh and the world laughs with you, cry and you cry alone*.

Letting go

Most ego-based people who are self-made cannot stop interfering with their staff and do not trust them to do their jobs. At the beginning, the ego-based person had to believe in himself/herself against all the other Doubting Thomas's, believe in their service or product, do all the grunt work and usually work mentally and physically 18 plus hours a day.

Once they got past the early years and the business started flourishing they employed more people, and that's when the ego-based person started interfering and dehumanising their staff. They became a boss, managing from above instead of a leader, leading from the front.

There is magic in the synergy of team work, and conversely, there is disaster looming if the boss is a control freak and wants to do everything themselves like in the old days.

An egoless leader will let go and as, when and if an employee messes up, they will say, "that's a learning experience and it's only a mistake if you make it again". A more mature egoless leader will say "I now have an investment in you as we will all learn from that experience of what we mustn't do next time".

Encourage, motivate, inspire and manage your staff and allow them to share in the credit of the success of the business too. Let them buy into it as if it's their business and, if possible, give them pride of part ownership too, either as a profit share or equity partners.

Be an egoless leader and not an ego-based boss, using your position and power to intimidate your staff through fear of loss of their job. As an egoless leader, ensure that your staff jump out of bed in the morning dying to come to work by treating them with respect, dignity, pride and, if possible, profit too. This is the role of an egoless and humble leader who has the respect, admiration and loyalty of their staff.

Listening

Are you listening to someone or something, or are you merely hearing them or it? Hearing is a physiological phenomenon whereas listening is a more proactive way to understand, interpret, avoid misunderstandings

and to build trust. Listening is done via one's ears and is expressed by your concentration and body language while listening.

Listening can be therapeutic too. By allowing someone to speak uninterrupted, you are respecting their viewpoint and respecting who they are via your active listening and following what they are saying.

In my book *How to Live in the Now*, I devoted a section to listening, including "whole body listening". By this, I mean listening not only with your ears but your entire body language is engaged with the conversation being dominated by the person currently talking. For example, hearing with your ears and watching someone else with your eyes while waving to a third person with your hands is hearing but not listening!

Listening intently is showing respect to the other person. Also, active listening is an important way to bring about changes in people. It is an effective way to get people to be heard and for them to hear their viewpoints spoken out aloud. This outpouring of their opinion sometimes is all they wanted to achieve by being heard. Once they have been offered this opportunity to be heard, then they might be more willing to listen to another person's viewpoint. Being heard and recognised enables them to feel important in your eyes and, in their eyes too. This can bring about a change in how they feel about themselves and others now that they have been validated by their talking. They might become more emotionally mature about their viewpoint once it's been expressed and listened too and they should be more receptive to listening to another's viewpoint now that they have been listened to. They could become more open to finding a compromise position in a democratic manner and perhaps a combination of viewpoints may distil into one acceptable viewpoint of all the parties involved.

American Diplomat and Politician, Dean Rusk, said *"The best way to persuade people is with your ears - by listening to them."*

For many a listener, they are simply waiting for a break in the monologue so they can interrupt and give their viewpoint. A genuine listener simply listens in a whole body way, and they become very popular people as there are substantially many more ego-based talkers than egoless based listeners out there.

From a spiritual viewpoint we are always being listened to by our Soul, our Higher Self, our "Unseen Entities" guiding our lives if we let them, and by our perception of our Higher Power. But what messages are we sending for them to listen to?

Mentoring

Genuine mentoring by someone experienced in the field is an egoless way to live. I say genuine mentoring as opposed to ego-based mentoring where the mentor regales the mentee with their "war stories". Being a genuine mentor is much more about listening and being a sounding board while giving gentle direction in the unfolding of their mentee.

The role of a genuine mentor is very emotionally rewarding as you stand back and watch your mentee evolve into the best person they can be with your gentle persuasion and direction in leading them to find their North Star within themselves.

I have a business, CareerManagementServices.co.za, which incorporates Step Up - School-based Mentoring. Here we supply schools with a software programme for free which enables the older school kids to mentor the younger school kids in academic, cultural and sporting areas. It is an accountable and reportable software system based on Management By Objectives (MBO). The peer-based mentorship programme trains mentors and mentees, and as they mature through high school, the mentees become mentors in due course as well. The mentors develop leadership skills based on many of the egoless skills taught in this book. For example, listening skills form an important part of mentorships.

Mentoring is vital to upskill a society, and if done willingly can materially improve mentees' abilities, earnings capacity as well as the leadership skills of the mentor. Mentorship is vital in societies where single parent, and mainly single mothers, predominate. The role of a mentor figure can be a life-changing event in a young person's life as invariably they tend to slide downwards, and the local gang becomes their go-to place for friendship and, unfortunately, guidance too.

The apprentice system of training people has worked successfully since the 9th Century, and the might of the Swiss and German industrial economies are based on apprentices learning from older workers. Numerous other countries have an active apprenticeship programme, and in changing with the times, the terms

internships and articles of clerkship have been formed for businesses and the professions. Knowledge, abilities and skills passed down from generation to generation served these countries well who used the apprenticeship model.

Genuine mentors learn about developing a more egoless personality as they guide their mentees into a better future.

Missed?

The first job I had when I left school was as an audit clerk for a firm of auditors. There was a notice put up on the clerks' notice board which has stayed with me for the past 48 years. It said: *"If you think you are indispensable and will be missed if you go, please put your hand into a bucket of water and then pull it out. The hole in the water that remains is the amount you will be missed."*

Quite a sobering message for a 17- year - old to read when starting his career.

Unfortunately, no one is irreplaceable, and that is a simple fact of life. No matter how big a frog you are in your little pond there will be someone to take your place tomorrow or the day after that. I recall the CEO of one of South Africa's largest Insurance companies, a larger than life character who dominated the room he was in, being killed in a car accident on a Friday evening. By Monday morning there was a new CEO at his desk making his mark on the Insurance Company.

Even the loss of a breadwinner is handled by their remaining family, as life adjusts to his/her loss, and life carries on regardless, maybe less comfortably and less securely but carry on it does.

For people with big ego's, they can't contemplate that their loss will be handled in their absence. They dominate their world, but there may be others waiting for them to go so that they can put themselves in the driving seat and probably be less ego-based and fairer to those around them.

An egoless and humble person is more likely to be missed as a calming presence in one's life than an ego-based domineering person will be.

Oneness

I believe in Oneness, but many people don't or won't admit it. I don't judge anyone and hope you don't judge me.

To avoid getting all "preachy" and coming from "on high" and discussing Oneness as it affects ego-based people and more egoless people with humility I want to draw an example from your life or my life at street level.

Have you ever disliked, hated or despised anyone so much that you wished they would die? Has someone upset you and affected your life so badly that you hated the sound of their name, let alone that actual person?

I would like you to imagine that person knocking at your door, and that you invite them in gritting your teeth. They state their business and say that they would like to repair the damage to you both. You decide to hear them out before you throw them out and allow them to talk. They explain the bone of contention between the two of you from their side, and they say things that begin to resonate with you. The more they talk, the more you realise that you have much more in common than you have that separates you. Their explanations have both a ring of truth to them as well as major misunderstandings which have caused you both to have different views of what the truth of the matter is.

They finish talking, and somehow you have not uttered a word and interrupted them. It's now your turn to speak and to explain your viewpoint. They listen without interrupting, and you put your case to them tempered now with more understanding of the misunderstandings between the two of you in the past. After you have finished, it becomes apparent that this problem can be resolved if you both want it to be. It's now a question of who is going to be the first to put their protective ego away and embrace the other and find a way to open channels of communication and potential other further visits together. You have now experienced Oneness in action.

So if you can feel such Oneness with someone you previously wished was dead, how much easier is it going to be to embrace your friends in Oneness?

Our separation from God, and as God is All That Is, from everyone and everything, is the cause of our unhappiness and all that flows from such unhappiness, including mind/body ill health.

When you begin to feel Oneness you start to see that it's not only people who you are connected to but other life forms as well. You and your pet probably have an unspoken language and you know what each other wants and means by simple eye contact or with the nod of a head, or a hand gesture or the expression on their face. The birds that come up to your table at an outdoor restaurant expecting crumbs, appear to have overcome their skittishness and seem tame but they live in the wild. The flowers and trees that you water and grow can be spoken to in a loving way and they will respond in their unique way. If you can hug a tree you will feel connected to it.

Your kindness, compassion and empathy develop as you develop your Oneness "mental muscles". Realising that if we were threatened by an exterior force such as in Aliens invading the earth type of movies, all the people on earth would have a common enemy to face and we would find more commonality in this instance than issues which divide and separate us.

Perspective

Been to a funeral lately? Whenever I go to a cemetery, it always helps me put my life into perspective. I look at all the gravestones and the countless names and inscriptions that tell what people remember about them in a line of text.

Here lies John Smith 1940-2010 - A good man loved by all.

What happened to John Smith occurred in the dash between the dates. His life is a one line inscription that will tell people passing by or stopping at the grave that he was a good man loved by all. The sands of time and cemetery neglect will, in time, obliterate his existence on earth and as the people who knew him pass away so will the memory of his being on the earth plane.

Having such a perspective will put the petty ego fights we all get involved in into perspective. I often say to myself, and counsel others, by thinking and saying "will this matter in a few years' time?"

What is really worth fighting over? If it's ego-based then once you mature you will realise how unimportant it really was and you may even be embarrassed by how hard you fought for your viewpoint against all odds.

Let it go, and with it, your ego will be diminished, and you will become more humble and more egoless and attract other similar nice people into your orbit.

Pleasure

We live in a sensual world where our five senses of touch, smell, taste, hearing and sight make our world very pleasurable to inhabit.

Regarding our ego, we can use or abuse these senses. I want to explore the purpose of pleasure with two simple questions regarding ego-based and egoless based lives.

I am simply going to ask you two questions:

1. How much pleasure are you getting out of your life?
2. How much pleasure is God getting out of your life?

If God is your Co-Creator and is experiencing life and the sensual delights through you, then how much pleasure are you giving God?

Life is for the living. I don't believe that God would want you to deprive yourself of any of the sensual pleasures available to you within your moral code of behaviour but bear in mind that God is also experiencing your choices too.

Too much pressure!!?

Resentment

Here is the canary in the mine! In days of old, miners used to take a canary in a cage into an old mine and if the bird died of noxious gases, then they knew the mine was unsafe to explore any further.

What your ego resents is such a canary! Resentment means that you have not accepted "what is" and you would like it to be different. Your resentment is based on your objecting to "what is". If you wish to become more egoless and humble then this needs to be analysed and addressed in a state of vulnerability and surrender. The causes of resentment must be identified and preferably brought out into the open by you for investigation and resolution.

Such resentment is ego-based and is likely to have its roots in bias, prejudice, insecurity and the like. An egoless person will be prepared to unearth and identify the causes of this resentment and come to terms with it, accepting it as it is.

There is a sense of relief that comes from the full investigation and unearthing of the issues that the resentment was based on. You unlock yourself from your fears which were the cause of the resentment.

For example, neighbourhoods change over time, and people who have always lived there tend to resent the newcomers, especially if the neighbourhood is in a phase of deterioration and the new neighbours are immigrants or from a different racial group, or even a different religious group. The reality is that the neighbourhood is deteriorating and the Old Timers chose to ignore that and to rather focus on the newcomers who can now afford to live there as the prices and rentals have dropped. Not accepting "what is" and choosing to stay put in a deteriorating neighbourhood and complain about the new undesirable neighbours is a bit like drinking poison and hoping the other person will die from the poison.

If the Old Timers took the trouble and made the effort of welcoming in their new neighbours and got to know them as people first and foremost, they would discover that they have a lot more in common with them, then they have that divides them.

Tackling resentments as the canaries in the mine can help make a person more egoless as they seek to resolve their resentments through a positive, healthy, egoless approach rather than a defensive ego-based conflict approach.

Resilience

It is said that failure is not getting knocked down by life but is staying down and not getting back on your feet.

Resilience to handle life's vicissitudes is a humble way of living. Knowing that your Higher Power works in mysterious ways and perhaps the failure you have had was not a failure but a course correction as you had missed your mark. Funnily enough, the term "missed your mark" is one of the literal explanations of the term "sin" in Greek as is a failure and being in error.

Having confidence that your Higher Power will never give you something you are unable to overcome, which thing is for the growth of your soul, changes your perspective of this so-called failure to one of an opportunity for the growth of your soul.

Having the resilience to overcome these struggles is simply having the patience and fortitude to identify the opportunity/ies that need addressing.

An ego-based person will dwell on the failure and probably not take ownership of their errors in judgement or execution. They will probably find excuses and look for scapegoats to shift the blame. Their ego-based approach will prevent them from learning from this so-called failure, and they will also not do a course correction due to their stiff-necked approach to the issue. They will not only fail but will not learn anything positive from the experience.

A more egoless person will learn from this experience via a more humble approach and a course correction after finding out what doesn't work so they can find out what will work with a different approach next time.

Thomas Edison, the founder of the light bulb, is quoted as saying, *"I have found over 1000 ways that this won't work before I found out what did work"*. Thomas Edison is the 10th most prolific inventor in the world with 1084 patents to his name. Talk about resilience!

Self Control

Self-control is the ability to control one's emotions by inhibiting spontaneous reactions and bringing in conscious, mindful, responses at the appropriate time. Self-control stems from self-awareness and, in spiritual terms, this is also called mindfulness. Being conscious or aware of what you are doing is a good foundation stone for controlling one's ego and becoming more egoless.

Usually, people who are ego-based have a lower level of self-awareness resulting in a lower level of self-control at an emotional level. They may very well have a high level of self-control in areas such as achievement-based orientated goals as these goals feed their ego's need for achievement and recognition. Emotional self-control is a learnt response and like a muscle, increases with regular use. Emotional self-control is usually learnt in childhood via a strong parent-child emotional bond. Also, sufficient supervision by the parents over the child; for the parent to make the child aware of acceptable boundaries of behaviour; for the parent to be prepared to enforce discipline and define punishable behaviour, when such behaviour occurs outside the stated areas of acceptable boundaries.

If this self-control is not learnt in childhood, then it is considerably harder to learn and implement in the more rebellious teenage years as the teenager strives for independence from their parents. Learning self-control in one's twenties, thirties and after that will require considerable effort, rigorous training and determination, especially if the person has had a few decades of lack of emotional self-control.

At this point in their lives, the person's lack of emotional self-control may have brought them into the orbit of people who are paid to enforce discipline and correct such lack of emotional self-control in society; people working in law enforcement, the justice system, as well as places like rehab facilities, psychologists, psychiatrists and the like. Employees who show such lack of emotional self-control are usually unwanted by their employers as they are disruptive to the general well-being of their fellow employees and the operation suffers through their unpredictability and unreliability to perform their tasks efficiently when required to do so.

As you can expect, these people with low self-control issues are often defensive and occasionally lash out at those people who they consider to be attacking them in their criticism of their lack of self-control. This lack of self-control brings their ego into full flight as they attempt to defend their obvious weakness of not being able to control themselves in term of society's norms.

People with acceptable levels of emotional self-control can lead a more egoless life as they can control their emotions and there is nothing to defend from their ego's standpoint.

Self-pride

Self-pride is how you feel about the way you live your life. It is an inner glow of happiness, joy and even bliss of how you feel about yourself, within. This self-pride is not expressed outwardly to anyone and becomes your internal secret. Every time you do something that makes you, even more, self-proud your inner smile becomes broader.

Maybe you can envisage it as an inner balloon that gets bigger and bigger, but only you are aware of it. There is no end to the size of this inner balloon. Every time that you do something meritorious for yourself or someone else and you do not claim any external credit for these words or actions, and only you are aware of what you have said or done, then your self-pride swells within.

This inner self-pride is an egoless approach providing it is an internal message to yourself and not a boast to others. Feeling good within improves your self-esteem and is justified by these actions for yourself or others. You appear externally to be humble and egoless but internally you enhance your inner feelings about yourself, and this helps build your self-esteem on a solid foundation.

Pride, as experienced via boastfulness and chest thumping, is not well received by others. No one likes a braggart and especially one who claims all the credit for the work when it is a team effort. There are many pitfalls awaiting someone who is proud and cocky to boot. The inability to be flexible and adapt is severely restricted if you believe that you have the only answer. Relationship building cannot exist under these prideful conditions.

Another example is believing that you have all the answers and you stop learning from others. A further example is arrogance, and this is not a pretty trait indeed!

True leaders cannot be prideful as they will be blind-sighted by something or someone they refuse to see, let alone whose existence they didn't acknowledge.

The antidote to this pridefulness is to question yourself continually and, if need be, assume the role of your competitor/antagonist and probe for any weaknesses you may have. Ask others you trust how you can improve. Never believe that you are always right and infallible.

Self-pride gives the inner self-esteem and the outward appearance of humility and of being egoless. This process is a delicate balancing act but is achievable.

Silence

There is a saying in motorsport - when the starting flag drops, the bulldust stops. (I have paraphrased it for polite company!)

Most valuable creations are done in silence and even better in silence and stillness. In my book *How To Live in the Now*, I go into some detail showing the difference between silence and stillness. In paraphrasing, silence is not verbalising anything, but your thoughts are loud in your head, whereas stillness means finding inner peace and calmness, without intruding thoughts, and this stillness can even be found amongst the noise and haste of others.

Usually, when you are talking, you are not learning but are giving your views, opinions and comments to someone else. A lot of talking is ego-based words and listening is a skill that is very much appreciated by others who do most of the talking!

Talking implies that while you are talking, generally speaking, you are not doing something beneficial or worthwhile for yourself or others. Obviously, giving instructions or teaching or lecturing is usually beneficial to another, but, for the rest, talking is avoidance of action, including active listening!

Primal man had to hunt in silence and men are usually more accustomed to working in silence than primal women who tended to share their experiences by talking while gathering nuts, berries and the like and attending to the nurturing and caring for their children.

In a recent book, I wrote about the popularity of fishing as a past time in the USA and the need for silence in a person's life. There are an estimated 60 million anglers in the USA, and about 45 million people go fishing in any given year. Also, there are over 10 million hunters in the USA and even more birdwatchers; both hobbies requiring silence.

Henry David Thoreau, a writer who was a recluse for parts of his life, said, "*Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after.*"

The need for silence is becoming more and more imperative especially with the smartphone creeping into all phases of our waking day. The search for silence reduces ones need to be ego-based and talking to make oneself seem more important than one usually is.

More silence is an egoless pursuit.

Simplicity

In our consumer-based materialistic society we have given up our freedom of thought, and the advertising, marketing and consumer influencers within the various media tell us what to buy, where to buy it and how much to pay for it.

The Internet buying frenzy now has us buying everything we think we need and it is delivered to our front door within 24 hours. Talk about ego-based instant gratification!

If you are honest with yourself what do you need from :

- (1) a survival viewpoint,
- (2) from a have to have viewpoint,
- (3) from a nice to have viewpoint and
- (4) from a “one day, I would like to own that” viewpoint?

We have allowed access to easy credit to determine our ego’s need to feel more important by buying so much “stuff”. We want to be accepted by others in our social circle and more so by others in the social circle above us that we aspire to be a member of.

You will feel so much lighter and freer by giving away or selling so much of the “stuff” that you no longer need to have, to live a more simple life.

After 27 years of living in a 750m2 (Over 8000 sq.ft.) home with two Jaguar cars in the garage, I recently moved to a wonderful fully furnished beachfront apartment, in Tamarin, Black River, Mauritius. I bought one suitcase with me of basic island type clothes, some books and a computer. I bought a Toyota Aqua here, what I call my “Noddy Car ” and I have never felt happier and freer in my life. During early 2018 I intend establishing a free Personal Empowerment Wellness Centre in Mauritius to share my spiritual knowledge and experiences with others and for them to share their spiritual knowledge and experiences with me, as well as others attending the Centre at that time.

Simplicity is an egoless way to live and if you are happy within yourself, then worrying about what the neighbours will think doesn’t matter as it’s an ego-based thought process anyway.

Why don’t you start by questioning what you currently have and what you may soon be buying and ask yourself, “do I need this or is it to placate my ego?”

Student forever

When we become knowledgeable, and others seek us out for their needs we may fall into the trap of thinking we know everything there is to know, and we bask in the glory of being this Expert.

There is a saying that goes “if you are the smartest person in the room then you are in the wrong room!” You must get out of your comfort zone and find others to learn from. Being a big frog in a small pond is self-gratifying from an ego viewpoint but very stunting from a self-growth perspective.

It pays to be always looking for more to learn and preferably more people to learn from. Be a “forever student” in your approach to life and continually enhance the abilities and skills you possess.

Go to lectures and workshops and if asked to speak at such functions stretch yourself and talk about new things, not the ones you are famous for. Read voraciously and listen to audio books and watch TED talks, documentaries and other internet-based educational items.

There is a saying that goes “they don’t advertise Ferrari cars on television because people who can afford a Ferrari aren’t wasting time watching TV!”

It was Socrates who said, “*One thing that I know is that I know nothing.*” Remaining humble and seeking people to learn from is a good step to take. Another good step to follow this with is asking for constructive criticism or feedback from people you respect, in order to do an honest assessment of you and your work. Feedback is the breakfast of champions!

Who can you learn from today? Being such a student means that you are becoming more egoless in searching for your next teacher to learn from.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “*Every man is my master at some point, and in that, I learn from him.*”

Learn, then attempt to do what you do better from what you have learnt, adapt your strategy, planning and execution to accommodate what you have learnt and appropriated and perform even better the next time you are called into action. If you have the focus, determination and strong will then you will be very successful in what you do.

However, when you do achieve your objective remember that being egoless and humble will make the achievement, even more sweet as you will not be deposing or replacing someone or something but inviting them to partake in your success with you.

Success

Success is a poisoned chalice. Believing that your early success is worthy of headlines, awards, medal parades and ego based items like fancy cars, new workspaces in high rent districts and the like is the kiss of death for an ego-based person or business.

Although I cannot prove this with researched accuracy, in the 45 years that I have been active in real estate, I have noticed that when a corporation erects its own edifice to itself in the form of a corporate head office, the maturity part of the corporate lifecycle is in full swing. Within the next 10-20 years, the company is likely to change meaningfully, usually for the worse, as its management rests on its laurels from yesteryears and does not see the corporate bloatedness and lack of sharpness emerging. Older management tends to enjoy the spoils of corporate life, and younger, hungrier, more aggressive management look elsewhere for their career opportunities as they don't want to wait to fill dead man's shoes in the comfortable executive suite.

Such success is ego bloatedness and to dismantle such ego decision making is a difficult task to perform as the top executives are the ones enjoying it most. It usually takes a cash flow crises or the loss of a major subsidiary or sizeable fraud within the business to jolt everyone's attention back to running a lean business. The reputational damage to the corporate entity will take years if ever, to recover back to its former glory.

My experience is that the CEO is the bell-weather person to watch. Their integrity, leanness, acumen and leadership skills will determine the future of the business.

If a person or business can remain egoless, humble, aware of changing trends, serve its customers/clients' changing needs and be customer/client focused, then it will continually succeed for the benefit of all its stakeholders. An egoless business that is cash flow focused, present and future orientated and invests part of its surplus profits in training its staff to a level of service excellence, then they have nothing to fear of the uncertain future.

If you seek success for the glory of your Higher Power, then your success is assured but if you seek it for your ego's needs, then such success will be fleeting and will carry within its wings the sword of its own destruction via the Universal Law of Cause and Effect.

Surrender

Surrender doesn't mean to raise your arms and to give in to your opponents as much as it means to hit the floor with your knees in total submission to your Higher Power. This form of surrender is the acknowledgement that your Higher Power is a Co-Creator in your life and that you are humbling yourself before such a Higher Power and asking for It to work through you in achieving your tasks you have set for yourself. This handing over is a submissive act and must be done genuinely to have any effect on your life.

Obviously ego-based people are too proud to surrender in this way until they have nowhere else to turn to resolve their life's issues. Egoless people find it easy to surrender and humble themselves to their Higher Power.

Allowing and enabling your Higher Power to work through you makes you a vessel, channel or conduit, if you prefer, for your Higher Power to operate through you to yourself and others.

Another form of surrender comes through transmutation of accepting "what is" occurring now and experiencing it until you have come through it and out the other side where you have survived and now find a form of peace. By not offering resistance to "what is" and accepting it and working through it you evolve into a

being with a higher vibrational frequency than before you started the process. Consider a caterpillar going through the metamorphosis to become a butterfly, and you will get a more visual representation of what I am saying.

If your ego fights the transmutation, it will not occur. You are required to become more egoless and humble through such a surrender process.

Values

In my recently published book on PersonalEmpowerment.co - *Unfolding Your Child - a spiritual approach to parenting* - I identified some 30 character values that I considered each child be made aware continually and preferably via the actions of their parents.

I reproduce these values here:

Having virtues of character like:

1. Appreciation of beauty
2. Bravery
3. Compassion
4. Consideration of others
5. Courage
6. Creativity
7. Curiosity
8. Determination
9. Empathy
10. Enthusiasm
11. Fairness
12. Focus
13. Forgiveness
14. Generosity
15. Genuineness or authenticity
16. Gratitude
17. Hope
18. Honesty
19. Humour
20. Integrity (being honest coupled with strong moral principles)
21. Kindness
22. Leadership
23. Love of self and others
24. Love of learning
25. Modesty
26. Persistence
27. Perspective
28. Respectful
29. Self-control
30. Social Intelligence

“To thine own self-be true” is Shakespeare’s advice to your child.

If you, as an aspirant more egoless and humble person were to focus on developing and or improving on these character values then you can drive yourself as hard as you like to be the best version of yourself as long as this drive is counterbalanced by these values then there is no mountain you cannot climb.

Any success that you have will be held in check and balanced by these character values, and your success will not be fleeting but long lasting as you will build a team around you with these character values to take what you have built and develop it further in your absence or departure from the earth plane.

Vocation

Education should have as its thrust the ability to identify and unearth the talents and abilities inherent within the student so that they may choose a vocation that assists in their Soul Contract's orbit.

Job satisfaction as measured by the Conference Board in the USA finds that less than half of workers have job satisfaction and this trend has been reducing of late. Clearly, education has done a poor job of identifying and unearthing students' skills set, abilities and even desires.

Ambition is also at fault because it tells the ambitious person that they must hang in there and do the grunt work and soon, or one day, they will be headed for the top. The problem with such ambition and motivation is that it diminishes the work being done in the Now, in the present moment. You miss all those moments of living in the joy that the Now brings by shoving them aside so that you can climb one rung more up the ladder of success. If you could find enjoyment in the grunt work, then success is guaranteed because, your superiors, if you are an employee, or yourself if you are self-employed, will recognise the passion and vocation you have and that which separates you from your fellow workers or entrepreneurs.

Working with dedication and passion is recognising that God is All That Is so whatever you are doing is for God. If God asked you to take out the trash and dump it in a garbage truck or to do intricate brain surgery to save a life, it all belongs to God, and you are doing God's work.

Kahlil Gibran in *The Prophet* said, *"Work is Love made visible. And if you cannot work with joy but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at the gate of the temple, and take alms from them who work with joy."*

Having such a vocation is an egoless way to live and having ambition and ignoring the present moment of Now for some future reward is an ego-based way of living.

Obtaining job satisfaction is knowing that you are Co-Creating your life with God as your Co-pilot and that anything and everything is possible because God is All That Is. Needing to compete with another for a prize is so meaningless compared to working for and with God, and feeling job satisfaction of a job well done and benefitting mankind. When you work like this, you then know there are no ordinary moments.

For those who consider the job of a garbage man to be beneath them, simply consider what would happen to the health of a city if the garbage wasn't collected and taken to a dump? Now perhaps you may have more respect for the "lowly" garbage man doing God's work of keeping you healthier by removing your garbage.

There is a wonderful story about an airman, Air Commodore Nash who was a jet pilot in the USA airforce. When his jet fighter was destroyed by an enemy missile he managed to eject and parachute to safety. Five years later he and his wife were in a restaurant and a man approached him and asked if he was Air Commodore Nash who had parachuted to safety. Nash was astounded and asked the man how he recognised him and knew the story. The man replied "I was the person who packed your parachute".

Nash gasped in surprise and gratitude and thanked the man for doing his job properly so that the parachute worked. That night Nash couldn't sleep as he thought about the many times he, as an important pilot, never acknowledged this man's existence as he was only a parachute packer.

So the question to ask yourself is who is "packing your parachute" to enable you to make it through the day and home safely at night? Who do you take for granted due to their supposedly lowly position on the totem pole of life?

Vulnerability

To choose to be vulnerable is the first step towards surrender. Being vulnerable means to open yourself up to complete inspection and to invite people to judge and criticise or praise you and this can only be done in an egoless way with true humility.

This vulnerability is based on TRUST- To Release Unto Spirit Totally and then To Rely Upon Spirit Totally. This TRUST comes from a place of being egoless and having humility, and if you can reach this place then you will live with the statement on the home page of PersonalEmpowerment.co which reads:

“God will give me what I need when I need it for the highest growth of my soul. God’s timing is always perfect. Trust God now and be Godlike.”

Conclusion

It is 31 December 2017 and I fittingly now reach the end of this book. I have learnt a lot about myself in writing this book and I will attempt to become more egoless and humble as spelt out in this book. This is a never ending task and like anything worthwhile will require awareness, daily application, persistence and fortitude.

I trust you have benefited from this book as much as I have in writing it for you.

With Love and Light
Neville.

31 December 2017.