



Wisdom in a Nutshell

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Preface

I have identified 156 topics that covered a spectrum of wisdom from our book *5000 Years of Wisdom*. This book has some 960 topics comprising over 13 500 quotations from the wisest people to have walked the earth over the past 5000 years.

Guided by certain of these quotations I then wrote from my heart and created the book you have in front of you now.

It became obvious after a while that the synchronicity of some of these alphabetical topics were flowing into each other and as I wrote I started remarking about this flow, especially towards the second half of this book.

I wrote and edited this book in about 2 months and it was a labour of love. I was enjoying myself so much I was wishing it never ended! Once my work day ended I brought up the book on my computer and revelled in the wisdom I was reading from the quotations in *5000 Years of Wisdom* and hopefully creating some wisdom for you out of my interpretations and additions from my life's experience to date.

I hope you enjoy and benefit from this book as much as I did creating it for you.

In Love and Light

Neville Berkowitz

Johannesburg
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Ability

When ability is a verb and not a noun, it has value. There is nothing more common than talented people who sit on their backsides and don't achieve much. Education without action is, in reality, consumption not production.

Ability comes from being educated for a purpose and having the knowledge, skills, willingness, action plan and implementation to make it work.

Ability is always in demand. Skill and the confidence to implement it will always win the day, and that is why ability empowers the poor as well as the rich.

A leader is one who recognises the ability of others and can synergise with these abilities to achieve a common purpose and goal.

Abundance

Abundance is a feeling, not a bank account. If you knew that everything you needed would be supplied to you at the appropriate time, would you not feel abundant?

So abundance then becomes faith rather than material. Tagore said that "Faith is the bird that feels the light when the dawn is still dark".

When your belief is that your Higher Power will supply whatever you need, when you need it, for the highest growth of your soul, then abundance is your middle name. With this internal security, you cannot know fear.

Acceptance

It's quite simple really. Either you accept 'what is' or you are resistant to 'it', attempting to make 'it' what you want it to be.

If you want a life of peace and tranquility, then accept 'what is' and say 'yes' to life.

If you want a life of challenge and achievement and, potentially, failure too, then choose resistance.

There is no right and wrong way - acceptance or resistance - it's a personal choice with its resultant cause and effect.

If you choose acceptance, then learning to accept the most unacceptable situation will ensure your inner peace and tranquility.

For those choosing a spiritual way of life, acceptance is a pre-condition.

Achievement

For those who choose resistance and are willing to get out of their comfort zone then achievement beckons.

This pre-supposes that you advance your aim to previously uncharted areas and that you have the skill, ability, wherewithal and confidence to hit your target.

You must believe that you are superior to the circumstances surrounding you. This implies that you are an optimist and not a realist and do not indulge in pessimism. You must believe in yourself and in your ability to perform. Each day you must do more than you did the day before. Persistence is the key, like ants building anthills.

Action

The intention behind your actions determines the likely result. If your intention is to increase the well-being of others, including yourself, then it is likely that you will achieve your objectives.

Conversely, if your intention is for selfish reasons only, then, even if you do achieve your objective, which is unlikely, it will be a hollow victory.

Nothing happens without action. The best laid plans will not move you one inch. Action creates momentum and this builds and builds enabling you to cross the finish line of life.

Adversity

Welcome adversity, never shun it.

Childbirth, the essence of creativity, requires a child's head or body to squeeze through a small opening with much pain and discomfort for the mother.

A diamond requires the friction of polishing to show its brilliance and gold has to go through fire to have value. A pearl is created through the friction of annoyance in the oyster shell. Man is tried in adversity and success results.

Adversity is to be welcomed as a step towards progress and achievement.

Age

AGE - Always Growing Evolving

Age, when looked upon as Always Growing Evolving, is something to be revered. In civilisations of old, aged people were revered for their wisdom and experience. In today's world of instant gratification, age is seen as irrelevant and a nuisance factor for young people.

When AGE - Always Growing Evolving - is reinstated as a value system then experience and wisdom will prevail, once more.

Ambition

Ambition can be used in one of two ways. Ambition coming from a place of soul/love for the genuine betterment of one's fellow man is a positive energy and usually results in the upliftment of all, including the love-based ambitious person.

Ambition for personal gain, which regrettably is the most common form of ambition, is a tiger that one dares not dismount for fear that it will eat you! This ambition usually has its roots in fear and insecurity. The need to better oneself through such ambition usually knows no ceiling and whatever one achieves never seems to satisfy the need for more achievement and more possessions. The enjoyment of the success achieved tends to play second fiddle to the need for more and more power achieved through the continuation of unbridled ambition. This type of ambition rarely ends well for anyone.

Anger

When we allow ourselves to experience anger, we can be guaranteed of one result, and that is regret. Once the anger is expressed 'the cat is out the bag'.

Anger stems from an insecurity within us that we are not receiving what we want. We boil over in disappointment and express that feeling as anger towards someone or something. We have simply given our power base away to them, and we are vindicated emotionally, temporarily, but 'the chicken always come home to roost', and we end up paying a much higher price for losing our temper and expressing our anger.

Anger is usually not to do with the current episode that you are exploding about but more likely other underlying issues that you have allowed to fester and now erupt. The real trick is not to express your anger but to explain your anger, firstly to yourself and then, if necessary, to the others involved

Suppressed anger is even more detrimental to our bodies as the boiling takes place within and like a pressure cooker, usually gives off steam. Regrettably, whatever it is will be detrimental to our health and well-being.

The wisdom concerning anger is to never become angry and to become more forgiving and understanding of other people and other things. Accept 'what is' with an understanding that you will use this opportunity to become the best person you can be in every circumstance with the spiritual watchword of 'what would Love do now?'

Anxiety

Can you imagine taking a knife and stabbing yourself repeatedly? Being anxious has the same effect mentally as stabbing yourself.

Anxiety is based on worrying about something in the future that may or may not happen. If there is a solution to the concern, then there is no need to be anxious and if there is no obvious solution, then being anxious about it serves no purpose now. Anxiety robs you in the present of your strength as you worry about a possible future event which may or may not occur.

Anxiety is based on feeling separate from the support and knowledge that you can handle whatever comes your way. If you knew that whatever comes up in your life, you have the ability and support to handle, then there would be no need to be anxious.

So the anxiety, in fact, is your feeling hopelessly inadequate to handle what may come your way.

The facts show a different picture of your life. You have handled 100% of the things in your life that were unwelcome and even unexpected. Somehow you found the strength and ability to handle them. This is simply one more '3 a.m. Bogeyman of Fear' that you can handle.

If you are a religious or spiritual person, then you can be comforted with the knowledge that God will not give you something you cannot handle. And, in fact, this fear is most probably the next growth spurt in the growth of your Soul, camouflaged as a big problem.

Welcome it as a challenge for your growth and know that whatever it is, you will beat it into submission and stand over its dead carcass!

Appreciation

We all have potential to become better than we are now. The limits we place on ourselves are usually based on our levels of self-satisfaction and self-esteem.

These limits can usually be lifted meaningfully if we feel the inner motivation to 'go the extra mile'. One way to feed that inner motivation is self-appreciation of what you have accomplished, considering the constraints that may have been placed in your way. Another way is a bit more precarious. It is an appreciation from someone whose opinion you respect. The precariousness is based on them or someone else denying or withdrawing that appreciation and, even more so, criticism from these people potentially damaging your self-belief and your self-esteem.

For many people, who need recognition to feed their esteem, appreciation may be required as much as they need oxygen!

The appreciation and recognition you seek should always, and in all ways, come from yourself and your increasing standards of excellence that you establish for yourself. Expecting others to water your plant of esteem pre-supposes that they have your best interests at heart, whereas in reality, they are always likely to have their own best interests at heart.

Set your goals and upon achievement look into the mirror and congratulate yourself. If others appreciate you, welcome their comments but keep your own counsel and don't allow their comments to affect what you know the truth to be.

Attitude

There is something we all do in the present moment that affects our future, and that is choosing our attitude. Circumstances that affect us either positively or negatively do so simply by the way we respond via the attitude we choose to look at these circumstances.

It's not what we look at but what we choose to see that determines our attitude and our future.

Ability is a learned skill and with practice can be honed to perfection, but the attitude you bring to the execution of that ability determines the difference between success and failure. Believing you can and believing you can't both prove prophetic outcomes.

We spend a lot of our time waiting for things to develop. Our mindset while waiting can be one of hopefulness of inner certainty of reaching our goal or hopelessness of not reaching it.

Your attitude does determine your altitude.

Awareness

If you can become consciously aware in this present moment of a Presence that is All That Is then your life will be in perfect harmony with the Love and the Light that is God/Oneness/Source or whatever name you are comfortable calling this ultimate Higher Power.

We all look for this Higher Power to be explained and understood by us but, on the earth plane, we do not have the wherewithal to comprehend what Is all around us.

This Higher Power needs to be lived not understood. We, in our awareness, need to be Godlike in our every thought, word and action. We need to continuously follow the spiritual mantra of "what would God/Love do now?" and act on that in awareness in this present moment.

Balance

The middle path is the one to seek. Nature balances itself with its four seasons and man too must expect to experience ups and downs and to find the middle way.

Experience pleasure but know that pain is its counter balance. Experience joy and know that sorrow is the other side of the same coin. We live on earth in a duality and the pendulum of life swings continually. Keep in mind this fact when your storehouse is full and when it is empty. Plan and prepare in good times for the bad times to come and in the bad times always remember the good times will follow.

Your most treasured possession is your health for without it wealth is meaningless. Keep healthy by moderate exercise, moderate eating and moderate drinking. Excess of eating and drinking is unhealthy as is too much exercise putting your body under too much duress. Lack of liquids, especially water as your body is made up of 70% water, and reduced intake of necessary foods coupled with no exercise is harmful too. Find a balance that keeps you healthy.

In the materialistic world we live in, working hard and making lots of money is prized above all else. The downside to this is that divorces and damaged children result due to the inattention of the parents to each other and their children. Find a balance and rate your success on making sufficient money to be financially comfortable, maintain a happy marriage and spend quality time developing a loving relationship with your children while ensuring you all lead a healthy and happy life.

Annually Forbes Magazine ranks the world's wealthiest people. If they ranked the 'wealthiest' people on this success scale of a balanced lifestyle as outlined above, instead of on who has the most financial wealth, a different picture of 'wealthiest' people would emerge.

We must find our authentic self and strive for harmony and balance there. We then will know the power of love rather than the love of power that usually results from excessive material wealth.

Finding a balance between living a religious or spiritual life and a materialistic life is always the first prize in life.

Beauty

Beauty, as found by the eyes, is subjective. Beauty, as found by the heart, is the real truth. Physical beauty is part of the cycle of life, and it will have its spring and its summer followed by its autumn/fall and its winter too. Pity the beautiful woman or the handsome man because people do not look beyond the facade to see the real person beneath the cover.

An insecure person is attracted to the beauty of another as somehow they feel that by securing the beautiful woman or the handsome man they too become more desirable by association. Of course, other people don't see that; they see the insincerity of the couple as beauty and money are more often the attraction than love and happiness.

Real beauty is that felt by the heart. The beauty that flows from honesty, integrity, moral truth, from being of service to another without wanting a reward, from unconditional love, this is the real beauty. The beauty of one's soul connecting to another soul is the beauty of knowing God as both souls reside in God's heart. This bliss is the essence of beauty.

Spiritual beauty is eternal and immortal and physical beauty is regrettably measured by a few years.

Physical beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but spiritual beauty is found together in the heart of God.

Behaviour

The Golden Rule - Do unto others as you would want them to do unto you- is the Standard Bearer of behaviour.

We usually learn our behavioural traits from our parents and teachers. Our parents are there before we arrive but our teachers are selected by us once we are consciously aware that we can choose them.

The choice of a mentor and teacher needs to be done with deliberate intent. Our respect for them will determine how we follow their teachings and guidance and with it, our behaviour will be modelled.

Once we become a parent or a teacher to others, we must be consciously aware that our behaviour will be modelled and duplicated by our children, pupils or mentees.

Our thoughts determine our words and our actions and with it our behaviour. Your thoughts do create your reality and your resultant behaviour. What you are thinking you are becoming. What you are becoming results in your behaviour.

Belief

A belief is something that cannot be proved because then it would be a fact. A belief is then a thought process that hinges on either desire or fear.

Once we have the experience of something, the belief in it is replaced by the factual experience of it. The belief becomes a knowing.

While we have the belief, we must be understanding that there is doubt because if we believe with such fervency that it becomes a dogmatic doctrine, then we are simply showing tunnel vision of ignorance and narrow-mindedness. In this case, we believe with a closed mind and usually a closed fist.

There is a spiritual understanding of hopefulness that states that "believing is seeing" as opposed to the conventional statement that "seeing is believing". The positiveness or negativeness of your thought process in your subconscious and conscious mind somehow can create the reality of that belief process into actual manifestation of that positive or negative thought process. Hence the spiritual understanding that "your thoughts create your reality".

Once again the choice of your belief system comes into play. You can either believe that “seeing is believing” as most non-spiritual people live their lives or that “believing is seeing” as some spiritual people live their lives.

Bravery

There are three parts of bravery. There is physical bravery, mental bravery and moral bravery.

Physical bravery is usually seen on the battlefield where one stands one's ground or attacks the enemy without fear of death.

Mental bravery is the skill to overcome hardships of the mind's consciousness and sub-consciousness where imagined or real issues create mental obstacles to be overcome for peace of mind and or progress to be achieved.

Moral bravery is coming from your authentic self-knowing only to do what is morally correct not merely legally correct nor to do what is expedient at this time.

The saying “fortune favours the brave” is usually seen from a materialistic viewpoint, but arguably it has, even more, truth from mental bravery and moral bravery standpoints.

Business

There is no mystery in creating and running a profitable business. All it takes is to be customer/client focused. Give the customer or client what they want, not necessarily what they need, at a price and at a service level that is the best you can offer. Keep abreast, and if possible, slightly ahead, of your customers/clients wants and needs as they change with the times.

Have sufficient capital to support your business and collect your sales receipts as efficiently as possible. Keep your overheads as low as practically possible and reinvest your surplus funds in customer/client centric ways and you will know uncommon success.

Cause and Effect

“As ye sow so shall ye reap”. You cannot plant seeds of tomatoes and hope for apples to arrive in its place.

The Universe/God/Source/Oneness does not judge you. They simply allow the consequences of your thoughts, words and actions to come to fruition.

There is an unfolding of events that follow a thought, word or action. Thoughts result in actions; actions develop habits, habits create character and character results in your destiny.

For those who believe in reincarnation, the “past lives” create the need for the “current life” to balance the harmony of the soul's growth. The “current life's” cause and effects impact on “future lives”. The eternal and immortal nature of a spiritual life is in your hands right now.

Change

In the physical world, our basis of being is an atom. An atom is a constantly changing vortex of reactions.

In the spiritual world, our basis of being is that we are part of Oneness/Source/God whose core is constant but who experiences growth via the changes we go through feeding those experiences back to the ever growing Oneness/Source/God.

Therefore change is the one constant we know as truth.

My acronym for CHANGE is Clearing Healing And New Gifts Emerging.

If you can be accepting of change, then you can live on the leading edge of the wave that never ends. If we can make change our friend and not see it as the enemy, then we will have open hands to grasp the opportunities that change presents to us in every moment of now. Seeing change as the enemy sees our fists close and only able to fight the inevitable change- it is like spitting into the wind in our faces!

Accept change and welcome it as a friend and the world will unroll itself at your feet.

Character

Thousands of years ago the ancient Greeks reduced character to the sum of four virtues:

1. Fortitude, strength of mind and courage.
2. Temperance, self-discipline and self-control
3. Prudence, practical wisdom and righteousness.
4. Justice, your word is your bond and knowing right from wrong.

Since then we have seen evidence that character is built up step by step in daily pursuits and once ingrained in a person can withstand the strongest attacks without changing one's character one iota.

Character remains, after all, is lost, it is man's most enduring quality because it represents the goodness within the human heart.

At a spiritual level, Character is seen by Oneness/Source/God and other "unseen" Entities while man usually only sees the personality of the person at the moment of interaction. Character is who you are when no-one on earth is looking, but all is seen from "heaven".

Character is not inherited, it is a learnt thought process put into words and actions consistently and sustained in both good and bad times.

Character has its base in self- discipline and self-control coupled with a moral compass which has the sayings "do unto others as you would like done unto you" and "be the best person you can be" as it's North Star.

Charity

If you believe in Oneness, then charity is merely the transferring of your wealth from your one pocket to another pocket in your same clothes. Your ability to give and the recipient's willingness to receive is merely the see-saw of Oneness.

Maimonides, a Rabbi who died in 1204, sums up our duties in respect of charity as follows: Anticipate charity by preventing poverty; assist the reduced fellow man, either by a considerable gift or a sum of money or by teaching him a trade or by putting him in the way of business that he may earn an honest livelihood and not be forced to the dreadful alternative of holding out his hand for charity. This is the highest step and summit of charity's golden ladder.

This religious and spiritual approach to charity accords with the statement by Thomas Browne (1605-1682) who stated that "he that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord".

In today's materialistic world, charity has become a tax right off for many with wealth. It is common knowledge that the top 1% of people (some 70 million people) have some 50% plus of the wealth of the world while nearly 1 billion people live on less than \$2/day according to the World Bank. According to Fortune Magazine, in 2015 some 34 million people with more than US\$1 million each had 45% of the world's wealth. That is 0.7% of the world having nearly as much wealth as the remaining 99.3% of the world.

Did someone say 1789- the French Revolution?!

The Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1911-2008) who started Transcendental Meditation (TM) was organising a conference when someone asked him where the money was to come from to finance the conference and he replied, "From wherever it is now." Such is belief!

There is another school of thought about charity and that it weakens the will of people to become self-sufficient and further increases poverty. If people receiving the charity are capable of working and the giving of charity to them robs them of the need to become independent of such charity, then the logic of that argument holds some water. However, the members of society that are incapable of working for various mental or physical reasons need the protection of receiving charity, and the Have's should provide for the Have Nots through taxation and voluntary gifts.

Each person reading these words have to make up their own mind about their concept of charity, and their religious or spiritual or agnostic or other belief systems will guide them accordingly.

Children

If you want a job or career in the world today, you are required to have a skill, experience and preferably academic training before you can apply for such a job or career.

The most important job in the world is the correct raising and unfolding of children and the only qualification to become a parent is to open your legs or unzip your fly!

In the most developed economy in the world today, the USA, some 40% of children are born to single mothers. There are no illegitimate children simply illegitimate parents!

Children are very fragile emotionally and mentally as well as physically. They need to be nurtured with all the love, support, encouragement, admiration, kindness and patience while ensuring they have boundaries based on correction and discipline as stated in Proverbs 29:15.

Children will not necessary listen to their parents, but they will never fail to emulate what they do. The best thing a parent can do for their child is to love their spouse as the children will see the cause and effect of such love.

The result of great parenting is to give our children the understanding and experience of being loved, being unfolded and not moulded, the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.

Kahlil Gibran says it best- "Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They came through you but not from you. And though they are with you yet they belong not to you. You may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their thoughts."

Choices

The right to choose is exactly that- a right. Many people do not have the ability to choose; it's made for them by a superior, a boss, a spouse, a jailor, a religious authority or tradition or any authoritarian figure.

To be able to make a choice is already a benefit denied to some.

The choice one can make is based on conscious awareness of the possible and likely consequences of that choice. Alternatively, the choice you make can be made without thought of the consequences and be an impulsive choice.

Most people have freedom of will to make such a choice. The consequences are based on cause and effect. Some choices are made with deliberate intent, and some are responses to situations thrust upon one.

Responsibility weighs heavily upon a choice and irresponsibility chooses impulsively without thought.

The power of choice is not something we should take for granted nor is the decision to make a choice a frivolous thing. Think wisely about each choice you make because your destiny is bound up on the path you choose to go down.

For example, the ability to choose one's attitude in any given moment determines the likely outcome of the event.

You have the right to choose- use it wisely.

Compassion

Compassion comes from the heart. It is found within you and is soul based love and understanding. The linkage between your Soul-connecting to Spirit and Spirit connecting to Oneness/Source/God and for the flow of that love and understanding to and from this Higher Power back to you is compassion. You are seeing someone, something or even yourself through the eyes and heart of this Higher Power reflecting in your own eyes and heart.

Compassion is without boundaries or limitation. It is the caring of Life giving to Life through you. For those who experience this compassion consider yourself fortunate to have the Unconditional Love from the Source of Love and Light shining through you to yourself to another or something else.

Compassion is an energy, and it radiates outwards blessing all who are in its radiance.

If you are honoured by experiencing this compassion from its Source, then you will feel the 'energy high' as you share it with yourself or another or something else.

Such compassion is sharing and caring and knowing the Love and Light of your Higher Power.

Confidence

No one definitely knows the outcome of an event. We can hope, or we can fear, and the outcome will likely follow that chosen imaginary path.

Having confidence in one's ability to perform is knowing that if things go according to plan, you will succeed but if things don't go according to plan, you will adjust your sails and find a way to achieve your objective. The inner confidence that you can handle any outcome is what defines winners.

People follow confident leaders. Having the optimism, vision and ability to perform and to course correct, if necessary, determines a confident leader.

The hardest part of waiting for the outcome of an event is the waiting! Having a resolute belief in yourself, in your abilities to perform and adjust, if need be, and a positive attitude that the outcome will be in your favour will make the waiting for a more confident process than simply hoping that the outcome will be favourable for you.

Confidence breeds confidence as success builds on success. It's all about an attitude of well-founded inner confidence and believing in yourself to achieve your goals.

Conscience

The small voice within us is the voice of God. Our conscience is the pinprick of being just, honest and understanding the Golden Rule: "do unto others as you would want to be done unto yourself."

Your conscience is not answering the questions of: "can I get away with it?; who will know?; I'm sure it will be o.k. as long as no one sees us?; is it safe?; will I get caught?; but everyone is doing it?; we are only doing it once; what's the worse that can happen to us?"

Your conscience is not a voting machine. Your conscience is only the small voice within which knows the difference between right and wrong- with no grey areas in-between.

If you allow your conscience to guide you it will be your softest pillow enabling a good night's sleep every night that you have obeyed its small inner voice.

Your conscience is your true friend.

Consciousness

Consciousness is another name for awareness of Oneness/Source/God.

We become conscious, or aware that " Days pass and the years vanish, and we walk sightless among miracles. Lord, fill our eyes with seeing and our minds with knowing. Let there be moments when your Presence, like lightning, illumines the darkness in which we walk. Help us to see, wherever we gaze, that the bush burns, unconsumed. And we, clay touched by God, will reach out for holiness and exclaim in wonder, "How filled with awe is this place, and we did not know it."
(Source: Reform Jewish Prayer Book)

With this understanding, consciousness is the presence of All That Is or Oneness/Source/God or whatever name resonates with you for the creative Higher Power that created our Universe and countless other Universes.

Living in such consciousness will illumine your life with the Light and Love from the Source of Light and Love.

Contentment

If you seek contentment, then you want to live a satisfied, peaceful life. That is not everyone's choice. Many people seek to expand their horizons, seek new challenges, create new adventures and to experience more than their current lot in life. These people want to live continually outside their comfort zone.

This boils down to an individual's choice- there is no right or wrong way.

If you seek contentment then accepting what is in your life now and having no desire to enlarge it in any way is your chosen path for a tranquil, peaceful life. If this makes you happy inside, then it's mission accomplished!

If you want to enlarge and expand your current experience in life then hopefully by doing so and reaching your goals you will be content, for a while, and then your new journey begins again and so on and so on.

Contentment can be compared to the level valley floor where some people are happy to live, whereas others see the challenge of climbing the hill or mountain to seek new pastures as this makes them content.

Milk is content to be milk, but if you want the butter that hides in the milk, then you have to churn the milk to make butter. Some like milk and some want butter- the choice is always yours to find contentment.

Courage

The word courage is derived from French where it means heart or inner feelings.

We associate courage with lion-hearted bravery, and it usually implies physical bravery. In this context, it is often allied to fighting and war where the brave fighter or soldier faces the enemy instilling confidence in himself and those on his side fighting with him. Medals for bravery in war are given and proudly displayed on one's chest or, posthumously, on the departed's memorabilia so that the remaining family members can feel proud to have a medal to remember a fallen father, mother, husband, wife, sibling, son or daughter.

There are other forms of bravery that are usually not as acknowledged but require an equally strong lion-hearted approach to situations.

The bravery of an abused spouse or child to take action to stop the abuse whether it be physical or mental abuse.

The bravery to be morally brave, usually against the wishes of the majority, and to stand up and fight against injustice, hatred, prejudice and bigotry.

The inner courage that requires one to take an internal stand against one's ego domination based on one's desires and allow and enable one's soul to dominate the thoughts, words and actions you choose.

The mental challenge to hold on long after mere mortals would have given up and surrendered is a unique bravery of mind over matter.

Somehow these non-physical acts of bravery seem equal, or more so, worthy of a medal, but society is patriarchal and prefers to single out the physical bravery for the medal parade.

Having courage gives one security to determine your future.

Creativity

Creativity begins with thought and is followed by intention.

Humans and other living creatures have a sexual desire to procreate, and this is stimulated by thought. The creation of another human being or other living creature is a miracle we usually take for granted. We give life! We, through sexual intercourse, create another life. Our bodies have perfected the ultimate in creation, the creation of something living and breathing and growing. For those who believe that this ability to give life was created by a Higher Power that is their belief and wishful understanding. For those who believe in the evolution of the species then that is their belief and wishful understanding too.

Thought and the ability to think is directly responsible for all of the creation. Whether plant life and vegetable life has such an ability to think is beyond my understanding. Every creative process from man is based on thought. Can you begin to understand how important it is to guard one's thoughts and to ensure that only thoughts based on love are allowed into your mind for the manifestation of creation of those thoughts?

Creativity requires a Gatekeeper to ensure the love based thoughts are allowed to become fertile and that the non-love based thoughts are shut down and still born.

This is, of course, simply wishful thinking on my part because many, if not most thoughts, are not love based and they are created, and mayhem usually results for those people thinking non- love thoughts. The jails and prisons and divorce courts, to name a few, are full of people who did not use love based thoughts in the creations they made manifest by their non- love thoughts.

Think first whether the thought you are having has its source in love or fear and watch the creative process give birth to those manifestations of your chosen thoughts.

Criticism

For an ego based person giving or receiving criticism is usually based on fear related motives. Such criticism is normally seen as destructive and not beneficial to either party. The person giving such criticism somehow considers that it is their right and duty to level such criticism but nowhere on earth is there a statue dedicated to a Critic!

Criticism, like all judgement, is based on ignorance of all the facts and Critics would rather stop thinking and prefer to judge based on their level of self-importance.

Non-ego based criticism is very valuable and can be used as a course correction as this criticism is usually well intentioned as advice. However, for the well-intentioned criticism to be fair, the person making such criticism must have exhausted every avenue of thought and reasoning available to them to come to that conclusion.

Such love based criticism should be gentle in its well-meaning and used to nourish one's growth and not uproot it.

Cycles

"To every thing, there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to reap that which is planted;".....
(Ecclesiastes)

We live in a world of cycles and ignoring that fact could be injurious to one physically, mentally, emotionally and financially.

The cycle of creation, birth, growth, peak, slowdown and decay is evident for all to see in Nature and the world. Trying to fight this natural order of cycles becomes self-defeating as you are struggling against the weight of the world. Rather go with the flow and use the timing within the cycle to maximise one's energetic input.

Each stage of the cycle is beneficial to the whole cycle, and the cause and effect of each stage kickstart the next phase and so on. Timing is key to maximise performance and knowing the flow of the cycles whether it be the most opportune time to create a new life or to sow and reap or to make a financial windfall, etc..

Be accepting of the cycles of life and enjoy each stage for what it offers. Wishing to be in growth during decay simply wastes your energy and does not allow you to benefit from being in the present moment of now where your power resides.

Danger

Danger is not to be ignored. It is a warning to your conscience awareness that "here be dragons"! Fortunately, the feeling of danger allows and enables you to course correct before it happens.

If the danger eventuates and you are now threatened physically, emotionally, and in many other ways then you have to face the danger or run away. Facing it requires courage and running away may be the best alternative under the circumstances. Standing up to the incoming tide of vengeance from either Nature in the form of a cyclone or storm or volcanic eruption does not mean you are courageous nor is standing up to a mad man with a gun or a knife intent on doing you harm, considered courageous. Running away seems a much better alternative. After that, you can plan a more careful way to overcome the danger.

However, facing danger head on can be courageous in certain circumstances especially if you are shielding your loved ones from an attack they can't run away from. In these instances have the inner knowing that, with time, you will succeed in overcoming the danger and subduing it then you will be strengthened thereby.

From a creative viewpoint, facing danger can be a spur to finding an improbable solution and snatching victory from the jaws of danger.

Danger is intertwined with risk and calculating the odds is important in determining whether to face danger head on or run from it to fight another day when the conditions and odds are more in your favour.

Death

Death is unknown. Those with faith and belief in reincarnation and a Spirit World expect to experience an Afterlife which is eternal. Those who don't have such beliefs believe you have one life and then you become food for worms or ashes via cremation.

It's your choice to follow your belief system. I have decided on the former because I have experienced and know that life is eternal. In this understanding and knowing I have been given evidence, and so my belief has become my knowing. I do not expect you to follow me blindly but for you to open yourself up to your departed loved ones who have left the earth plane to return to Spirit eternally. They will give you signs and maybe even images in your awakened or dream states. What do you have to lose?

I know that death is simply the horizon, a place where our current vision ends. Beyond that horizon is an eternal space and the date of your death is simply the day of your return to your eternal and immortal life in Spirit. It could be termed your birthday in eternity!

You come from this space of eternity, and you return to it. You are simply going home to the loving embrace of Light and Love of your Higher Power where the larger part of your Soul abides in Spirit. You will be greeted by all your loved ones already at "home" and "you will know the peace that passeth all understanding" again. You may even say that "death is the bright side of life" to quote Tennyson.

Nothing ever dies in Nature; it is transformed. The caterpillar and the butterfly are living proof of that transformation. The dead leaves create the compost for the next season's growth of the tree.

Water is never lost it is transformed through evaporation, transpiration, condensation, precipitation, and runoff and so the cycle turns again and again.

Life and death comprise a continual thread when viewed from both sides.

There is more to be concerned about death while you are alive on the earth plane. The death of your enthusiasm and passion for life, the death of your feeling loved and loving others; these are deaths to be mourned but not so the death of your body as you are transformed into eternal life in the Spirit World. May you have a long eternal life of love and bliss forever more.

Decisions

When you make a decision it should usually be based on two modus operandi:

Firstly, in matters of business, you collect as many facts and expert opinions as you can, collate the information and advice and then after a thorough assessment you make an informed and calculated decision.

Secondly, in matters of the heart, you rely on your Inner Voice, the part of Oneness/Source/God within you or your soul if you prefer the term.

When in doubt flip a coin and while the coin is in the air what you are hoping for will become more apparent. This may be flippant (excuse the pun!) but is a good way to find out what you really want to happen.

Indecision is not advisable as the creative forces that come into play behind this indecision sit on the sidelines as they do not know what to begin manifesting.

The difficulty in making a decision is that all the facts are not in evidence because if they were the decision would be an obvious one and would be an implementation, not a decision.

Whatever decision you choose will put you on a path of cause and effect and these will play out as sure as night follows day, so decide wisely.

Once you have decided then commit yourself fully to that decision and the creative forces will propel that decision into manifestation at the correct timing for the growth of your soul not necessarily for want of your ego's needs.

Democracy

Democracy is a fine notion, but its implementation is harder to achieve mainly because power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Access to the public purse and lack of transparency become the recipe for greed and abuse time and time again.

For democracy to work, we need a totally transparent world with an efficient judicial system that not only punishes the abusers of power but makes them into pariahs of society. Is a child rapist any worse than someone who was entrusted with the public purse stealing from that purse? How many child rapists are pariahs in society and how many corrupt public officials go about their business with impunity?

How can democracy work with such corruption due to lack of transparency and vigilant oversight? This corrupt form of democracy is the wolf and the lamb voting on what is for dinner!

Without total transparency of everyone's bank account and asset holdings, democracy will never work. If such transparency were available, it would immediately become apparent who is benefitting from the public purse or abusing the private economy. Any and all ill-gotten gains should then be seized and placed in a transparent fund to uplift the poor and the needy in society. Then true democracy could function for the good of the voters. Everyone has to play their part in a democracy not only the elected officials.

Today the USA is the country most people fight to get into so they can live the "American Dream". The USA Constitution has suitable checks and balances to ensure that democracy prevails. So how come the top 1% of American citizens own some 50% of the assets in the USA while the remaining 99% have the other 50%. Some 47% of American citizens cannot access \$400 for any emergency they might have. Is this the land of the free and the brave? Is this democracy in action? To me, it sounds like the wolves and the sheep are at it again deciding what is for dinner!

Desire

Like many things in life whether you are coming from your ego or your soul determines the "gods that you worship".

Desire from an ego perspective may give you satisfaction and enjoyment, but it is usually transient of nature. Whatever you have you want more and more. It is like a dog buying its bone in the shifting sands of the desert. This is being thirsty even when your well is full to the brim. This hole inside you can never be satiated because whatever you have is never enough.

Every time you desire something first look to see if its existing owner is happy with it. In many cases what we prayed for in the past we have today, and yet we are still dissatisfied.

That is not to say that having an ego-based desire is bad, but it has its limitations. Desire creates ambition and with it growth of a physical nature. Its when the worship of such growth becomes the panacea for living that the distortion occurs.

It is often said that a man desires a woman, but a woman desires the desire of a man rather than the man himself. For a woman to feel desired is what turns her on but a man usually has one thing on his mind, and that desire is sex! So even at this primal level of ego-based desire, the gender difference is huge.

Having desire from a perspective of one's soul, a desire to be Godlike in our thoughts, words and actions, is the panacea for bliss. Here we feel the Love and Light of Oneness/Source/God, and we share that with others creating synergistic blessings felt in our hearts.

Once you experience this bliss, the desire for mere material things becomes so empty and worthless. Sure you need your creature comforts to be happy at a physical level but to desire more and more of things you don't really need because your well is overbrimming makes the expending of ego-based desire energy quite fruitless.

Difficulties

There are three types of difficulties- imaginary, real and insoluble.

Imaginary difficulties are fear based and are usually much larger in one's mind than they are once they are faced with real difficulties. The problem is that your negative, fear based mind's thoughts have made them loom large and very formidable, so you believe you will never solve them and the going gets tough even though you still have to face the actual difficulty.

Real difficulties have to be faced to be overcome. You can't send them an email or wish them away. They are in your growth path because you have to overcome them to grow and build up your capacity to handle these difficulties.

From a spiritual perspective, you have called these difficulties into your life as you are required to find a way to overcome them to grow your soul's experience. If you avoid these difficulties or shirk the responsibility to face them head on then, they will reappear in some other form or guise, and they may be even larger ones to face at that point.

Insoluble difficulties do occur. No matter what you do, there is no resolution at this time. These difficulties have to be present and eventually you simply outgrow them. You work a way to bypass them and to move on with your life. The difficulties remain, but they no longer impede your life's progress as you have found a way to live with them and to bypass them.

Every difficulty has as its counterbalance a victory of the physical or spiritual realm. Overcoming these difficulties makes them seem so easily scaleable once you have them behind you.

A ship in the harbour is safe, but that is not what ships are built for!
For me, Hannibal (Circa 200BC) said it best- "We will either find a way or make one".
Ayn Rand weighs in with "it's not who is going to let me, it's who is going to stop me!"

Dignity

Dignity comes from the nobility of character. It does not belong to the stiff upper lipped class who look down their noses at people- that's haughtiness, not dignity. Dignity knows that you have

treated yourself and others with utmost respect. You cannot be robbed of your dignity, and only you can surrender it through improper behaviour.

Like most things of value, dignity has to be earned not bestowed upon you by another. It's an inside job without external influence.

Dignity is something to strive for and feel within, and then you can walk with your head held up high, ever mindful of respecting all in your pathway, including yourself and treating all with utmost integrity.

Diligence

In today's world of instant everything, including instant gratification, the need and use of diligence are replaced with expediency. Unfortunately, there is no substitute for diligence and persistence to undertake a task.

The time taken to perfect something through diligence is necessary because if it is beneficial for mankind then "Unseen Forces" come into play and assist you once you have shown your willingness to stick to the task at hand and be persistent.

How often have Inventors stated that after many, many failed attempts, eventually they broke through and the solution came when they least expected it to. Thomas Edison in inventing the light bulb is quoted as saying "I have not failed. I have found 10 000 ways that won't work" Albert Einstein is quoted as saying " It's not that I am so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer".

Diligence does not only require a nose to the grindstone approach but knowing first to sharpen the saw before you attempt to cut down the tree.

Diligence is usually followed by good fortune in the causal relationship that is created by studiously applying oneself first.

Discipline

Discipline is necessary to record achievement and success in one's life. The ability to motivate and manage yourself creates the desire for discipline to ensure that the repetitive tasks are done to master that which you want to attain.

The training in the gym or on the track is where the hard work is done .That is the cause of the inevitable victory to come. The day of the competitive performance is simply the inevitable victory as the effect of the cause of disciplined training. You may not come first, but you will better your previous performance, and in those small, continual performances you achieve victory every time.

Self- respect is the root of self-discipline and learning to say "no" to temptations is vital for your growth in both a physical and spiritual environment. The victory over yourself is more valuable than any Olympic gold medal.

Doubt

It is valuable to doubt when you require time to fully unearth as many facts as possible so that you can make a firm decision and commitment to proceed.

Doubt without the research is uncertainty and potentially harmful to the outcome due to the lack of will behind the commitment to proceed.

If you remain uncertain after you have as many facts as you need to make a decision then rather trust your “gut feel” and step away from the challenge and live to fight another day.

If your doubt comes from your lack of trust in your own ability to perform, then the doubt is about you and not about the task at hand. The right person should mount the challenge, and you should step aside so that life can proceed to surmount the challenge you faced and stepped away from. There is no shame in this “step aside” approach; you are doing what is best for the group, not, everyone needs to be a leader. A leader needs followers too!

Duality

It appears to most people that we live in a world of duality. We have light and darkness represented by day and by night. We have war and peace; sorrow and joy; sadness and happiness; life and death and so on.

From a spiritual perspective we have ego and soul, but in reality, once we cross the threshold of duality we find Oneness. With Oneness, we are all part of the Whole. There is multiplicity rather than duality. The many parts make up the Oneness.

So for those who are stuck in duality they will experience the duality of life as the see-saw of life goes up and down continuously. For those who have crossed the threshold to Oneness, they will recognise that the multiplicity of parts are not to be judged as good or bad, happy or sad, etc., but rather accepted for what they are without labels and judgements. Merely acceptance that multiplicity requires many parts to be the Oneness or All That Is.

Once you suspend labels and judgements, you accept everyone and everything for their strengths and weaknesses making up All That Is.

Duality requires judgement, but multiplicity requires acceptance without judgement.

Education

The USA, the world’s only Superpower, spends more money on Defence than on Education and it spends about \$15 500 per student each year at primary, secondary and tertiary education, one of the world’s highest per capita education expenditures.

Pew Research reflects the state of education in the USA as follows:

One of the biggest cross-national tests is the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which every three years measures reading ability, math and science literacy and other key skills among 15-year-olds in dozens of developed and developing countries. The most recent PISA results, from 2015, placed the U.S. an unimpressive 38th out of 71 countries in math and 24th in science. Among the 35 members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which sponsors the PISA initiative, the U.S. ranked 30th in math and 19th in science.

Other research on the penal system in the USA shows that 70% of jail and prison inmates did not finish high school showing a direct correlation between being poorly educated and the criminals in society.

Diogenes (412 B.C- 323 B.C.) stated that: "The foundation of every state is the education of its youth". Nothing has changed in 2500 years, and the USA is looking down the barrel of an average educated youth population implying that the next 50 years will see the USA revert to the middle of the pack as far as economic performance is concerned.

The only solution is an educated population taught to think how to do things, especially out -of-the-box thinking for problem-solving, and not what to repeat parrot fashion to attain their educational qualifications.

With the top Universities and Colleges in the world in the USA teaching the best and the brightest minds is it any wonder that the top 1% in the USA control some 50% of the wealth and the undereducated masses comprising 99% only own the remaining 50% of the assets.

Education boils down to a causal relationship; it's simply cause and effect. Dumbed down education by paying teachers poorly, the Teachers Union allowing poor teachers to retain their jobs, ill discipline at home and school, a sizeable number of school girl pregnancies become the recipe for mediocre to poorly educated youth. Now bring those poorly educated workers into the mainstream of the USA between 2020- 2070 and you have an economy that slips into a mediocre performance.

When teachers are respected and paid their true worth, then education levels will rise, but if guns and ammunition are more important than education then the inevitable decline in standards of living will result for the masses in the USA.

I have signalled out the USA here because they have the statistics and research to validate the above statements, but the same applies to many similar countries worldwide.

Ego

There is good ego and bad ego. The good ego is that which protects you from hurting yourself physically, and the bad ego tells you that you are important. The bad ego sees in you what is not seen by others. It is this ego to which I now refer:

The ego inflates your sense of importance and relevance to the world. Most of the damage done in the world is caused by the need to feel important and relevant. Conversely, man's growth and the development of the world materialistically is the result of someone's ego believing that they are more important than circumstances prevailing at the time. Skyscrapers are today's monuments to man's ego among other similar vanities.

This ego-based person is usually not comfortable within their own skin and usually feels unloved by both themselves and by others. The desire to be superior to others is a need to conquer that which does not come naturally to them. Their life is one of a closed fist to hold what they can for themselves as opposed to an open hand to uplift others and allow the bird of happiness to land on their open hand.

The ego has to use fear and hope to keep control of your mind in the past, and in the future, because in the present moment of now the ego cannot exist as this is God's Space, the place of your Soul and its messages of love to you.

The temporary happiness and unhappiness you experience can be laid directly at the door of your ego whereas feeling the unconditional love of your Higher Power is the role of your soul in the present moment of now.

Your ego asks what do you do for a living, and your soul asks how do you do what you do for a living!

Be conscious of your thoughts and manage the ego-based thoughts with awareness. Wherever possible let your soul-based thoughts dominate your mind. Be kind and compassionate to yourself and others and address each person you meet in the way you would address your Higher Power. Their soul is a part of that Higher Power, as yours is.

Emotions

The earth plane is a sensual place where we use all our five senses to feel, to touch, to smell, to taste, to hear and to see. These sensual experiences are usually accompanied by emotions resulting from that place. These emotions are usually conditioned by the environment where you are. In certain countries showing one's emotions is considered not the thing to do whereas in other countries people are very emotionally expressive.

In spiritual terms, the Course of Miracles said to be a channeling from Jesus, is based on two emotions: love and fear. Ultimately only love is real because God is Love and God is All That Is.

Many people consider that hate is the opposite of love, but it's really indifference which is the opposite of love because hate still has some emotion attached to it whereas indifference is emotionless.

When the emotion of love is present within you, then all is right in your world.

All emotions need to be expressed, and one should be as the Watcher identifying your own emotions and discovering the roots of such emotions. If the emotions are negative like jealousy, fear, greed and so on then, it's time to analyse why you feel those emotions and deal with the underlying causes.

If you do not feel that you have the requisite skills to be self-honest then perhaps professional help is required to assist you. Until you can trace and heal those underlying issues, you will be held back by the reoccurrence of those negative emotions and the damage they cause you and others with whom you interact.

Unfortunately today there are many adults going around who still have childhood issues and they revert to their childhood via their subconscious mind which does not discern between the past and the present, treating all injuries as if they are occurring now.

Positive ego sentiments, which are usually love based, make for very happy people.

Enemy

The only real enemy you have is within you. The prejudice, bigotry, hatred, ignorance, intellectual deformities, desire, jealousy, pride, greed, lower passions and weaknesses inside ourselves is who our real enemies are.

We simply refuse to acknowledge them within and look to find them without. The bully is invariably bullied himself or herself, and they look to take their anger out on someone more vulnerable than themselves.

If we can come to terms and placate, or preferably destroy, the enemies within ourselves then there will be no enemies without to be fearful of.

Finding inner peace and love within will enable you to have compassion and empathy for those exhibiting unacceptable behaviour and even threatening your life.

Sun Tzu writing his masterpiece- The Art of War- some 2500 years ago said: "To subdue an enemy without fighting is the greatest of skills".

The real secret of subduing an enemy without fighting them is to pray for their well being. This prayer will be heard in the heavens and the enemy's eyes will be opened as the scales are lifted from their eyes.

The role of an enemy is simply a function of time. The enemies of the USA and England and their Allies in the Second World War were Germany, Italy and Japan. Today they are their major trading partners and, in the case of Germany and Japan, funders of their national debts.

With few exceptions every freedom fighter or terrorist, depending who is recounting the story, wants the same thing. To live peacefully and grow up with their children. They are pressurised into strapping bombs to themselves or picking up weapons to defend themselves as they feel that their opinions have not been heard and acted upon in a conciliatory way.

In the USA there is a military industrial complex that President Eisenhower in 1961 warned against assuming too much power.

With the USA currently spending more money on defence than on education, annually, should tell you that the military industrial complex has a vested interest in prolonging war and selecting targets who fight back. The war in Vietnam/ Indo-China, the wars in Central America and the current war against Islamic Fundamentalists all have cause and effect on not only the American people but on their enemies as well. No one wins a war; there are only a major loser and a minor loser in a war.

After the USA lost 50 000 soldiers in Vietnam and spending billions of dollars on a misguided war, today Vietnam is a trading partner with the USA, the same for many countries in Central America and, no doubt, one day the Islamic Fundamentalists will become more moderate and also trade with the USA.

The enemy is within and clever "spin doctors" employed by the Military/Industrial complex inflame passions against real and imagined enemies to keep the armaments industry in full flight. Hollywood Producers are also involved in glorifying the USA war efforts in movies making the gullible public see the need to kill their enemies as a heroic act of bravery and valour.

How many parents of deceased soldiers would prefer to be bouncing their grandchildren on their knees than looking at a picture of their deceased child in military uniform in their living room?

The only real enemy you have is within you.

Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm stems from the Greek and means "a God within".

Nothing meaningful can be created without enthusiasm. By using the God within you, you can harness this energy and passion for creating ideas through your imagination and to implement those ideas into reality.

Enthusiasm enables you to get above the friction level of life and to unleash your creative spirit of "can do". Obstacles disappear in your wake as the energy and passion lift you upward and onward. Say "yes" to life with a smile on your face!

Over 2500 years ago Aeschylus, a Greek playwright, said that when a man's willing and eager, God joins in.

If you will only use your enthusiasm in your day to day activities when you greet your spouse and your children, your neighbour, your fellow travellers, your work colleagues, your customers and clients, your creditors and your debtors and, most importantly, yourself, then your life will become miraculous. Don't take my word for it, unleash your enthusiasm for one day and you will never go back to your previous life. Go on; I dare you!

Example

Words are plentiful and meaningless; it's presenting an example of excellence that really counts. Those who would preach to others from a pulpit need to be preaching by example with every breath they take away from the pulpit too.

In working hard and in an exemplary manner we do not count what we earn as our wealth but what we become as a person is our true measure of wealth.

Leading by example is the greatest influencer and others will follow a leader they believe in by his or her actions. Children may not listen to their parents, but invariably they will imitate their actions - for better or for worse - depending on the example set by their parents.

Expectations

We set our own bar of expectations. Those expectations we set for ourselves, we are in control of and with sufficient enthusiasm, passion commitment, self-discipline and persistence we can achieve, in time.

When we set our expectations for others to follow one of two things happen:

Firstly, with your great leadership skills they may lift their sights and be imbued with enough enthusiasm, passion, commitment, self-discipline and persistence, coupled with motivation and encouragement from you, to achieve your expectations of them but it may take time.

Secondly, they may not achieve your expectation for them, and you will be disappointed. However, without your leadership and managerial skills assisting them what right do you have to set those expectations in the first place? If you set the expectations for them, and it is with their consent, then you must be ready to be responsible for their performance or lack of it.

Remember the words of William Shakespeare, "Expectations are the root of all heartache".

Experience

When we win at life, we consider ourselves the victor and when we lose we chalk it down to experience. But winning is also an experience because the experience of winning, and what you learnt from it to improve, even more, creates the furrow for the water of success in other ventures to flow through.

If you treat losing as an experience beware that the furrow for the water of other losses is also dug for other ventures to flow through if you haven't learnt valuable lessons from the loss.

If you learn from the experiences of both winning and losing and take those improvements to heart and into daily practice, then you will benefit from the experiences to improve your excellence.

If you have the experience and don't learn from it then it isn't a good experience it's merely something you did, and there is no growth from the action.

Unlike school where you get the lesson and then the test, in life, it's the test first, and then you learn the lesson of that experience.

There is a Chinese proverb that states "To know the road ahead, ask those coming back."

Failure

Only your ego says you have failed. Your soul knows that failure is merely feedback that the way you were trying to succeed needs to be reassessed to find another way to success.

Once your ego convinces you that you have failed then, like a person falling into the water, you will only drown if you stay face down in the water. But if you get up out of the water then you can learn from the experience of falling and ensure you don't repeat that action again.

Success is on the far side of numerous failures providing you learn from the feedback of each failure. It's always too early to quit, and those who experience failure are usually a step or two from rounding the bend where success lies in wait.

The strength brought about by learning from repeated failures enables you to dig deep roots for the inevitable success that will flourish in your life providing you have the correct mental attitude to become successful.

Learn to laugh at your failures and call them learning experiences and then put that invaluable experience into practice as you adjust your sails and course correct your life towards success.

If your determination to succeed is strong enough and you apply yourself persistently on the correct path, then success is waiting for you around the bend.

For those who are spiritual by nature simply align your will with the will of Oneness/Source/God and be Godlike in your thoughts, words and actions and success will follow you always and in all ways.

Faith

Faith is imaginary. Knowing is experiential. For those who have faith in their ability to do something that they have never accomplished before, this is an inner knowing that they are capable of this accomplishment. With this faith in themselves and with their self-belief they create a mindset of possibility for achieving this accomplishment.

Conversely, if you do not have faith in oneself to accomplish something then you can be assured this lack of faith in yourself and your lack of self-belief will prove to be correct and you will fail in your endeavour.

Faith, as it relates to a Higher Power, must be imaginary until one experiences the knowing that the faith you have is realised through your life's journey. The faith you have and the prayers you have spoken or thought and in the meditation you have connected to a Higher Power, if it is all in

alignment with this Higher Power, then you may very well feel a knowing or experience an event that validates this faith.

The essence of faith is that “believing is seeing” as opposed to the conventional statement that “seeing is believing”. Those who have such faith somehow have a more endearing and optimistic approach to life, and that can’t be a bad thing to have, can it?

Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) sums up faith as “To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To those without faith, no explanation is possible.”

Fame

Fame sought by so many and yet many of those who have it feel that they have a tin can tied to their legs rattling as they go. Many famous people want to be rid of this mantle and to enjoy their lives outside of the temporary spotlight of public awareness.

The desire to be famous and the energy to maintain it are two different things. When you are famous, you are surrounded by people wanting a piece of you to reflect upon themselves and to feel a part of such fame. The issue remains that you only hear from them what they think you should hear, and you are deaf and blind to what is really going on in your world.

To escape this clamour, you may seek to be alone, and this loneliness makes you a bird in a gilded cage. Fame is usually a fashionable thing and the next wave of popularity sees you cast adrift as the caravan of popularity moves on.

Fame is ego- based and for those who believe their own 'press' get more and more removed from the reality of life. If you can use your fame to shine a spotlight on worthy causes, and preferably personally serve such causes, then the ego-based fame is replaced with soul -based fame and you reach outside of yourself to uplift others in need.

Becoming an idol with clay feet as part of a media circus usually ends badly and knowing how to keep humble with fame may be the only way to survive this temporary moment in the spotlight and have a useful life after that.

FAME - For All My Ego!

Family

The responsibility of parents for their family should always be their primary responsibility. The correct nurturing and unfolding of each child knowing the love, support and confidence of a family as a unit of moral strength and fortitude creates a foundation for the rest of their lives.

Where a family knows disharmony and friction the emotional scars are indelibly imprinted on the children who usually struggle to become valuable members of society and themselves potentially damaged parents to their own children one day.

Pope John Paul II said, “As the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the world in which we live”.

Families who together worship a Higher Power know a cementing of family values based on the moral codes of most religions and spiritual followings. The saying that “a family that prays together stays together” has some validity to it. Most importantly though, is the mutual respect each family member has for each other as the basis of family love and stability in the home.

Parents should never seek to overshadow their children and should allow and encourage them to find their own way in the world without the parents over- involvement. Knowing when to back off and remain silent as the children leave the nest and find their own wings requires a mature approach to parenting.

With the knowledge that children require roots and wings, the parent's role should be one of a Watcher rather than being involved in their every decision as they learn to fly by themselves into tomorrow where parents cannot visit.

Fear

FEAR- False Evidence Appearing Real

Fear is an emotion and is a learnt response. It can be unlearned if you are willing to do so. This process requires self-integrity and deep analysis of what you fear and why that fear is within your conscious and subconscious mind.

You may have lived your life in fear to date, but you are still here now, and those fears have either never materialised or if they have you have found a way to overcome or sidestep them. Knowing that you are a survivor of fear to date is a first step to begin the process to conquer that which imprisons you mentally.

At its root cause, fear means that you do not have the self-confidence and self-belief to overcome that which you fear most. There is only one way to abolish fear, and that is to face the fear head on and see it for the imaginary fraud that it is.

Fear is always anticipatory, and that means that it is yet to come sometime in the future. It is not happening now! If you can begin to live in the present moment of now, then you will know the only emotion possible in the Now, which is Love. God is Love, and God only exists in the present moment of Now or in God's Space, as I have called it in my book *How to Live in the Now*.

In truth, the only emotion that is possible is Love because God is Love and God is All That Is. So fear is not real and is imaginary, and only Love is real.

Can you live your life from now on with the thought that only Love is real and that there is nothing to fear? How different would your life be going forward if there was nothing to fear? Be love now and in every successive moment of now and fear will evaporate like the morning mist.

Forgiveness

True forgiveness has nothing to do with the person who has wronged you. True forgiveness is 'forgiving -you' the ability to come from love and not harbour the fear that the damage inflicted on you by another will continue to hold you back from knowing love.

In truth, giving forgiveness means that your ego has been running your life and feeling injured. This egoic approach has unsettled your inner balance and harmony and been detrimental to your soul's growth. Your damaged ego has clouded your outlook, and you have been defensively attacking the other person in your mind. Damage has followed damage, and parts of you may have become injured in the process.

When you decided to reach a place of forgiveness if it came from an ego -based decision whereby you felt superior to the other party, then it is not true forgiveness but rather ego-based condescension.

True forgiveness realises that we are all One and that there is no one to judge and no one to forgive. Everyone is doing the best they can from their level of consciousness. If they were in a wheelchair, you would not expect them to run the four-minute mile but you do not see that they are in an 'emotional wheelchair' and incapable of doing better than their level of conscious awareness will allow them to do. They are operating out of fear and not love. Their words and actions against you are fear based, and they have targeted you with their fear based anger and hostility.

You cannot fight fear with fear but only with love. As Gandhi says “an eye for an eye and soon the whole world is blind”.

If your forgiveness is love- based for yourself and for them, then it becomes true forgiveness without any form of judgement on your part.

Fortune

Fortune that is inherited is not valued as highly as that which is earned by the opportunity, ability, risk taking and sweat of the brow of the person who made a fortune initially.

Inherited fortune has many people drinking at the fountain of fortune but not many people carefully ensuring that the fortune is increased with the care and diligence of its Founder.

There are some people who believe that inheriting a fortune robs one of the ability to fulfil their own potential and they become softer and weaker because their life is too easy and comfortable.

Fortunes are won and lost and relying on the wealth of a fortune instead of developing one's character, and ability could be detrimental in the long run. Education and skills training are the harbingers of wealth creation when coupled with caution, appropriate risk taking and being an opportunist, especially when “blood is running in the streets”.

Making a fortune is often the easy part as keeping and even enlarging it requires a different skill set to making it initially. A developer or opportunist may strike lucky but an investor's mind to maintain and enlarge the fortune requires a trained and practised person at the helm. Risk taking at this time is not required as much as someone more diligent and astute to changing cycles and changing trends.

As the saying goes “fortune favours the brave”, but the one who is more cautiously aware of cycles and current and future trends is the person for the job after that to maintain and enlarge the fortune that was initially made. At this point, the power of compound interest becomes greater than the power of an adventuring risk taker!

Freedom

Freedom is not a legal right it's a mental state. There are many who have freedom regarding the law of the land in which they live, but they are enslaved by their desires.

Those who want an education are enslaved by student loans. Those who want to own their own home are enslaved by mortgage loan repayments. Those who want to be married are responsible for the welfare of their spouse. Those who want to have children are responsible for the upkeep, discipline, love and responsibility of parenthood. Those who want to own their own businesses are

enslaved by their customers or clients. Those who want a job are enslaved by their bosses' desires. Those who want freedom to eat, drink and be merry are enslaved by the consequences of their actions.

Freedom of, freedom from, freedom to, freedom for, they all have responsibility attached to them. Responsibility is the price of freedom so unless you are free from responsibility then you will never be free. However, if you have no responsibility and you are free then what type of society are you living in? A society where there is no responsibility cannot survive for too long.

Freedom to choose your thoughts and freedom to discipline yourself are the closest you will get to total freedom while you are on the earth plane.

Freedom is an ideal, not a reality. If you want to ultimately be as free as you can then choose the thoughts, words and actions of being Godlike by acting on the spiritual maxim of "what would God/Love do now?"

Friend

A friend, a true friend, is probably your most prized possession. For those who believe in a Spiritual World, true friends are Soul Mates who have decided to reincarnate together in this lifetime to support each other. Sometimes your true friend may be a friend, and sometimes it may be an enemy.

The role of a true friend as a supportive person to you is obvious, but sometimes an enemy will force you to become an even better version of yourself, as the enemy will prod and provoke you to that end.

Friends may turn a blind eye by being tolerant of the love you share, but an enemy will be unrelenting in forcing you to perform at your highest and best version of morality that you can be so that you can defeat this enemy.

It is only the judgement you are making as treating this person as your enemy that blinds you to the spiritual truth that this enemy is your Soul Mate and together in Spirit, you chose these roles to play out on the earth plane for the growth of your Soul. Your enemy was happy to be the Pariah in society in this lifetime to bring out the best in you.

Perhaps in another lifetime you will be such a good friend to your Soul Mate and be their enemy by becoming the Pariah of that society in that period.

Friendship

Friendship is the most voluntary of all relationships. There is no legal agreement binding friendships. You can terminate a friendship at any time for any reason by simply walking away and ignoring the other person. This doesn't happen that frequently. True friendships survive time apart and even living on different continents. The need for friendship, the willingness to be a true friend, the tolerance and unconditional love of true friendship are the cement that binds true friendships.

Friendship can be summarised in two words- trust and loyalty. You trust each other to be and do the best for each other no matter the circumstances you find yourselves. True friendship is sharing by giving and taking and not accounting, simply being there for each other in thick and thin times. Laughing with your friend is a sure sign that there is a strong bond between you.

Being your own best friend should be your goal in life. Knowing you can trust yourself and be loyal for what you stand for in life while being able to forgive yourself for any indiscretions, are vital ingredients in being your own best friend. Set your standards high in being the best version of yourself and smile at yourself in the mirror each day saying and meaning "I love you".

For those who live a spiritual or religious life befriending their Higher Power is a true friendship of note. Being able to pray and talk to your Higher Power, who "sees" everything and to be able to be silent and meditate and to listen to your Higher Power will be all the guidance you need from your Friend in Spirit.

Remember that silent and listen have the same letters!

Genius

Geniuses are rare and as such not recognised by the vast majority of people who are usually against them as they are threatened by someone who sees what they can't see. This disturbs their belief in themselves because it causes them to doubt themselves, so it is easier to reject the genius and revert to their current blindness of the issue at hand.

A genius sees a solution rather than a problem and has the aptitude, creative thought, labour, perseverance and persistence to create a solution. This is the composition of a Genius.

A Genius is not usually rewarded by fortune because their ambition is creativity and not wealth. To be wealthy requires a commercial mind, conscious of limited supply and large demand and the Genius usually is only motivated by improving man's lot.

The fire burning inside a Genius is self-lit, and they seek originality, not perfection. The creative spark within seeks to break through barriers and frontiers to attain new horizons of thought and ability.

A Genius is intent on creating the light of awareness not the heat of a marketplace battle!

Giving

In the cycle of nature, everyone and everything gives, and everyone and everything receives. It is an ongoing balance and harmony. This balance and harmony do not require acknowledgement and gratitude because giving and receiving are the opposite sides of the same coin. There is no distinction between giving and receiving; it's like the in and out breath. The in breath receives, and the out breath gives on a continuous cycle.

Who has to give and who has to receive is immaterial. Whoever has to give, gives, and whoever has to receive, receives. These circumstances change continually, and givers and receivers swap places numerous times in the cycle of Nature and in the life you live too.

The only thing that is real is Love; all else is an illusion because God is Love and God is All That Is.

The material things you prize most are subject to rust, moths and decay. The cycle of growth and decay, as well as the cycle of changing fashions, make valuable things obsolete and worthless in time.

Way back in 354-430 AD St. Augustine said, 'Find out how much God has given to you and take from it what you need; the remainder is needed by others.'

Giving is not an obligation, it's a privilege because it means you have something to give from your store of wealth. When you give of yourself to another, that is true giving because it's easy to give money and claim a tax write-off but giving of your valuable time and energy is true giving.

One day all that you prize will be given away as you leave the earth plane with no possessions other than your deeds recorded in the journey of your Soul.

You can choose now to be the Giver while you still can or else your inheritors will fight and squabble over your inheritance and probably squander your wealth as 'easy comes and easy goes.'

Do not spoil your children and give them excess wealth. You will be doing them a disservice. Give them an education and skills training to kick-start their careers and then allow them to create their own wealth and make their own mistakes as part of their journey of soul growth.

When considering what to give and to whom to give it, choose a gift that goes on giving. Give your vital organs upon your passing so that someone else can use your eyes, your heart, your kidneys and your liver and any other part of you that has value to someone else.

Give an education to those who require one but cannot afford it. Give your experience as a mentor to those mentees who need guidance. Give a smile every day and preferably all day to anyone who needs to feel uplifted or happier.

Plant seeds in various ways with people and with things. Let the harvest be theirs to reap.

Be grateful to be considered a Giver because it is better to give than to receive and be dependent on others so that you may have your daily bread.

As your wealth increases don't increase your standard of living but rather increase your standard of giving!

Know that it is Oneness/Source/God who has it all and gives to you so that you may give to His/Her other children as His/Her's helping hand. In this way, your Higher Power gives through you, not to you!

In reality, it isn't your wealth. You are a Steward and a Guardian, watching over God's wealth and God's unlimited abundance and you are sharing it on behalf of God.

Goal

It is important to have a goal so that one has direction, meaning and purpose in their life. Your goal may be a materialistic one, but your eventual goal should be to become Godlike in your every thought, word and deed.

When setting a long-term goal, know that there will gains and losses along the way and keep your focus on that goal, especially when the losses seem insurmountable.

As, when and if you reach your goal and upon attaining it, you will see what you have become by such attainment, and, if you are proud of that person, then you will realise that becoming is more relevant than attainment.

Do not be afraid to set huge goals that may seem unrealistic, because you belong with the Immortals who are talked about for millennia. And why should you shy away from this goal of becoming an Immortal? Give it all you have and then go the extra mile and never, ever, ever, give up on your goal.

Grace

Grace seems to defy definition. It's more of an emotion than something that you can define. Grace is the love of God for each one of us, and we are capable of feeling it when we surrender and are humble enough to experience it.

Any form of egotism seems to block the flow of grace. The love from Oneness/Source/God appears to be a soulful experience rather than one based on egotism and fear.

Harmony, balance, love and peace are the building blocks to receive the Grace that is flowing from God towards each of us always and in all ways.

Gratitude

Gratitude is a blessing we should express continually throughout our wakening hours. We have so much to be grateful for, and that includes receiving the blessings we have asked for and also receiving the blessings we don't want.

We believe that we know what a blessing is and also what is not a blessing but our vision is small and weak and Oneness/Source/God's vision is universal and omnipotent.

The gains we attain and the losses we incur once looked upon with the perspective of a lifetime, or lifetimes, if you believe in reincarnation, show that everything is a blessing.

Gratitude and abundance are twins and share the same Source of creation as identical twins share the same fertilised egg.

Cicero (106 BC-43 BC) had the foresight over 2100 years ago to state 'A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue but the parent of all other virtues.'

Gratitude makes us look back at our past and causes us to be thankful for the place that we have reached today, while giving us confidence in tomorrow.

Greatness

To achieve the pinnacle of greatness, man has to be virtuous and have a certain amount of genius, as defined earlier on in this book. Great people have mostly been misunderstood by the people of the time as the majority of them are like sheep. When a Shepherd approaches, the sheep see a different vision to what they are used to, and this frightens them.

The majority of people feel threatened by the greatness shown by a relative stranger in their midst. The great person stands alone and the crowd often bays for their blood.

This great person is upsetting the applecart in their lives, and people usually abhor change, preferring the known of the status quo, no matter how unrighteous and lacking in virtue this status quo may be.

People exhibiting this greatness are usually ridiculed, imprisoned, killed or crucified, mainly by the mob of the majority or at least with their blessing.

Nothing will stop this greatness being put on display for all to witness because the hand of God requires a change to be made and He/She selects a Messenger who invariably is virtuous and

humble and is earmarked to become a page in history for people to remember thousands of years into the future.

This person of greatness is usually virtuous, mentally strong, brave and committed to delivering the message as an emissary from Oneness/Source/God who determines that the time is right for doing right.

Being a person of greatness may involve martyrdom but so be it. The message is important, not the Messenger who lives an eternal and immortal life with their Source/Oneness/God.

Remember that you can't shrink yourself to greatness. If you have been selected to be great, and for a Higher Power to work through you to create this greatness, then shrinking away is not an option.

You can be humble in your greatness, but you need to be non-egotistically proud of what you have been selected to do for the betterment of mankind. Others will follow, in time, but you need to stand tall and be visible for all to witness this state of greatness.

Growth

Within us is the cycle of growth and decay. We begin life as a fertilised egg, and we grow at a steady pace to eventually return as a Soul to the Source of our being.

Growth is an intrinsic pathway of our journey, and we have to learn to let go of the security of one rung of a ladder to grasp the next rung as we climb higher and higher.

Like a plant or a tree, we need to put down roots to stabilise ourselves as our leaves grow upwards and outwards.

Like birds that leave the nest to learn to fly, we too must not attempt to grow in the shade of our family tree, or else our growth will be stunted due to lack of sunshine, rain and wind.

Growth is painful but necessary and having a solid foundation is a prerequisite for proper growth. Growing pains accompany us as we grow. Having one's eye on the goal is a way to overcome the friction accompanying growth.

Growth involves risk taking and usually happens without the necessary experience, but having faith that once you jump, you will be safely caught or given wings to fly.

Growth occurs outside your comfort zone, but you reset the dial for that comfort zone as you grow. One day you look back and realise that comfort zones were unnecessary security blankets you clung to in fear because you never had the faith to trust that your growth was ordained by a Higher Power who guided and protected you every step of the way.

Happiness

Happiness is not a readily definable state as it's a feeling that comes from within. If happiness comes from an external source, then the withdrawal of that happiness can destroy one.

Appreciation of what one has, instead of focusing on what one doesn't have, creates an attitude of appreciation and acceptance of what is in one's life.

Attitude is everything in embodying happiness. The correct thought processes and attitude of feeling blessed by life will prolong happiness within.

Ceasing to be anxious and worrying about the future and living in the present moment of now will engender happiness within.

Enjoyment of the little things in life as well as enjoying the big things creates happiness.

Enthusiasm for life is a key ingredient for appreciation of what you have and for feeling happy.

Forgiveness and non-judgement and simple acceptance of what is occurring now will keep one happy.

Freedom from anything negative in life will lift one's spirits from the inside.

Awareness of God and realisation that God is guiding you and that His/Her will will occur in your life with the consciousness that God is Love, will keep your happiness level rising.

Give and cease wanting anything in return. Simply give like the flower in the field gives of its beauty, radiance and pollen to the world. This form of giving will open you up to receive more and more to give, and in the giving to others, you will receive inner happiness.

Gratitude for everything you are and everything you have will make you humble and kind to yourself and others, and you will feel a radiance of happiness in this gratitude.

Your imagination is the result of your thoughts, and positive, grateful thoughts will engender happiness within.

Having the inner peace and tranquility that come from a grateful heart and a clear conscience will keep happiness uppermost in your being.

Joy is the development of happiness evolving to the next level. Joy is the upliftment of your soul in happiness.

Laughter is the bubbling up of happiness within and finding laughter with others creates a synergistic happiness between you.

Liking what you do gives a meaning and purpose to your life, and this makes one happy in the creativity and accomplishments you achieve.

Loving yourself and others and being loved by yourself and by others elevates your soul to know its Source, which is God, who is Love.

Peace is the ultimate form of happiness and having a peaceful and loving heart is the meaning and purpose of one's existence in this world and in the Spirit World to come.

Something to do, something to hope for and someone to love will reap much happiness.

Happiness is a way of thinking, and that automatically creates an attitude of acceptance as you smile your way through life no matter what is going on around you. Simply smiling changes your thought processes to one of optimism and hope and with that comes inner happiness.

Tranquility can be achieved even in noisy surroundings and boils down to having inner peace. The confidence that comes when you are in harmony with God's will as you co-create your life with God, will bring you the tranquility and happiness that flows from that place.

If you were stripped of everything you own and you had nothing, would you be happy? If your answer is yes, then you will be one of the very few people who have walked the earth over 5000 years that feel this way, and your companions would be St. Francis of Assisi, Buddha and the like.

Happiness is truly an inside job!

Hate

Hatred is like taking poison and hoping the other person suffers!
Hatred is an ego-based emotion and fear lurks in the shadows egging hatred on.
Prejudice, bigotry and false pride inflame hatred.

When hating someone, firstly, you do not have all the facts, and your ignorance is preventing you from seeing the whole picture. Secondly, this hatred is binding you to the other person. Hatred has its essence in fear. And perhaps the hatred you express is preferable than the pain that the fear has caused you. To somehow avoid that pain, you choose to hate someone or something, but the pain will always be there below the surface, and it will surface in your life whether your hatred for the other person or thing is there or not.

Hatred is not the opposite of love - that's indifference.
Hatred still has some perverted love attached to it; it is too emotional to be considered indifference.

The true test of heroism is to offer love in exchange for hatred as only love can block out hatred. Returning hatred for hatred will not bring the issue to a close but will merely inflame the mutual hatred with continual escalating damage to both parties. Regrettably, hatred of such a nature can become multi-generational, and only the olive branch of love can dissolve it.

Healing

Hippocrates, circa 450 BC, stated: 'Leave your drugs in the Chemist's pot if you can cure the patient with food.' He was the author of the Hippocratic Oath used by the medical profession to this day. He is also quoted as saying 'The natural healing force within each of us is the greatest force in getting well'.

Healing takes place within and is a life force connected to the soul. The mind needs to be silenced as it is controlled by the ego and is based on fear. The soul needs love and life force to begin the healing from within. Trust Oneness/Source/God, who is connected to your soul, to bring the healing powers of love to your body and your mind.

The healing process requires that the impurities in one's system come to the surface so that they can be released out of the body. This implies that the process involves expulsion which may be painful but is necessary to release the impurities that negatively affect the body's health.

Sometimes scars remain to remind one that the healing from the soul with love was effective.

Heal with faith and belief from within and watch the power of Love at work.

Health

It is amazing to find a similar message about health from people like Buddha, 500 BC, Hippocrates, circa 450 BC, the I Ching 50 BC, Ovid 20 BC, Seneca 50 AD, Paracelsus 1500 AD and Voltaire 1750 AD.

They all speak about the body healing itself via its natural healing forces, providing nature, time and patience are adopted, and advise that prevention is better than cure. They also talk about being present in the now and avoiding the causes of ill-health such as over-indulgence in food and alcohol, regular exercise, moderation in all things and reduced anxiety and stress. Not much has changed in 2500 years!

Carl Jung (1875-1961), a Swiss Psychiatrist, made a comment that every one of his patients over the age of 35 years had the source of their ill-health in not following a religious or spiritual outlook on life. This father of analytical psychology may have put his finger on the cause of ill-health for those of that age.

Heart

Throughout history, going back over the 5000 years that I have studied, the heart has been acknowledged as the seat of the soul, the place where Oneness/Source/God connects to us as humans.

The heart has assumed this mystical place of connection, consciousness, awareness, ultimate wisdom and being the eyes of the soul.

Seeing with your heart, hearing with your heart, touching with your heart and feeling with your heart are the ways that Oneness/Source/God speaks to us and through us to others.

The heart is more than a physical pump sending blood to all parts of your body. It is the still small voice within that connects us to eternal and immortal life via our soul and its connection to Oneness/Source/God.

Hope

Hope is the optimist's clasp on life. Hope somehow changes a mindset, an attitude, that something is possible.

Most people hope for success despite the fact that they haven't done their homework. When hope substitutes for homework the chances of success are slim.

When you have done the homework to ensure success, then hope becomes the correct mindset while waiting for the outcome to appear.

Hope, backed up by the homework, especially if it concerns a large group of people, charges the air with positivity and, at a level we mere mortals cannot understand, the flow of abundance becomes possible. An example of this is a change of government where corruption, nepotism and ineptitude are the order of the day and the will of the people to root this out becomes a reality.

Conversely, hope without any effort on one's part, is, in truth, hopelessness. Taking a lottery ticket and hoping to win the jackpot is such an example for millions of people as there usually is only one winner. Hoping to pass an exam when you have not opened a book to prepare for the exam is another example.

Hope is a good mindset to adopt but the responsibility to have done your best is a prerequisite for expecting hope to translate into success.

Humility

In today's ego-driven world where the 'selfie' has become the most treasured of one's possessions, humility has been pushed into oblivion. It is now virtually obligatory to use social media channels to talk about yourself and the minutia of one's life and to share it with the world.

The humble person today is so rare as to be considered an endangered species!

The cycle will turn, as it always does, and humility will return to favour. But in the meantime, those people intent on becoming better versions of themselves, armed with the ability to be humble will always thrive.

Humility can best be summarised as not humbling oneself to be lower than another but in knowing that in Oneness you are the other!

By not looking to claim the credit and by boosting and encouraging the achievement of others, the glare of the spotlight is avoided, and you can do the work that you intended to do to uplift yourself and others.

Humility is seen in being patiently attentive to others and in not interrupting them with what you think is important to say. Using words like 'I don't know' invites others to help you and show you what they do know and allowing them to give you good counsel and help you in this way.

By approaching each day with a beginner's mind you bring a simple, unsophisticated and childlike awareness to life and ego-filled people will tell you all they know to make themselves appear to be important.

The reality is that life is one long lesson in humility as ego-filled people with the love of power climb on their self-proclaimed pedestals and continue to fall off and fall flat on their faces.

Those who are secure in their self-knowledge, who have dignity and grace and who know that God works through them find it easy to be humble as they know that when they stand tall next to their image and vision of God, they are minute in comparison. It's only when a man compares himself to a man that he becomes filled with ego.

If you put your hand into a bucket of water and then pull it out, the hole that remains is the amount you will be missed!

Ideas

An idea comes from your imagination. Where your imagination comes from is not as clear. If your mind is so preoccupied with yourself and your life, then the gap between yourself and your self-obsessed thoughts is not wide enough for an idea to get through.

An idea is powerful. Inventions, revolutions, creativity and even life itself are created through an idea. If you share an idea, it grows synergistically because other people can add to it without diminishing it in any way.

On the contrary, further synergistic ideas polish and shape an idea into being. As discussed in the previous topic on humility, it's only the ego's desire to be recognised and appreciated that stops many ideas from being developed further and becoming a great boon for all of the inhabitants of earth.

Victor Hugo (1802- 1885) said, 'There is one thing stronger than all the armies of the world: and that is an idea whose time has come'.

A word of caution when you propose a new idea - expect opposition from mediocre minds. People fear change as they assess what they stand to lose as opposed to having the intelligence and foresight to see what they stand to gain through such a change.

When you try and explain your idea to others, use small words, short sentences and big thoughts. You have been thinking about the idea and, no doubt, are excited with your findings. They are hearing it for the first time and are probably going to assess it against their current knowledge-base and how it will affect them directly. Be patient and don't be discouraged as you may have to ram it down their throats before the light dawns and they see what you are so passionate about. Some will get it and some won't. Having expectations for a frog to become a bird is unrealistic and expecting people who are left-brain thinkers; those who are more numerate and logical thinkers, to see your right brain concepts and dreams may be unrealistic.

Believe in your idea but be willing to hear of any shortcomings you may have to face to make your idea more practical and acceptable. Be aware of who is giving you advice and know that not every critic is right. There has never been a statue erected for a critic!

Ignorance

The saying that ignorance is bliss is very far from the truth. Ignorance can be caused by anything from lack of awareness to downright avoidance of the facts.

Watching ignorance in action is a sight to avoid. The misfortune, misery, dogmatism, argumentativeness and, many times, evil that results as a consequence is to be evaded at all costs.

Ignorance is your only true competitor in life and business. All competitors have a reason to be in business, but ignorance of the facts prevents your message from being understood. It is your duty to ensure that your marketing message is seen and understood by your target market. You cannot shrink your way to market dominance. However, if your audience, through their ignorance, does not have the ability to comprehend your message, then it is like telling bedtime stories to your teddy bear!

Imagination

You are powerful without measure as long as you use your imagination. The ability to create an image in your mind and for you to bring that imagined thought into reality is creativity on steroids!

Imagination, if it were a nation, would be the most desirable nation on earth!

Imagination knows no boundaries, and it is infinite in its usage. The power of imagination is the most powerful thing on earth. Imagination can create anything, and it can be created in a dark deep pit as easily as from a posh penthouse. Imagination has no anchor, and its sails are ever-unfolding. Imagination sees things as they could be, not only as they are.

As we enter into the world of Virtual Reality, we are going to suspend knowledge of what is and experience unparalleled imagination as our brain, and our eyes become unhinged from logic and reason, and the impossible is made possible through imagination.

Integrity

My high school motto was *Quisque Sibi Verus* which translated from the Latin means 'To thine own self be true'. This is a quote from Shakespeare which goes on to state ... 'and it shall follow as night follows day that thou cannot then be false to any man.'

Integrity is living your life with inner honour. Knowing you will always tell the truth no matter the consequences to you and another. To think, speak and act with inner conviction that you are aligned to the Godlike within you and to be the best version of yourself at all times. This earns you self-respect, develops your self-esteem, gives you dignity and uprightness and allows you to lead by example.

Face the truth always and have the courage of your convictions to say no to anything that could damage your integrity. Immaterial of wealth or position in society, integrity can never be bought or acquired. It has to be earned step by step and can be lost with one simple mis-step.

Integrity has a conscience, and whether you are on your own or with others, it is under continual scrutiny. The rewards of integrity are a clear conscience and a soft pillow ensuring a good night's sleep without care and concern for your thoughts, words and behaviour.

Journey

There are those who enjoy travelling and look for new journeys to expand their horizons and seek new places and meet new people. This is called an experience and brings them happiness even though the actual travelling may be difficult and even hazardous to their well-being. The expansion of their knowledge and experience is enjoyable for them and creates memories for them to remember and recount throughout their lives.

Those who choose an inner journey of discovery experience a completely different set of experiences and build upon their knowledge-base of unfolding the mysteries of the unknowable.

The ignorance of what lies within is dissipated as the journey to Oneness/Source/God is sought. Those fortunate enough to experience it, the knowing that we are all a part of that Oneness/Source/God as our essence is the reward. It is a journey from ignorance to recognition. Now and then you fall flat on your face, and sheepishly you look up and see God smiling back at you, encouraging you to get back on your feet and take the next step. The inner journey is from your ego-self to your Soulful Self, and you haven't moved an inch!

Joy

In Ancient Egypt, they believed that upon death you would be asked two questions which determined the continuation of one's journey to the afterlife. The first question was 'Did you bring joy?'" The second question was, 'Did you find joy?'

Joy is within each of us and is our birthright. A baby is joyous and laughs and laughs at everything they think is funny. Most of us choose to bury this inner joy and we attend to our ego's needs and

wants of desire and possessions forgetting that joy is one of our most wonderful possessions and it's free!

Joy is found in sharing, giving, serving, feeling worthwhile and finding happiness in the smallest of things. Feeling gratitude for all we have and choosing to ignore what we don't have enables this gratitude to become inner joy. Acceptance of 'what is' in our life and loving how good things really are, enables a wise and loving heart to unearth our inner joy.

For those following a religious or spiritual path, knowing that Oneness/Source/God is such joy and aligning your will with His/Her Will also unearth that inner joy which is your birthright.

Such joy is the grinning inside of you bursting out to share this joy with the world.

Judgement

It is easy to judge but much harder to think something through to its logical conclusion. Judgement tends to be emotionally based, and you can only use the limits of your vision, experience and thought processes to reach judgment.

Do you know everything about the issue you are judging? Has every stone been overturned in your quest for the truth? Do you have the right to judge? Are you prepared to be responsible for this judgment?

Are you aware that you too will be judged by a much Higher Power for the judgement you are making and, as it says in Mathews 7:1-2, 'Judge ye not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete; it shall be measured to you again.'

Instead of leaping to make a judgement, the correct way is to approach people in a loving manner, with kindness and without judgement. By pointing out the issue at hand and showing the viewpoints from all sides, the person is much more likely to judge themselves and transform themselves willingly to become the best version of themselves.

Justice

Justice is often confused with a court of law. Oliver Wendel Holmes (1809-1894) is reported as saying, 'This is a court of law, young man, not a court of justice'. Justice in the legal system is often a case of who has the better legal representatives presenting their case.

Justice is subjective to the ruling morals of the time as well as the ruling power-base and their hold on the reigns of power.

Justice is often motivated by profit and expediency rather than equal justice for all. Equality is a myth as it is man's nature to want to be superior. The food chain of Nature also follows the rule of the strength and cunning of the hunter and the weakness, slowness or lack of brain power of the hunted.

Expecting the strong and powerful to mete out equal justice to uplift the weaker members of society is a bridge of hope too far and too naive to be implemented.

Virtually every revolution has seen the weaker, more numerous masses uproot the stronger, fewer, privileged class and then, over time, replicate a privileged class with power over the weaker masses.

The only true justice is found in a religious or spiritual way of life where one's conscience is guided by the Golden Rule, 'Do unto others as you would want to be done unto yourself'.

Awareness that your every thought, word and action is recorded and seen by 'Unseen Forces', and that you will have to experience that which you have caused others to experience, whether through 'good' or 'bad' intentions, helps keep true justice alive for those who believe and follow these religious or spiritual rules of behaviour.

Karma

It is very interesting that the next topic to discuss is Karma because that is exactly what I alluded to in the previous two paragraphs under Justice.

Karma is the Law of Cause and Effect. You will be accountable and responsible for your every thought, word and action and the cause of such issues will see a corresponding effect come into place at the appropriate time, whether in this lifetime or another.

The belief in Karmic Law is man's way of saying that equality will emerge for each person and no one is above this law. Karma can exact pain or grant pleasure, and the belief in this law probably acts more as a deterrent and guide to its believers than the police force of any country.

Karmic rebalances also affect the entire world and when the earth is damaged by man it will, through so-called natural phenomenon, rebalance itself, usually through earthquakes, fires or floods.

Kindness

The current Dalai Lama talks about kindness as follows: 'This is my simple religion. There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple; the philosophy is kindness.'

Without a doubt, showing kindness to others, and to yourself, is your passport into peoples' hearts. People will forget what you say, but they will never forget how you made them feel. Kindness begets kindness and with it inner peace and happiness. Even those without the ability to speak or to hear can feel the kindness shown to them. How much more so can a fully functioning person appreciate the kindness shown to them?

Kindness is the solution for all of the world's ills. It's never too soon to practice kindness, and if you simply treated every person with the kindness you would treat Oneness/Source/God if they were physically in your presence, then your world would smile back at you with such joy and bliss.

Knowledge

As we enter the home stretch of the second decade of the 21st Century, we look back at the last 25 years and realise that the Internet as a public domain is only a quarter of a century old and it has already reshaped most people's lives and jobs.

The Internet's impact is in its infancy as a 25-year-old. The next 25 years will see Artificial Intelligence reshape entire industries and reshape the employment landscape as never before, even including the Industrial Revolution's impact on jobs during 1760-1840.

With Artificial Intelligence rushing to the fore, what will this do to normal human intelligence, knowledge and wisdom?

The very definition of Artificial Intelligence is a person's cognitive ability to learn. Well, that is what Artificial Intelligence is replicating and perfecting at a rapid rate, already replacing existing jobs and potentially creating new jobs in its wake.

So what intelligence do we humans need to acquire to be considered to be intelligent in the age of Artificial Intelligence? Perhaps intuitive thinking and creativity via out of the box creation of solutions, especially as they affect the psychology and social welfare of humans.

What then of knowledge and the acquisition of knowledge? Knowledge is defined as the condition of knowing something or someone with familiarity gained through experience or association. Well, once again Artificial Intelligence as it continues to be perfected, will cover this definition of knowledge as well.

Perhaps having a network of well-known contacts and knowing their inherent strengths and weaknesses to build teams to undertake tasks, may be considered a role for knowledge by humans in the Artificial Intelligence revolution ahead of us. Project management together with the nuances of human behaviour and maximization of performance and quality control and time could see a role for human intervention.

What then of wisdom? Wisdom is defined as having experience, knowledge and good judgement - the quality of being wise, having discernment, intuition and insight.

So it looks like we humans may have a role to play here by being wise while Artificial Intelligence attends to intelligence and knowledge!

'Knowledge is power' was applicable to the 20th Century but in the 21st Century controlling information and database mining will pinpoint the needs of the world and satisfy those needs with unerring accuracy.

The days of blasting out information and knowledge, like throwing mud at the wall to see what sticks are over. Today and into the future pinpoint accuracy of determining:

1. who has a need and
2. for what and
3. at what time to suit them best

will change the way of production, financing, storage/retail, marketing, delivery and even consumption.

Knowledge in the future will need to be reassessed and the term 'I don't know' will be heard more and more often as re-education occurs for most humans.

Laughter

Laughter is a common bond between both strangers and friends. Laughter breaks down the barriers and allows people to share in gaiety. This sharing reduces the friction of life and lubricates the wheels of communication and connection between either strangers or friends.

Laughter elevates the vibrational frequency of the energy which is what we are at our essence. This increase in our energy vibrational level brings us closer to our Higher Power, who, for all we know, is laughing with us. Imagine knowing that you made God laugh?!

Laughter helps us overcome many obstacles that common sense can't seem to get over. Laughter helps us see a way to get around the obstacle rather than confront it headlong and be bounced backwards. Laughter allows insight and tolerance to be adopted to resolve issues. Laughter is forgiving and forges a bond where no obvious bond existed.

At a spiritual level, an old Yiddish saying states, 'What soap is to the body, laughter is to the soul.'

Leadership

I am going to summarise certain qualities of a leader in an alphabetical sequence:

Agile - to be able to adjust the sails to the prevailing conditions.

Anxiety - to be able to unequivocally confront the major anxiety of people and solve it.

Bring out the best - to be able to bring out the best in each person who follows the leader.

Catalyst - To blend the best in each follower to achieve the goal for the whole team.

Character - To be of high morals and practice justice and be a character worthy of following.

Confidence - A leader creates confidence in his followers and does not rely on fear.

Courage - To have the moral, physical and emotional courage to stand up for what is right.

Direction - A leader must know the direction to go in order to achieve the objectives of the campaign.

Elicit - A leader must be able to bring out the best in their followers.

Gentleness - A leader must be gentle, courteous and respectful of his followers.

Heart - A leader must show that they have a heart of understanding and be able to tap into the hearts of their followers.

Hope - A leader must have hope and optimism and be able to impart that to their followers.

Influence - Influence is necessary to lead. To achieve influence a leader must have a track record worthy of trust so that others agree to follow.

Inspiration - To be able to inspire others to achieve their best, your actions count more than your words.

Judgement - To be just and to only judge once you have all the facts, is the role of a leader.

Knowledge - A leader must have as much knowledge, information and wisdom as possible.

Leader - A leader is not a boss. A leader leads whereas a boss drives. A leader inspires; a boss manages. A leader fixes mistakes and a boss lays blame. A leader asks questions; a boss knows all and doesn't ask questions.

Listen - A leader listens to all the views of his followers and advisers, not only the ones they want to hear which accords with their views.

Persuade - A leader can persuade people and not force them to follow blindly.

Pointing - A great leader simply imbues his followers with the belief in themselves and points the way for them to go and achieve their objective.

Principles - A leader must remain true to his principles and not waver for reasons of expediency.

Prioritise - A leader must prioritise his objectives and undertake them in that order.

Producer of leaders - A leader must produce more leaders and not more followers.

Right - A leader must know what is right and must do only what he know to be right.

Self-esteem - A leader must have a great self-esteem and develop the self-esteem of his followers for them to believe in what they are doing and achieving for the greater good of all.

Simplifier - A leader must be able to simplify the objectives of the solutions he seeks.

Strategy - A leader must have a clear and simplified strategy to achieve the solutions.

Strength - A leader must have the inner strength and outer strength to give total confidence to his followers.

Team - A leader must lead a team and use the word we and not I. The team gets the credit and not the leader.

Test - The final test of a great leader is that once they are gone, the followers have the conviction and determination to carry on the work.

Trust - Trust is a two way street in leadership. The leader must trust his followers, and they must have unwavering trust in their leader.

Learning

If the desire for learning was as strong as the desire for possessions then the world would be a much better place.

We have become an ego based society intent on acquiring things and treating education as a means to an end. Assuming that those who have learnt, know what they need to know, they will be educated for the past while those who continue life-long learning will be able to function in the present and the future.

As explained under the topic of knowledge, the future is going to be more challenging in the next 25 years than probably in any other time in history. The adoption of artificial intelligence will require re-education of those who desire to be able to earn a living.

Learning starts with an inquisitive mind asking questions and searching for the answers. Today we are fortunate to have the Internet as an instant source of information, knowledge and wisdom. The young people of today take the Internet for granted. Having spent most of my time until the age of around 50 involved in research, forecasting, consulting, investing and developing real estate, and

not having the Internet to turn to, makes me so conscious of the miracle of the Internet as a source of information, knowledge and wisdom.

If you choose only to use the Internet for laughter, social interaction and entertainment, then you are looking a most amazing gift horse in the mouth.

Never stop asking questions and looking for answers in your life's journey, and learn, learn and learn something from everyone you meet and from everything you experience.

Be like a desert thirsting for learning and growing, all day and every day and your life will be rich indeed.

Liberty

Liberty is freedom from and freedom of, but most importantly it is found in giving and receiving unconditional love. Giving and receiving love, without any expectations, makes the giver and the receiver free to choose their response, if any.

Freedom from fear is true liberty. Freedom of choice is also true liberty. If you are not free from fear and not free to choose, than nothing else can be called liberty.

Liberty is a two-way street. You have to be able to give it and receive it for there to be real liberty. The oppressed that become free also free their oppressors from their roles of oppressors and allow all to know liberty.

Countries that profess to stand for liberty merely colour their inbuilt prejudices, biases and repressions with the flag of liberty but their people are not free in the truest sense of freedom. The power of love could be a road towards liberty but the love of power is a bitter enemy of liberty.

If you cannot control your appetites and you become a slave to your desires, then that is not freedom to participate but enslavement. You may consider yourself free to indulge in these appetites but, in truth, they control you and determine the cause and effect of such indulgences.

Liberty requires responsibility to ensure that it is kept pristine and as most men shy away from responsibility at this level they choose to be enslaved rather than be responsible.

Liberty is attainable, but the price is high. Personal responsibility demands constant vigilance to ensure that freedom.

Life

If you approach life as a part in a play that you have been assigned to by the Director, you will learn your lines, and as the curtain goes up, your memory will go blank.

What am I doing here? What is my purpose on this stage? Who are these other people on the stage and what are they doing here? What is this play supposed to be about? What do I do next?

If your memory returns then it will be apparent as to what you are doing there and what your tasks are, but until it does you are on your own.

The easiest way to go forward is to remember that you are a part of Oneness/Source/God or the Director of the play. To remember that you are Love as Oneness/Source/God is Love and that if

you give unconditional love to yourself and others you are likely to receive such unconditional love in return.

Those who choose to become fearful of life and to know fear as their constant companion will see a Bogeyman under every bush and in every shadow. They will react to life with fear and know all the negative attributes that fear trails in its wake.

Life becomes a choice between love and fear in every thought, word or action.

Life on the earth plane is, in reality, the hyphen between the two dates of your birth and your so-called death. Both these dates are, in reality, trigger points for when you leave immortality and eternity and when you rejoin it again. Life is the hyphen in-between, and the way you live in the hyphen determines where you rejoin immortality and eternity again.

If you live a life of Love, then the rejoining point is much nearer to the highest level which is the Love and Light of Oneness/Source/God. Alternatively, a life lived in fear experiencing the negative attributes of life, will see your rejoining point lower down the spectrum where the Light and Love is weaker.

In reality, life is the only game where the object is to figure out what the rules are before the game is over!

Enjoy the hyphen of your life on earth.

Listening

Interestingly, the words listen and silent have the same letters.

It may surprise you to hear that the often stated, 'you have two ears and one mouth so listen more and talk less' is traced back some 2500 years to Zeno (490BC- 430 BC), a Pro-Socratic Greek Philosopher.

A good listener is a great healer because a loving silence has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words. When the speaker is allowed to voice their issues out aloud to another, they hear themselves a lot clearer than when the words are simply running around in their mind. Clarity of thought and pro-active action results from hearing their words out aloud, courtesy of the patient listener.

It's even more powerful when you allow someone to speak and you simply listen, without interruption. You create a space of conscious presence. This increased awareness enables your souls to connect instead of your egos, and there is now no barrier between you but a synergy of love via your connected souls.

For this reason, our best friends tend to be the ones who listen patiently to us as they create a magnetic force drawing us to them where we feel the warmth of love, understanding and trust.

It takes a great person to be a good listener.

Love

I would categorise love into the following categories

- Unconditional Love/Spiritual Love/Universal Love

- Self-Love
- Relationship Love, including familial and friendship love

Unconditional Love:

The starting point of this Soul-based love is that God is Love. We are part of God and we are then Love as our essence. This is the Love that comes through us, not from us. It's our being as Soul-based Love. Whatever we think, say and do is based on 'What would God/Love do now?' and to do only that.

Self-Love:

This is not ego-based self-love but Soul based Self-Love. This is knowing that we are Love as our essence and knowing the experience of feeling this soul-based love in our every thought, word and action to ourselves and others.

The ego-based self-love is another form of love entirely and is selfish, self-centred love idolising oneself as a god.

Relationship Love:

Here we have to distinguish between need and love.

I need you because you can improve my material standing, self-image, position, possessions, status, sex life, etc. is not love but need and desire.

'I love you' is knowing that I will give you anything and everything I am capable of giving to ensure your happiness; immaterial of whether or not I benefit in any way. It is a selfless attitude of uplifting the other person in your relationship, without seeking a reward in exchange.

This love is knowing that love is within you both and you both are in each other eternally and immortally as Love, knowing you are One in Spirit. This Love is a state of your Being as you know you are Love as your essence and you are One with Oneness/Source/God. Your relationship love has emerged as your Unconditional Love.

The real impediments to relationship love are ego and selfishness. There are plenty of other impediments like lack of respect, being judgmental, etc but the root causes are ego and selfishness. The barriers we place in the way of experiencing relationship love are the fears that are ego based. We have to identify each of these fears, such as abandonment, hurt, jealousy, greed, and so on and bring them out into the light of day and examine their root causes in our life. They are unbalancing our life and need to be dealt with and then discarded. Once that ego clearing exercise is completed, that which is left is Unconditional Love as your essence as part of God, who is Love.

You are Love, and you deserve to give and receive Love like the air that you breathe. Love is all that there is because God is Love and Oneness/Source/God is All That Is - everything else is an illusion.

So be Love in your every thought, word and deed and the mirror of life will reflect that Love back to you via the Law of Attraction - like connects to like.

Marriage

Once again we have two related topics following on one from the one other - synchronicity!

In many countries around the world, couples are choosing to live together, or co-habit, either as a prelude to getting married or as a lifestyle choice.

The annual number of births to unmarried mothers is over 50% in the United Kingdom and over 40% in the USA. Northern European and Eastern European countries have unmarried birth rates well over 50%.

Countries with strict religious governance, such as Islamic countries, have few births to unmarried mothers, and this is usually a punishable offence. Other countries where religion is dominant but not State run also show much lower rates of births to unmarried mothers.

Economic conditions are a major factor to co-habitation as some 39.5% of Americans between the ages of 18-34 still live at home with their parent/s. Europe, especially Southern Europe where youth unemployment is very high, has similar statistics.

The 'One Child Policy' of Communist China has created a huge imbalance of too few females, as those parents wanting only sons who will look after them in their old age, choose to murder girls born to them.

Japan's lack of economic growth since the 1990's is seeing young Japanese men financially unable to support a wife while still living with their parents. Certain Japanese young ladies having been emancipated by education and the ability to earn their own money and are turning their backs on marriage, which requires them to live with their in-laws and, in effect, become a servant to their in-laws.

So the convention of marriage is breaking up under various pressures and being partly replaced with people living together, remaining living in their parent/s homes or living by themselves. In the USA today over 23% of people live alone, either as widows, widowers, single or divorced.

The nuclear family is under attack, and with half of the children in a school classroom having unmarried parents from birth and 50% of marriages in the USA ending in divorce, marriage is becoming a minority status.

Of those marriages that are intact, the happiness level is not usually high as the expectation levels of each partner exceeds what they willingly give to the other partner.

The root cause of all the maladies that are causing the minority status of marriage is that one's ego is more important than one's soul.

Finding and treasuring the friendship and love of a happy marriage is regrettably an endangered species in the early part of the 21st Century.

It doesn't have to be so. Simply approach your marriage with an attitude of 'What would Love do now?' and the solution will see both friendship and love grow between you and your partner. It really is that simple!

Meaning

We look for meaning when we should be looking for purpose. If we have a purpose, then the map of meaning is irrelevant because we have found what we have to do with our lives.

True meaning and purpose come from the Soul Contracts we made in Spirit before embarking on our journey to the earth plane this time around. Our Soul's journey is to grow and to merge with Oneness/Source/God, and we have to take the necessary steps, as experiential steps, to reach this Nirvana.

If we could somehow only find out what we had planned for this lifetime's mission our frustrations as we find cul-de-sacs in both our personal and work lives will cease.

Perhaps it's time we stopped asking in our prayers and started listening during our meditations?

Without a shadow of a doubt, if you serve your fellow man with love then your mission will be complete. If you choose nobility of being to become a better person than you were yesterday and implement responsibility, truth, goodness, beauty and peace as your North Star to guide you, then you will be on the correct path.

If your actions were 'spell checked' first with the thought of 'is this going to help or harm another?', and even more so, 'will this help uplift those who are too poor financially and or spiritually to have a better day?', then you would proceed accordingly.

If the meaning and purpose of your life were to be Godlike in your every thought, word and action, would you need any other meaning and purpose?

Meditation

Once again we find meditation coming after meaning - more synchronicity?

The Bhagavad-Gita, an ancient Hindu Scripture, states 'Through meditation, the Higher Self is seen' and the Prophet Muhammed states 'One hour's meditation on the work of the Creator is better than seventy years of prayer.'

Meditation is initially a daily task at a set time in a set position where you commune with Oneness/Source/God, and you open yourself to receive awareness and consciousness of a Higher Power guiding your life.

Once you are more proficient at meditation, then it will be a constant companion for you at any time in any place without any prescribed posture. The ability to connect to your Higher Power at any time, or preferably continually, will enable you to dip into this awareness and consciousness and seek clarity and guidance whenever and wherever you need it. If you can adopt such meditation, then it becomes an attitude of total acceptance that your Higher Power is with you 24/7.

Meditation is the essence of spirituality because it can only take place in the eternal moment of Now. Your Soul operates in the Now whereas your ego's thoughts operate in the past or the future. You cannot meditate in the past or the future because your Soul is part of Oneness/Source/God who is only ever in the eternal moment of Now - God's Space.

What happens when you meditate? You connect to the Source of Love, and you become such Love. It is not what you do, it's what you become by meditating, and that is Soul-based Love finding inner peace.

Meditation is not mindful and is found in the gap between your mind created thoughts.

Mind

Your mind began as a clean slate. Whatever is there now is because you allowed it to be. If you can control your mind and discipline it to know only love-based thoughts, then the mirror of your life will be such love. Conversely, if ego and fear are your thought's major preoccupations, then the mirror of your life will be such negative perceptions and realities brought about by your thoughts.

No one can brainwash you; only you can do that, thought by thought.

Tomorrow's events are known through your thoughts that you are thinking today and if you wish your thoughts of tomorrow to be pleasant and happy then plant the thoughts today to make that a reality tomorrow.

You can choose if you want a generous mind, a mind at peace, a Godlike mind, and so forth, or the converse of those idyllic states. Your mind can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven as John Milton stated around 1650 and nothing has changed in 367 years!

If you can achieve a stillness of your mind as expressed in the previous topic on meditation, then you can access your Higher Power and have the benefit of all that eternal wisdom downloaded into your Soul and, in time, into your mind.

In time, as you have stillness of mind you will find your life becoming calmer and more peaceful and the friction level of your life will become a thing of the past.

The power to choose your thoughts is one of the most powerful attributes you have.

Miracles

My acronym for a MIRACLE is May I Recognise A Conscious Light Emerging.

Imagine living your life with a finer perception than you currently have. This finer perception sees beneath and through everything to its core. At this core is Love. At this core is Oneness/Source/God. It is seeing such Godliness and Love in everything you look at. And with this finer perception of your reality, everything becomes a miracle.

Kindness is such a miracle because it's what the blind see and the deaf hear and we, who have sight and hearing, simply take for granted.

Simply change your perception to one of a more refined awareness, and you will see the miracle of God playing with your children and their laughter making Him/Her smile. You will see God attending to someone gasping their last breath and being carried on Angel's wings to heaven. God is flying his kite and causing the clouds to move into wonderful patterns. God is introducing you to your beloved on your first date. God is everywhere and everything, but we walk sightless among the miracles of our life.

Because miracles surround us, we do not see them and acknowledge them as such. What could be more miraculous than giving you the ability to procreate and create a life form? What about a seed swept by the wind eventuating as wheat, creating bread, the staff of life, materialising in our lunch box.

Let's all begin to look at the miracles we take for granted and issue gratitude to God always and in all the ways for these miracles which surround us.

Misfortune

The pendulum of life swings from fortune to misfortune and back and forth.

Fortune is easy to handle but its twin, misfortune, usually brings one to a new low.

Unfortunately the step from fortune to misfortune is usually quick and, truth be told, has its roots in your thought processes. The stairs to climb from misfortune to fortune is a long and winding one and also has its roots of growth in your thought processes. As a man thinks so it goes!

If we are honest with ourselves and have inner integrity, we will discover that the door to misfortune was opened by us through our thought process and deeds of negligence, laziness, ignorance, greed, ego and the like. As we take credit for our good fortune, we must also acknowledge that misfortune can also be laid at our own doorstep.

Having an attitude of self-growth means that handling misfortune in a proper and honest manner with your head held high will see you overcoming this misfortune and begin mounting the long and winding stairs towards good fortune again. Inner integrity is the key.

Through this process of coming back from misfortune, you will realise that iron is tried in fire and man in adversity. To make bread to eat, the wheat has to be crushed, as does rice, both the staple food of billions of people on earth.

Misfortune can be your greatest boost if you simply see that sometimes you need to be broken open to be released onto a higher, more meaningful path for the growth of your Soul.

Be grateful for the misfortunes in your life, as they are, in fact, miraculous course corrections for you to attain your meaning and purpose as decided by you in Spirit, when you crafted your Soul Contract for this trip to the earth plane.

Mistakes

A mistake is only a learning experience provided you learn from it and avoid similar mistakes in the future.

However, there are times that a mistake made is a mistake and not a learning experience. For example, when asked to do something small which you consider too small to make a difference and you choose to do nothing at all. Another example is choosing not to go on and finish what you had started - these examples could lead to misfortune which was discussed above.

Many people avoid making a decision because they are afraid of making a mistake. This indecision is one of their biggest mistakes because you can't learn from the experience of making mistakes if you don't make the decision to try in the first place.

Mistakes are usually made by not knowing something; not thinking correctly and not caring enough to think or know.

Most mistakes aren't fatal, but a Native American proverb states that 'The hunter can make many mistakes, the hunted, only one.

Money

Man is gullible. He accepts the fact that a piece of paper issued by the government of the day which is marked with different denominations on it has the value that the government says it has. Even the banking system is taken in on this ruse, and they hold the paper for you, even pay you interest for doing so, and give you back the paper when you request it, giving you other pieces of paper with denominations written on it in exchange.

What is money other than an exchange of your productivity to produce goods and services for pieces of paper with denominations written on it? It's your productivity that counts, not the pieces of paper money. More so, it's the value of your productivity based on simple supply and demand for your goods and services at the time of production that determines the value of your productivity.

Usually, the value of brain power outshines the value of muscle power mainly because brain power is in shorter supply than muscle power. It boils down to education, knowledge, skills and the shortages of those in the place where you are, at the time you are there.

Now if you remember the topic about knowledge and the rise of artificial intelligence during the next 25 years, you will appreciate that money will be distributed differently to people over the next 25 years than in the past 5000 years.

Money is a god worshipped by ego-based people, but productivity is scorned as work, and many people resent having to work. However, as proved above, if productivity produces money then those who scorn work cannot have money. There are those whose forefathers worked productively and left a pile of money, but their inheritors hardly work now and use up this money. They are not productive unless you consider consumerism as a form of productivity! There are those who steal money rather than using their productivity for economic gain, and this money is tainted and will aid in their destruction in time.

Money is often connected, incorrectly, to happiness and the difference between an unhappy rich person and an unhappy poor person is that the unhappy poor person has hope. This hope is that money will make them happy! In truth, the poorest person in the world is one that has nothing but money.

Provided that you are the master of your life and your money is the servant, then have all the money you want, but if your money is your master, then you will be its servant.

Nature

As we live more and more in concrete boxes, removed from Nature, so our connection to the rhythmical flow of Nature becomes fainter and fainter.

Whatever we do in this life will not change Nature one iota. Nature has its cycle, and the persistence and certainty of Nature will outlast all of man's accomplishments.

We can create sea walls, and even new concrete islands and Nature will bide Its time and eventually win through doing what It wants to do.

Nature does not respect man, and if man does not respect Nature then don't bet on man winning against Nature in the long term.

There are people who believe that the earth has a Spirit known as Gaia. In Greek mythology, Gaia was the mother goddess who presided over the earth.

These people believe that Gaia will seek to rebalance the disharmony that man has created through exploitation and damage to the earth's delicate balance. Nature has infinite patience and the rebalance when it comes will most probably not be to man's liking.

Nothing

For spiritual people, the desire to become nothing is a form of nirvana. To be nothing is equated to God who is nothingness - nothing to see, nothing to feel, nothing to touch, nothing to speak and nothing to hear.

The desire to know that you are nothing usually implies that your ego is non-existent and you are pure soul as your being. Of course, while living on the earth plane, this desire to be nothingness is beyond all but a handful of beings that are known as Masters. This is what spiritual people strive for, and while some get close, for most it's a target to aim for rather than an occurring reality.

The principle behind becoming a nothing, a nobody, is to empty yourself out completely so that you can become filled with Source/Oneness/God.

The state of being nothing is not dissimilar to Nature, as outlined above. Nature does not claim an ego status. It simply does what It is supposed to do in Its circadian rhythm and balance.

Now

This concept of Now - Living in the Now - is not understood by most people. I had to write a book of 435 pages - *How to Live in the Now* - to aid my own understanding of it. The conclusion I reached was that the Now was not a moment of time, it is a space, which I called God's Space.

The reality of the Now is that it is gone in time once your mind has grasped it. So it's easier to understand that it's a space in which you can connect to your Higher Power because that is the only time/space that your Higher Power operates in eternally. Your Higher Power is eternally here Now.

For that reason, your ego has no power in the Now because your Higher Power has all the power Now. It is only in this moment of Now that the soul's power of love is greater than the ego's love of power, as I have stated numerous times in this book.

Your past has already happened, and although you cannot change what has occurred in the past, you can Now change your perception of what has happened. I detail this under Perception below. This change in perception is hindsight, or 20:20 vision.

For example, you suffered a loss in the past. At the time it was a major catastrophic issue in your life, and you wondered how you would ever survive it. With hindsight, the loss still occurred, but you now see that the loss was necessary to encounter because you were going down the wrong road and you needed a course correction to get onto the right road. This occurrence could have been a failed relationship, a business failure, getting fired or retrenched from a job, etc. On the road you are now on, you can look back with hindsight and see the loss as necessary and be thankful for the loss. The past is the past, but the perception and perspective you have Now make the loss a gain.

LOSS - Leave Our Selves Sad and GAIN - God And I Now

Your future, while uncertain, has also partially been made in the Now. What you are doing Now, as a cause, will result as an effect in the future. For example, studying for a final exam now should result in a pass whereas going out partying now and not studying may result in a fail.

In both examples of the past and the future, what you do in the Now is where your power is to change perceptions of the past and to influence the future.

In this space of the Now, God's Space, your soul connects to your Higher Self/Spirit which in turn connects to your Higher Power. Your ego is absent, and your love-sponsored soul is at work if you want it to be. This is the time to think, say and act on 'what would Love/God do Now'?

Now you can better appreciate why the desire to live in the Now is utopian as a spiritual person or as anyone with this level of consciousness or awareness.

Old Age

My acronym for AGE is Always Growing Evolving.

Old Age is usually seen as the period in which we attempt to hold onto life as the sands of time run through our wrinkled fingers, but it doesn't have to be so.

Having a meaning and purpose to our lives keeps the focal point ever present. Having no reason to get out of bed in the morning is probably the biggest reason for seeing old age as a curse rather than the blessing it is.

See an old person as a mountain climber, finding it difficult to breathe as the air gets thinner, but having the ability to have a vista not seen by those younger ones who are lower down the mountain of life, where the views are limited.

Another perspective of old age is to see it as the childhood of immortality, as an ageing caterpillar would be unaware that they will soon become a butterfly.

As one's physical eyes deteriorate with age, it is compensated with improving spiritual eyes. Over-eagerness and unbridled passion become tempered with perspective and wisdom. Old age is a time for sharing one's experiences, providing they are relevant, and to mentor the younger ones. However one needs to come down to their level to do so.

Wherever possible spend time with young people as they are full of hope, adventure and optimism, whereas many old people are simply taking up space in God's waiting room and their inner light has already been dimmed.

Seek Always to be Growing and Evolving and you will never know old age.

Oneness

The understanding that we are all One is the root of spirituality. Knowing and experiencing that Oneness is not the same thing. Knowing is a belief, whereas experiencing is practical awareness and consciousness that we are, in fact, all One.

In our utopian way, we aim for Oneness but most times settle for duality. Oneness is a state of mind and acceptance but is more intellectual than practical.

The Indian greeting ritual is 'Namaste - the God within me acknowledges the God within you, and with both of our acknowledgements of that we can find a Oneness to share and enjoy.'

In our world of duality, the odds are heavily stacked against us finding such Oneness on the earth plane. That does not mean we should not strive for Oneness and pursue it with all our hearts and minds, but there is a place where it is found in abundance.

The Course of Miracles, said to be a channeling of Jesus Christ, states that 'heaven is not a place or a condition. It is merely an awareness of perfect Oneness.'

If the lenses of our perception were properly cleansed, we would see that all exists in Oneness. We are limited by our vision of duality, and our perception is constrained. For those who see the Oneness all around us, their vision is unconstrained, and heaven is more of a space than a place.

Throughout the last 3000 years plus, the Sages of their time referred to Oneness as we understand it today. The Upanishads (800BC-500BC) had a clear understanding of the Oneness of life. Homer (865BC), Xenophanes (500BC), I Ching (50BC), Seneca (50AD), Epictetus (100AD), Marcus Aurelius (150AD) and many others, all subscribed to the belief and understanding of Oneness as is understood by us today.

Opportunities

Opportunities for personal advancement in whatever sphere interests you are as plentiful as you will ever need. The key is to recognise the opportunity for what it is.

Most people do not have this skill of recognising opportunity. Most see the problem or the drudgery or the hard work required; they don't see the opportunity the problem presents or the way to alleviate the drudgery or a process to simplify the hard work.

Most people cling to security and are scared to step up and take advantage of an opportunity but the only security there is, is in taking advantage of the opportunity. The people in the horse-drawn cart business who made buggy whips and who looked at the first motor cars as fads and turned their backs to this opportunity soon had many unsold buggy whips on their shelves before they went into liquidation. There is no security in the past; it's in the present and the future.

There are people waiting for opportunities to turn up, but they don't realise that first, they have to roll up their sleeves and make things happen.

Although preparedness to take advantage of an opportunity is always first prize, there are times when opportunities enable latent talents to be unearthed to take advantage of the opportunities.

Opportunities are recognised by optimistic people, Realists are working with known information, knowledge and wisdom and many opportunities are outside the comfort zone of the known. Of course, pessimists only see the downside of any opportunity.

In today's world where 1% of the world's population control half its wealth, the cry is for redistribution of wealth. What would serve the world better is redistribution of opportunities enabling more and more people to become entrepreneurs and job creators. Many willing people know how, they simply need the opportunity to prove it.

What is missing is the resolve to turn these opportunities into reality. It requires hard work, and this hurdle stops most wannabes in their tracks.

Carpe Diem, seize the opportunity that this day brings for you.

Optimism

Once again a relevant topic follows its predecessor, this time it's optimism following opportunity.

Optimism is a mind state that enables a positive, sunny, can-do attitude towards life in general. Optimistic people see the good in something or someone and create an environment of lubrication as opposed to one of friction that pessimists bring with them and the heavy cloud of 'can't do' that surrounds them.

An optimist must also be pragmatic and not starry-eyed, and maybe a better term would be a 'possibilist' - someone who sees the practical possibility for something to work or to happen but identifies the possible pitfalls and has a way to work around them. Many Engineers fall into this category when presented with a difficult project, and their skills and training are to find solutions to make the difficult workable.

Achievement is dependent on optimists who have the courage and fortitude required to make solid progress. Optimists also have hope and confidence in their ability and the self-belief and self-confidence to encourage others to join them in their endeavours. A leader will need to be an optimist.

Albert Camus (1913-1960), a notable author stated: 'In the midst of winter, I finally learned that there was in me an invincible summer'.

Pain

Pain is an uncomfortable sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage.

'In medical diagnosis, pain is regarded as a symptom of an underlying condition and is the most common reason for physician consultation in most developed countries.' (Source: Wikipedia).

So there you have it, tissue damage in your body sends an uncomfortable signal, which we call pain, to alert your mind to do something about the pain and, more so, its underlying condition.

Physical pain is then more of a blessing than a curse as it's highlighting the fact that action is needed to alleviate the pain. Intelligent people understand the message of pain and identify and unearth the underlying condition causing the pain to manifest in the tissue.

Without the signal of the pain, we would be unaware that something was wrong and needed fixing. Thank you, pain!

Mental pain, or psychological pain, is probably better described as anguish. This pain is subjective and not localised as is physical pain. Physical pain can be a referral pain stemming from another area connected through the body's unique meridian system as diagnosed by Eastern healing modalities such as reflexology and the like.

Mental pain is usually connected to a negative thought pattern of self-appraisal reflecting inability or deficiency of one's self. The pain associated with this diminished self-worth is an emotional cry for help, and the mental anguish creates a mental distortion of one's supposed inability to help oneself.

This feeling of emotional helplessness is not rational or logical, and the exhibiting of mental pain cannot be understood by many sufferers that this pain is their clarion call for help. Most people resort to prescription drugs and in certain cases, illegal narcotics, excessive alcohol and other pain

numbing remedies to dull this emotional pain. Addictions to these substance which can help dull this incessant emotional pain, often result.

The solution lies in correctly attending to the cause of this diminished self-worth and, if possible, seeking professional counselling as the initial steps to recovery.

A spiritual solution to emotional pain acknowledges that feeling separate from your Higher Power causes one to feel this mental anguish. If possible, a course correction to understanding that one is part of a Higher Power and is eternally and immortally incapable of being damaged at soul level. Your physical body and your mind are not who one really is but simply a vessel for your soul on this trip to the earth plane.

Understanding is needed that one is Love and Light and that one's ego has hijacked one's thought processes and convinced one of their diminished self-worth. This is only true in one's head and nowhere else.

If one can learn to recognise the ego and the damage it has done and learn to come from one's soul in Love and Light and kick the ego out of the driver's seat of one's life and replace it with one's soul as the driver, then emotional pain will diminish and, in time, disappear, as it was never real, to begin with.

Be thankful for the pain you feel; it's a warning sign that things need to be attended to for one's wellbeing.

Pain and suffering are not synonymous. Pain is what one feels, but suffering is what the ego needs, to be noticed, and for sympathy to be given.

Passion

Passion is the prelude to love, and this applies to romantic relationships, one's livelihood as well as one's recreational life.

Passion is enthusiasm and enthusiasm is derived from the Greek where it means God inspired. Enthusiasm is intense and eager enjoyment, interest or approval.

To feel the passion is an emotional response to stimuli from within or without you. This feeling precedes your thoughts about it. Feelings are the language of your soul, and true passion comes from this love-sponsored feeling, followed by the thoughts that this is something that will give your life more meaning and purpose.

Passion makes the possible real. It elevates you above the friction level of the usual trials and tribulations that are usually put in your way to test your resolve to make this happen. Partially committed people may be turned back at the first setback but totally committed people keep on keeping on until they have achieved their objective.

Two quotes come to mind: one is from Ayn Rand, (1905-1982), 'It's not who is going to let me, it's who is going to stop me' and the other from Hannibal (247BC- 183 BC), crossing the Alps with elephants in mid-winter, 'We will either find a way, or make one.'

Commitment, determination, inspiration and a 'can do' attitude fuel your passion as you make every stone the critics hurl at you a stepping stone to success.

Now translate that into your quest to win the hand of your life's partner and to keep the passionate relationship fires burning every day; to succeed at a business venture or career, and, to be the best you can be on the recreational field of life.

Passion lights a fire within your heart. Heart in French means courage and that is a component of passion.

Patience

'O' Lord give me patience, but hurry!'. How many of us have voiced those sentiments when we have had to wait and be patient when we would prefer to hurry up and move on?

When you realise that it's your ego that is impatient, and the cause of so much hardship through impatience, then you can be aware that approaching life from your patient soul is a better way to live an enjoyable life.

Nature personifies patience, and the rhythmical cycle of Nature shows that nothing can be hurried if it is to have value and meaning.

William Shakespeare is quoted as saying, 'How poor are those who have not patience! What wound did ever heal but by degrees?'

Anxiety is a cause for much potential damage to one's emotional, physical and material wellbeing, let alone one's spiritual wellbeing. The ego's need for instant gratification and fulfilment causes impatience and the anxiety that flows from having to wait for things to happen damages harmony and balance and, with it, contentment and peace.

We admire the patience of the driver in the car behind us, and we curse the slowness of the driver of the car in front of us. How many needless fatalities are caused by the impatience of drivers on the road? According to the World Health Organisation (WHO, in 2013, there were 1.25 million deaths caused by road accidents in the world. Probably most of the fatalities were breadwinners whose families are financially negatively affected, let alone emotionally deprived of losing their main support.

'O' Lord give me patience but hurry!'

For those who need to learn more patience simply remember that the mulberry leaf eventually becomes silk, and for those who are patient, it's worth the wait.

The danger of our young generation, who have been brought up in an era of instant gratification, is that patience is not a virtue that has been instilled in them and is foreign to their needs. It will be interesting to see how the Universe deals with them in the future as the ways of learning patience may be an arduous process.

Peace

Once again we have the synchronicity of peace following patience as the next topic.

If you believe as I do that we are a part of Source/Oneness/God and that this Higher Power is Love and Light then It must also be Peace at Its essence and then, ipso facto, we are peace at our essence.

So peace can be found within each of us as our eternal birthright. This begs the question, if you do not feel at inner peace right now then what obstacles have you put in your way to prevent you from being at inner peace?

The main culprit will always be your EGO - Edging God Out - edging peace out.

Your ego's desire for making you more important than you inherently feel right now is driving your need for more self-importance. At your essence, you are your Soul, and your Soul is connected to your Higher Self/Spirit, which in turn, is connected to Source/Oneness/God, who is All That Is.

Your ego is saying have desires for material, and non-material things to make you feel more self-important, while your Soul is patiently waiting for you to recognise that you are already All That Is!

Can you see the inner conflict? Can you understand why you do not have inner peace?

Now, if you do not have inner peace, then your home cannot have peace. If your home does not have peace, then your neighbourhood is devoid of peace. If your neighbourhood is devoid of peace, then your city has no peace. If your city does not know peace then your State/Province and your country will not know peace and nor will your neighbouring countries and those across the water from you too.

The only way for peace to reign in your heart and through the whole world is for you to come from your soul and not your ego, and back we go to the spiritual watchword in all my writings and in this book too: 'what would Love/God/Peace do now?'

I have used this quote before in this book more than once, 'when the love of power is replaced by the power of love then will our world know the blessings of peace' - William Gladstone (1809-1898).

A final quote from AJ Muste (1885-1967) 'There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.'

Perception

'Two men looked out of prison bars; one saw mud and one saw stars' - Dale Carnegie (1888-1955).

We have sight but do we have vision? What has coloured our view? We arrived on the earth plane as a baby with no perception of right and wrong, good and bad, war and peace, love and hate and we learnt through what we were subjected to; by other people and things surrounding us. We were blotting paper soaking up other peoples' perceptions to create our perception of reality as that which we understood reality to be.

So do we have sight or vision or perceptions? What is real and what is not? How hard do we fight to prove our point of view, which, in reality, is only our perception of reality? Our ego has determined that our perceptions are right and that others are wrong.

We are more unaware of the things that we do not see, due to our inability to perceive them, than that which we do see. Over 70% of all communications between people are non-verbal and how many of us are blind to these non-verbal signals, and, if we do see them, do we know what they mean?

There is a relevant quote from Nietzsche (1844-1900) –'And those who were seen dancing were thought insane by those who could not hear the music'.

We see things and other people not as they are but through our own lenses of perception.

There is a story told of indigenous people of old who looked out to sea and saw the sailing ships of the incoming strangers. Because they could not comprehend what they were seeing, they literally did not see them, until the strangers landed on the beach in their life rafts.

What perception do we have of ourselves? And where did that perception originate? And who has added to it with their viewpoints that we believed?

Do we really know who we are? Do you believe that you are a Soul, a part of Oneness/Source/God or do you think you are an accident of sperm fertilising an egg randomly, and that you have one life and then you become food for worms in the grave?

I will end this investigation into perception with a quote from Lao Tzu (circa 600 BC) 'What the caterpillar calls the end, the rest of the world calls a butterfly.'

Perfection

'To dream the impossible dream, to fight the unbeatable foe, to bear with unbearable sorrow, to run where the brave dare not go, to right the unrightable wrong, to love pure and chaste from afar, to try when your arms are too weary, to reach the unreachable star. This is my quest; to follow that star, no matter how hopeless, no matter how far...' (some of the lyrics from The Impossible Dream from the movie, The Man from La Mancha).

This song has always epitomised the search for perfection for me. We try our hardest to be perfect, but it's an impossible dream when we come from our ego in our quest for such perfection.

When we come from our soul in the search for perfection, then we see a completely different vision. We believe, know and may even have experienced the perfection we call Source/Oneness/God. Through our desire and practice to be as Godlike as we can be, then we may have glimpses of such perfection.

Buddha (563 BC-483 BC) had a clearer vision when he said, 'When you realise how perfect everything is, you will tilt your head back and laugh at the sky'.

We will probably only be aware of this perfection once we return to Spirit and see how all those twists and turns and cul-de-sacs and dead ends, as well as the highways, our life followed, were all perfect. We will see that we used so much energy struggling against the weight of the Universe, instead of simply going with the flow in total trust.

TRUST- To Rely Upon Spirit Totally

Perseverance

Perseverance is usually the one thing that separates success from failure; the determination to forgo some initial benefit by sticking it out through thick and thin times. Keeping your shoulder to the wheel, your nose to the grindstone, to arrive at the end and claim the prize that comes with a victory is the sweetest joy of achievement.

You will need patience, willpower, self-discipline and self-control to be tenacious and determined as you struggle against the odds with all the strength you can muster until you break through and achieve your goal.

The stream will always wear away the rock through its continual perseverance, consistently flowing and flowing and creating minute, consistent pressure until the outer edges of the rock are loosened, until the rock breaks up, eventually succumbing to the consistent pressure of the water.

In our current world of instant gratification, the next generation of leaders will be the ones who understand and apply perseverance to their lives, and to their causes, and earn their leadership roles through delayed gratification.

Perspective

'There are at least two trillion galaxies in the observable universe, containing more stars than all the grains of sand on planet Earth', according to Glen Mackie of the Centre for Astrophysics and Supercomputing, Swinburne University, Melbourne, Australia.

Most of us have an overdeveloped sense of importance as to who we are and our place on earth, let alone in the observable universe of two trillion galaxies.

Those of us who have a belief in a Higher Power have some awareness of the enormity of this Higher Power and a poor understanding, if any, of how and what this Higher Power is or does regarding the creation of our world, our universe and the two trillion galaxies in the observable universe.

We don't have a proper perspective of the world. We prefer to see the world as we exist in it. What are we individually, but a speck of dust in an expanse of well over 100 billion light years? One light-year is 5.88 trillion miles or 9.5 trillion km, so the distance and expansive nature of 100 billion light years are inconceivable.

Getting the picture yet?

So what makes us feel so important when patently we should not even be visible to the naked eye when taking a universal look at ourselves, let alone from two trillion galaxies away.

It's our ego. Our ego says we are all powerful as we beat our chests. If you want to run with your ego, please be my guest! Personally, I think humility and serving others will be more beneficial, but if you want to beat your chest, then please carry on and let me know how that works out for you in your latter days.

We are nothing, and nothing we do on the earth plane is likely to have any lasting value beyond a generation or two. Yes, a few of us can invent some amazing discovery or be a William Shakespeare or be someone else that will be remembered for centuries to come for some reason or another. The vast remainder of us will be like waves on the ocean, visible for a short while and then we return to the body of the ocean, unrecognisable as a wave, or as a person, who lived on the earth plane for several decades.

The truth is nobody cares about you beyond a few family members and friends, and they will get on with their lives once you are gone from the earth plane, and you will become a distant memory in time.

Whenever you feel important or in need of boosting your ego at one or more peoples' expense, remember no one gives a damn how important you think you are, unless they benefit in some way directly or indirectly. In these instances, they don't want you, but they need you, and when your usefulness has passed, they won't need you either.

Wise up to the perspective of your life and decide what is meaningful for you to do to make yourself feel good for the time you are here. Hopefully, you will give and receive love and serve others, but the choice is always yours to make.

Possessions

In our materialistic world, the acquisition of possessions is more often than not the scorecard we attach to our lives.

The problem with possessions is that the desire and chase to acquire them is most often more enjoyable than the responsibility and enjoyment that comes from having the possessions. The beneficial factors seem to diminish with time, and the desire and chase begin again for even better and even more possessions to fill the hole in our soul. But it's the ego that has the hole, not the soul.

The ego has a 'black hole' that is unfillable and, like any addiction, it requires more and more as it's satisfaction level diminishes with every purchase of the addicted substance.

As Kahlil Gibran, (1883-1931) stated, 'and tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the over-prudent dog burying its bones in the trackless sand.'

When you are clutching your possessions to your body, your hands are not free to assist others, or even yourself, as the fear of letting go of your possessions dominates your thoughts and actions.

Should you care about benefitting others besides yourself, then the acquisition and use of possessions that can be shared with others and improve the quality of all participants' lives, brings bountiful blessings to you and the others.

The greatest possessions you have are your health, your time, your knowledge and your wisdom. When you give your time to help and serve others with your knowledge and your wisdom, then you are sharing some of your most valuable possessions. Like a candle can be used to light millions of other candles without being diminished, so is your knowledge and wisdom.

The reality about possessions is that you will have them for a while and then they will either be used up, or no longer be fashionable and lose their value, or upon your passing on will be fought over by your inheritors and the Tax Collectors.

As Matthew 6:19 and 6:20 tells us 'Don't store up treasures here on earth where moths eat them and rust destroys them and thieves break in to steal, but store them up in heaven'.

The good deeds that you do accompany you to the afterlife and decide the positioning of your Soul in Spirit and its proximity to the Source's Light and Love.

Potential

If you knew without a shadow of a doubt that you would not fail, what would you do with your life?

If you knew without a shadow of a doubt that if you did fail that you would be able to fix whatever needed fixing and so move on with your adventure in life, then what would you do with your life?

If you knew without a shadow of a doubt that you will fail at whatever you do, how would that affect your life?

So the only difference between you as a complete success and you as a complete failure is your self-belief or your lack of self-belief.

That which makes you a victim and not a victor in your life is your lack of self-belief, and conversely, that which makes you a victor and not a victim is your self-belief.

We haven't talked about access to capital, or opportunities or anything else, simply your attitudinal self-belief system.

Your potential is unlimited. There are very few things you can't do if you had the desire, determination and perseverance to achieve any lofty goal.

As discussed under the topic 'leadership', convincing others that they can achieve more of their potential and motivate them to do so is one of the roles of a leader. True potential is found in self-belief and when you couple that with your belief in your Higher Power as your co-driver through life then there is no limit to what you are capable of doing.

Albert H. Schuller is quoted as saying: 'any fool can count the seeds in an apple. Only God can count all the apples in one seed.'

Power

My acronym for POWER is Present Only When Ego (is) Removed.

When power and responsibility rule together as authentic power, then peace will reign, but when power is corrupted then the inevitable mayhem will result at some future date.

Having power over others without their consent and their willingness to be led by this power usurper is a revolution in the making.

Power is a trust, and like any form of trust, it needs to be respected by the ones who have the power and those who are subjected to the power. The responsibility of those with the power to answer to the people they govern or manage, and to their Higher Power, is the only way to keep this power authentic.

The Higher Power is where the true power lies. Anyone abusing power eventually creates the causal effect of not only losing that power but usually losing their lives and or their livelihood as well. The cause and effect of power abusers are sometimes seen as God's judgement, but in truth, a God of Love cannot be a God of Judgement, and the abuser sows their own seed of failure by the causes that follow via their abuse of the power entrusted to them.

Having power over one's thoughts is probably the most important power to acquire and develop more fully. Seneca (4 BC-65 AD) said, 'He is most powerful who has power over himself.'

The I Ching, one of the oldest Chinese classic texts, states 'Power best expresses itself in gentleness.'

Prayer

Power followed by prayer is another synchronistic coupling as prayer is probably one of the most powerful things one can action.

If our Higher Power is prayed to it's not because we want to influence this Higher Power with our list of wants and needs but it makes us conscious of changing our nature to become more Godlike. By becoming more Godlike, we connect via the part of this Higher Power which is our Soul, and it's connected to our Higher Self/Spirit which, in turn, is connected to our Higher Power.

We are now on the vibrational frequency that is the same as our Higher Power, and now our prayer can be heard and felt by this Higher Power.

Can you imagine the power behind such a connection? We are connecting to the Source of all Universes and Galaxies and so much more.

This Higher Power is our Co-Creator of our lives, and once we are on the same vibrational frequency, this comprehensive guidance can come through. In our prayers, we talk, but in our meditations, we listen to the 'voice' and feelings of this Higher Power as well as to our Angels, Spirit Guides and other 'unseen Entities'.

Our prayers are our requests to a Higher Power who knows precisely what we need and when we need it for the highest growth of our Soul. We must not simply voice our needs and wants in prayer, but we must also row away from the rocks, and we must put all the effort we can to make this prayer a reality.

Prayer requires patience, and mostly we want instant gratification, but remember the journey from the mulberry leaf to the silk gown is a long one.

Prayer is our communication with our Higher Power. It must be what we need and want from our viewpoint, trusting that our Higher Power already knows what is to be done for us. Our prayers of gratitude are also required for what our Higher Power does for us daily and during each day. This gratitude should be continually acknowledged and must never be taken for granted.

Begin your day with a prayer to unlock the door to today and end your day with a prayer to lock you safely away in the heart of God.

May God bless you and keep you.

May God cause His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

May God grant you His most precious gift, the gift of peace.

Principles

Those who would lead a blissful existence know that there are basic principles that need to be learnt and applied daily.

These principles are based on the Golden Rule of 'Do unto others as you would like done unto you'.

The Ten Commandments are also part of these basic principles.

The most important word in dealing with yourself and with others is respect. My acronym for RESPECT is Recognising Each Soul Politely Ensuring Correct Tribute.

Once you have respect, then the next principle to adhere to is admiration. Admiration for yourself and what you stand for, who you are being, and what you are doing, and the same for everyone you meet.

When you acknowledge that the part of God within you as your soul is also a part of everyone and everything you come into contact with, as God is All That Is, then you should, no you must, show the respect for them that you would show to God.

Love as the religious injunction goes, 'Love your neighbour as yourself' is another important principle.

Honesty, integrity and trust are other principles to be ingrained into who you are and how you behave towards yourself and towards others.

Equality is also an important principle, as no one person or thing is more valuable in God's eyes than another.

Each person must decide on the principles that govern their lives and must ensure that these principles are the bedrock of their existence.

Problems

Do you have a problem or is it simply an inconvenience?

A problem could be termed life-threatening, employment threatening, losing your home or a losing a family member or friend.

Most everything else that we consider problems are really inconveniences that have solutions which may not be immediately evident.

When you look at a problem as an opportunity to grow and expand your capabilities, which makes you a better friend, work colleague and the like, then problems/inconveniences are blessings in disguise.

So why don't you try this one on for size? When you are next confronted with a problem or inconvenience, simply address it as 'a blessing in disguise'?

I have this 'blessing in disguise' at work that seems to have everyone stumped. One thing I know about this 'blessing in disguise' is that I can't solve it with the mindset I had when it was identified. I have to elevate my thinking and preferably come at this 'blessing in disguise' from a completely different angle to unearth it.

Once I unearth it, and I benefit from the 'blessing' then I will be strengthened by the courage and wisdom it requires to identify it like this 'blessing'.

Finding these 'blessings in disguise' and identifying them is what will differentiate me as a winner and one who is successful. After that, more complex 'blessings in disguise' will find their way to me and my growth from here on in is assured.

Fundamentally, there is a lack of understanding of the issue at hand which I term a 'blessing in disguise.' I need to interrogate this lack of understanding to see what blockages there are that others have accepted as permanent no-go areas. I must remember the wise words of Thomas Edison (1847-1931) when inventing the light bulb, 'I have found 10000 ways it won't work'. Edison's attitude included persistence and perseverance and learning from each failed experiment until he 'saw the light' if you will excuse the pun!

There are times that the solutions to find this 'blessing' are simply not in evidence after having scoured every avenue. These insoluble issues have to be managed and even massaged to reduce their importance, as stumbling blocks in the way of progress. Eventually one simply outgrows the

insurmountable issue at hand and bypasses are found around the problem via them being managed and massaged better. Another future generation may develop the wherewithal to resolve the current insoluble issue at hand. There is no disgrace in having tried and failed. The only disgrace may be in not having tackled the insoluble issue in the first place.

Use this new terminology of describing problems as 'blessings in disguise' and watch your success rate climb.

Purpose

Believe it or not, you decided what your purpose would be during this lifetime on earth. When you were in Spirit, you looked at the records of your Soul's eternal journey and discovered some missing bits that you still had to do to create eternal balance and harmony based on previous/parallel lifetimes. Your Soul Group got together and each soul involved in the transition to the earth plane this time around saw what they needed to do.

They created a 'play' and assigned each other the acting parts to play to fulfil the myriad of Soul Contracts involved.

Rich man, poor man, beggar man and thief roles were assigned and timing guidelines were laid out to achieve the success of the 'play' and the fulfilment of these various Soul Contracts which combined to create a structure for the arranged play. Free will, as always, was given, and if one went 'off script' the understanding was that new lines were to be written for the play, in order to reach the desired effect of fulfilling these Soul Contracts.

The purpose for some was straight-forward and obvious from a young age. Others had to dig very deep to unearth their purpose on the earth plane. And, of course, those in the middle between these two extremes found their purpose in reasonable time to play out their roles and achieve the completion of their Soul Contracts.

Once you have found your purpose, or re-membered it, by rejoining the members of your Soul Group, then the meaning of your life was far more obvious.

Once you have discovered the 'why' of your life, you can handle any 'how' to achieve it.

What we have a hard time remembering is that the role actors and actresses play could make them the heroes/heroines or the pariahs/enemies on earth, this time around, but it's only a role they are playing in the play, it's not who they are as eternal Souls.

The understanding of Soul Contracts is where non-judgement comes into play. We are judging actors on the stage of life, forgetting that it's all role playing and not real at all. It's all an illusion to fulfil Soul Contracts so that God can experience it all as All That Is and that participating souls fill in the 'holes in their souls', for their eternal souls' journey.

Finding your purpose that the amnesia, brought about by your transition to the earth plane, caused you to forget, is the adventure of this lifetime and correcting it is your goal. Soul growth is involved here so know that personal growth is assured and know that there are no accidents. Everything is working itself out in the intricate mosaic of your Soul Group's play as arranged in Spirit.

Reality

The synchronicity of reality following purpose is once again proof that the sequence of this alphabetical order is working!

There is no such thing as reality on the earth plane; it's all an illusion, as discussed in the previous topic - Purpose.

Author, Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) said 'All we see is but a dream within a dream' and author, Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880) said 'There is no such thing as reality. There is only perception.'

The flow of reality goes along the following pathway: Reality is:

- = what we take to be truth
- = what we believe to be truth
- = how we perceive reality to be
- = what we look for to validate this perception of reality
- = what we think to validate this perception of what we perceive to be the truth
- = what we perceive
- = what we believe
- = what we see as truth
- = therefore, our thoughts create our reality

There is a lovely Italian proverb that goes, 'At the end of the game, the pawn and the king go back into the same box.'

When taking judgment and non-judgement as two examples, as discussed in the previous topic, 'Purpose', any use of such judgment will change your perception of reality. If you use non-judgment, your perception of reality changes as well.

There is no truth in our understanding of reality as illustrated in the different terminology to describe the same person from two sides of the same coin, as either a freedom fighter or as a terrorist.

In reality, they are simply playing out an acting role in a play arranged and orchestrated by a Soul Group in Spirit to fulfil Soul Contracts.

Relationships

Your first conscious relationship is with your mother, as your nurturer and provider of sustenance, and hopefully, the person who first loved you.

If your father is around, and judging from the high percentage of unmarried mothers in many countries, as discussed under the topic of Marriage, we cannot assume that a father is around, then your father joins as a relationship partner with you.

Should you have siblings and or other close family members, such as grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and your parent's close friends and their families, they may also become relationship partners with you.

Once you enter the school system, your relationship partners grow via the friends that you meet. As your life progresses and you reach puberty, your relationship partners become more sexually based as you head towards the marriage altar or living together, as is becoming far more likely as the 21st Century unfolds. In-laws and their families may also add to your store of relationship partners, as may new friends, as your circle of people grows.

In time, you may become a parent and your relationship with your child or children repeats the pattern.

Your longest relationship is likely to be with your siblings, if you have any, but your most important relationship is with yourself.

If you are comfortable in your skin with who you are; your value systems, your integrity, your nobility based on conscious self-growth, your inner happiness, your feeling of self-love, what you stand for and how you act, then you may offer yourself to another in a relationship. In the ideal world, you would expect them to have achieved similar feelings of self-love within themselves.

If you are not at those levels of self-love and you enter into a relationship with another, hoping that they will supply any deficiencies you perceive there to be in yourself, then you have a need for this other person, not a love for them to share.

Professing love, instead of recognising it as need, is going to make for a bumpy ride, to say the least, as integrity is the basis of trust and trust is the basis of any relationship.

Friendship is the basis of all relationships. You can break off a friendship at a moment's notice. Any distrust in a friendship could immediately call for its cessation.

Romantic relationships based on friendship are usually the most stable of relationships, as trust, loyalty, integrity, laughter and shared experiences cement the relationship before sexuality is experienced.

Regrettably, today couples jump into bed together too soon, and the whole relationship is based on sexual needs, desire, control, manipulation and other less desirable human qualities which skew the relationship. Usually, this behaviour does not give the friendship time for roots to be established. Deep roots enable relationships to weather the inevitable storms which occur.

Relationships mirror what is happening both within each party as well as in the relationship itself. There are three parties to any relationship. There is you, your partner and the relationship itself. Never blame the relationship itself for any mishap, but nurture it with love, attention, patience, tolerance and care like the fragile flower it represents.

The mirror your partner is holding up for you to see may be your thoughts, words and actions or it may be theirs, but whatever it is, be very thankful for such reflection as it could be an early warning to fix what needs repairing or alternatively, to develop further what is working well in your relationship.

The ideal relationship partner is not one that needs changing or fixing to complete the image you may want for them, but one to share their completeness with your completeness. In this manner, you both synergistically face the world together as one whole soul in love, as soul-based love.

God is Love means that the Oneness is found between two souls knowing the Love that is God.

Your duty as a relationship partner is to perfect yourself as a soul love-based person and to bring that to the relationship table. You do this immaterial of whether or not the other party is doing the same in their life. They will rise to the occasion or they won't, it's their choice to make not yours. If they do rise to the occasion then you will have a match made in heaven, and if they don't, you will still strive to be the best version of yourself, and you will find inner bliss through that.

The purpose of a loving relationship is for the personal growth of becoming the best version of yourself that you can be; it is not for happiness. If through mutual personal growth you find happiness, then be grateful for this bonus in life.

If you value the relationship enough, you will choose to be happy and not to be right. You will place the relationship's value to you above your ego's needs so that your love-based soul is your guiding North Star in your relationship.

Religion

I think it is safe to assume that Oneness/Source/God was around over 13.5 million years ago when the earth was formed, if we believe that this Higher Power created the world.

The earliest traces of religion is measured before 2350BC. The first of the oldest surviving religious texts, the Pyramid Texts, was composed around 2350 BC in Ancient Egypt, according to Wikipedia.

So religion, as evidenced by the written word, is some 4400 years old and the acceptance of Oneness/Source/God first occurred some 13,5 million years before.

Patently God didn't require a religion!

The creation of religion was, no doubt, to manage the population and have the priests intercede on their behalf with the 'god' of the day.

The essence of what a religion stands for is fairly universal in its acceptance. Love, charity, comfort, compassion, forgiveness, giving, humanity, humility, inspiration, joy, kindness, patience, respect, service, sharing, strength, tolerance, trust and truth. There are probably a lot more to add to this list, but the point is well made as to what all religions have at their core.

The concept of Source/God being One is aptly described in the Jewish prayer known as the Shema – 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One' and is found in Deuteronomy 6:4.

If God is One, as we believe in Oneness/Source/God, and as also believed by many religions, then how can there be more than one religion?

My religion is Oneness and my belief is that God is Everything and Everything is God. The God of All That Is. We are all part of that Oneness, and we are all One, accountable and responsible to each other and to the concept we have of Oneness/Source/God.

Within this Oneness, there is everything on the earth plane and in the Spirit World as well, and probably in spaces we can only imagine where life forms exist.

Even George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), a playwright and co-founder of the London School of Economics, is quoted as saying 'There is only one religion, though there are a hundred versions of it.'

My belief is that in this Oneness we strive to become Godlike in our thoughts, words and actions by living the spiritual mantra of 'What would God/Love/Oneness do now?'

Science

Continuing with the synchronicity of topic headings, science which has been at odds with religion, follows on from religion, perhaps to find a commonality. We will see?

The development and growth of science is a universal approach to understanding truth based on provable facts. Regrettably, man's wisdom is not keeping pace, and the development of various sciences are far outstripping wisdom and even man's ability to understand and apply the growth of these scientific achievements.

Whereas religion is based on hope and belief, science is based on provable facts and the common overlap is hard to find. This led Albert Einstein (1879-1936) to proclaim, 'Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.'

To me, who knows nothing of science, scientists can be understandably atheistic, as the proof of God or a Higher Power requires a leap of faith that is not found in science books or scientific explorations.

For a scientist to become a theist or a religious or spiritual person requires them to come to a conclusion that there is something, undefinable, that is the Creator of what we see around us. Many scientists believe that we are here due to a reaction of scientific properties that accidentally created the perfection we see in Nature and the world, not to mention the visible galaxies from our most scientific telescopes.

Perhaps the quote from Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), a German playwright, sums up the role of science, 'The aim of science is not to open the door to infinite wisdom, but to set a limit to infinite error.'

However, science is continually expanding its known horizons and, in some cases, debunking previously recognised scientific facts.

Science in the right hands will add value to man's existence but in the wrong hands, such as nuclear warfare, could spell man's obliteration from the earth plane.

Security

Most people would trade their freedom for security, but security is a myth. The need for security is a fear-based one built on distrust and caution.

Many people turn to religion, and sometimes even spirituality, to find security in the unknowable future. The superstition of religion and the protective layers of traditions, behaviour and belief somehow make people believe that these will protect them in their fear based religious beliefs in a judgemental God, or vengeful Higher Power - a God or Higher Power waiting to pounce on you and punish you for your evil thoughts, words and actions.

Those who believe in a God of Love, a non-punishing God or Higher Power, also feel the need to have the security of this love-based belief to bolster them in peering nervously into the unknowable future.

The pre-occupation with the future and what it holds for one is why security is needed. But what if we didn't concern ourselves about the future and simply lived in the present moment of Now without any thought or concern about an unknowable future?

Imagine living on the crest of the leading edge of the never ending wave and finding out that God, or the Higher Power we seek for our future, was only found in God's Space of the Now. Why would we need the security of the future if we found that the solution to life was only to be found here and now, or nowhere, other than in the present moment of now.

If we could live in this eternal moment of now and connect to God or our Higher Power and know that this is the only real security you would ever need now and now and now.

There is no punishment or praise awaiting you in the future other than the causes you set into motion. The resultant effects thereof will eventuate sometime in the future. You are the causal result of your future. Breaking the rules of life and looking for the sanctity of a religious or spiritual

or any other structure to protect you from the effects of your thoughts, words and actions will not help you escape from the consequences of your causal actions.

Every cause has an effect, and while you have free will to make any choice you want, you cannot escape the consequences of that choice. Your thoughts create your reality, and your future is made in the present moment of your now thoughts.

Security is a myth, as stated at the outset of this topic. Finding that security within yourself as your ability to deal with whatever arises in your life and having faith in a loving God or Higher Power, are the initial steps. Knowing that the only constant in life is change, and learning to embrace that change will bring you to the knowledge that the need for security is unwarranted because whatever happens creates an opportunity for the growth of your soul to become more Godlike.

Be open to change, embrace it and look for the opportunity for the inner growth of your soul and the need for security will disappear in your confidence and trust in yourself and your loving God or Higher Power.

Change is assured in your life, but your growth will only occur if you grasp the opportunity that change presents and you don't run for the cover of recognized security to avoid that growth of your soul to become more Godlike.

CHANGE- Clearing, Healing And New Growth Emerging

Self-Esteem

Most people confuse self-esteem with esteem. Self-esteem is what you think of yourself and esteem is in what regard others hold you or, more simply, what others think of you.

What others think about you is none of your business because they are coming to that conclusion from their place of understanding and being. Until you know what they want from you, it is not possible to know through which jaundiced eyes they are looking at you.

Be concerned only with what you think about yourself and, more importantly, whether you are being the best version of yourself at all times. In this way your self-esteem should be high and your self-love intact.

Let's start at the beginning of who You really are. You are a part of Oneness/Source/God, and as such, You are perfect in every sense of the word. God is Love, and You are Love as a part of God. What right does anyone have to judge you and diminish your perfection? Only you can judge yourself and find yourself not living up to the perfection that you are, inherent as a part of God. On self-inspection, if you find that you lack in one or more areas then you have the ability and opportunity to course correct and improve yourself to become the best version of yourself that you can be.

By following this process, you can ensure that your self-esteem is as high as possible and your self-love and self-belief are at a high level too.

Once your level of self-esteem is high, you will find that you can admire and appreciate anyone else and you are likely to treat them with kindness, respect and generosity. Only those with low self-esteem find it difficult to admire, praise and acknowledge others and they treat them with disrespect, unkindness and selfishness.

When you have a high self-esteem, you do not need to compare yourself with others, as your yardstick of comparison is the best version of yourself. People who judge others and demean them

usually have low self-esteem and find some level of perverted happiness by comparing themselves to the worst in others to make them feel better about themselves.

Self-esteem is not ego based but love based, as you are a soul who is love and that love is what you show to yourself and others day in and day out.

Build your self-esteem day by day by lovingly doing the right things in your life for yourself and for others.

Self-Knowledge

If you truly believed that you were a part of Oneness/Source/God, then your self-knowledge would be that you are Godlike, eternal and immortal.

You would know that you are miraculous and capable of creating anything and everything. You would feel omnipotent and egoless. The self-realisation that you are You, a part of Oneness/Source/God would be evidenced by you being love and of love pouring out of your pores and you would be the embodiment of such love in your every thought, word and action.

In our search for self-knowledge, we tend to look outwardly instead of focusing our search within. If you don't find love, beauty and truth within yourself as your being, then you will not find it without, in others.

When you come to the realisation that you are here representing your Higher Power, enabling the divine purpose of the Universe to unfold as part of your Creator's plan with you as Its Co-Creator, then you will take your role seriously and enjoy every moment as you become love and be love in your every thought, word and action.

What greater self-knowledge can there be than knowing that your Higher Power is working through you for you to become You?

Service

Once again the synchronicity of self-knowledge being followed by service is amazing.

Those who are egoless will find that in serving others, they are serving themselves. In the belief of Oneness, we are all ourselves, and we are serving Oneness too.

To serve others and to be appreciated for that service is to ennoble ourselves. Those who only receive service and do not give service to others are empty vessels. All of Nature is the sharing of giving and receiving and any blockages that dam up that free-flowing process will be negatively affected and potentially damaged.

Life is a two-way street of giving and receiving and if you only give you will be depleted. If you only receive you will become bloated and uncomfortable before becoming ill-at-ease and then possibly diseased.

To serve is, in reality, to serve the part of Oneness/Source/God within that person or entity and to receive service from another is to receive it from the part of Oneness/Source/God within that person or entity.

Oneness/Source/God is, in fact, doing the giving and the receiving and we, who consider ourselves to be involved are, in reality, merely the conduits for the service of a Higher Power.

Mother Theresa who was recently canonised as a Saint saw the face of Jesus on every leper and beggar she helped. If we could reach that place of understanding, we might see the face of Oneness/Source/God. How differently we would react and respond if that was the case.

Imagine seeing the face of God, as we perceive It to be, on the face of all we serve and receive service from. Only then would we know unconditional Love and inner peace forever more.

Silence

Silence is wonderful, but stillness is even better. Silence is the absence of sound, but stillness is the absence of sound and thought and will be covered more fully under the topic of Stillness.

Silence is always ever-present. Silence is interrupted by a sound. Silence is the space in which so much can be learnt and understood.

Firstly, Oneness/Source/God operates in silence and any communication between you, and your Higher Power occurs most effectively in silence. Prayer may be either silent or verbal, but meditation requires silence to 'hear' your Higher Power.

Secondly, you seldom learn when you are talking. You learn when you are listening to another person or animate object or when you are reading in silence. If you look at your best friends, your trusted confidants, you will find that they are good listeners. If you want to become more popular with others then simply become a better listener and don't only wait for others to take a breath and then reply with what you want to say. Listen and remain silent and observe and learn.

Thirdly, by simply listening to others, you will be judged as wise, even though you hardly say a thing! Ego-filled people can't wait to talk about themselves and others and seldom say something a bit more interesting. The saying 'empty barrels make the most noise' is a quote from Plato, the Greek Philosopher (Circa 300AD), who said, 'An empty vessel makes the loudest sound, so they that have the least wit are the greatest babblers.' Well, that stood the test of time!

When you remain silent, you allow your inner creativity to connect to the creativity of All That Is. Now you can tap into whatever you need to know to discover your Eureka moment. In that silence your mind taps the Creative Bank of all possibilities and the answers and solutions come to you from 'somewhere out there'.

When you sit with your friend in silence the 'space' you enter is a comforting space. Words are not said but the connecting of souls takes place within this sacred space of silence, and the depth of your feelings towards each other is profound. The true test of friendship is to be in silence more often than in speech and to come out feeling emotionally stronger for this process.

Simplicity

Those choosing to live a more simple life and to rid themselves of superfluous possessions will experience a peace that descends on them.

Sathya Sai Baba (1926-2011), an Indian Guru, stated 'People say I want peace. If you remove I (ego) and your want (desire), you are left with peace!'

We come into the world without possessions, and we leave without possessions. It's only our ego that decides what you can't possibly do without, as your possessions grow and grow in number and size.

Sometimes I have to wonder if we own our possessions or whether they own us! Freedom is judged as freedom of; freedom to and freedom from. Perhaps freedom from possessions will liberate us more than freedom from persecution by others?

It's our insecurity that tells us to acquire material possessions, whereas, when we read about the topic of Security higher up, real security has precious little to do with material possessions and much more to do with living in the Now, confident that we can handle whatever comes into our space.

Once you rid yourself of the unnecessary in your life, you then appreciate what you are left with as necessary to add value to your life.

My son Jonathan (23) has recently returned from a 14 day trip to Nepal, and he took a backpack that weighed 8.5 kilograms or some 18 pounds in weight, and he had a wonderful time hiking around Nepal. On the way to the airport his lovely girlfriend, who stayed behind to work, remarked that her daily handbag weighed 9 kilograms!

If you live a religious or spiritual life, then you will know that God will give you what you need, when you need it, for the highest growth of your soul. Travel light through life and see the abundance that surrounds you. Take what you need when you need it and leave the rest for those who also have needs.

One of my favourite books is called Peace Pilgrim and is the story of a silver-haired lady (1908-1981), calling herself only 'Peace Pilgrim'. From 1953 to 1981 she walked more than 25000 miles throughout the USA, on a personal pilgrimage for peace. She vowed to 'remain a wanderer until mankind has learned the way of peace, walking until given shelter and fasting until given food.' In the course of her 28-year pilgrimage, she touched the hearts, minds, and lives of thousands of individuals across North America. Her message was both simple and profound. It continues to inspire people all over the world.

Solitude

In the USA, with a population of 324 million in 2016, 48.85 million of those people, or 15%, went fishing or angling, according to statista.com.

Realistically, most people going fishing are men, so a high proportion of men in the USA sought the solitude that fishing brings.

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), an American author, stated: 'Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after.'

Solitude is not something that most men find easy to do without distraction, whether it is fishing, walking, exercising, tinkering under the hood of a motor car, having a drink, etc.

Most women, who are mothers and grandmothers, also have families and homes to take care of and find it difficult to find some 'me time' where they can find solitude.

Most children would be happy to be playing rather than to be sitting in solitude, which for them would more likely be 'time out' as a form of discipline, if not punishment.

Elderly people, especially those living alone, find solitude a poor second to companionship.

So for those cherished souls who want to be in solitude, without the distraction of the outside world, they fall into a very small part of the population. When they do find such solitude, and they can connect to the 'small voice within them' that some call God, they enjoy bliss.

However, the true test of finding solitude within is when you can do so amongst the noise and haste of the busy world around you. Believe me, this is easier said than done but it is achievable and highly desirable if you are so inclined.

There is a Sufi saying that 'Eagles fly alone and sheep herd together.'

Aldous Huxley, (1894-1922), a writer, stated 'The more powerful and original a mind, the more it will incline towards the religion of solitude.'

Soul

For those who are religious or spiritual, the awareness that they are an eternal and immortal soul which occupies a body this trip to the earth plane is sacrosanct to their belief system.

The greatest achievement of man is to raise the souls of the people rather than the structures of the society. If people knew that they are a part of Oneness/Source/God and that this part of them, their souls, were indestructible, eternal and immortal, then they would be encouraged to become more Godlike towards themselves and their fellow man.

A society that is increasingly Godlike does not need religious structures of grandeur to display the wealth of their religion or to give them a feeling of something grand when they enter their house of worship. Their body is their Temple and the still, small voice within, their access to the God of their knowing.

The Oneness that is felt with your Higher Power and your fellow man, as well as with everyone and everything that constitutes All That Is, is beyond any grand structures, religious artefacts, jewels, crowns, sacred texts, religious clothing and the like. The soul needs none of these additions that signify and acknowledge religious life; it simply needs the connection to its Higher Power.

We do not see physical proof of that which we call our soul. However, the belief in the soul goes back over thousands of years of recorded history.

As Voltaire (1694-1778), a French writer and philosopher stated, 'Four thousand volumes of metaphysics will not teach us what the soul is.'

Spirituality

Unsurprisingly, the synchronicity of the topic of Spirituality following the topic of the Soul, in alphabetical sequence, is probably taken for granted as this book unfolds!

Deepak Chopra states that 'Religion is what other people have experienced for you to follow, whereas spirituality is what you personally experience.'

There are many people who find their spirituality within their religion, and there are those who have stepped out of their religion and found spirituality. There are also those who have no religious background and have found spirituality. It's an individual choice, and there is no finite prescription.

Religion is a bridge to the Spiritual but the Spiritual lies beyond the bridge. We often become attached to the bridge and don't cross over it to the Spiritual waiting on the other side.

The concept of spirituality is that Oneness/SourceGod is the 'Real in Reality' and that what we experience in the physical world is not our home but a playground in which to use our five senses to experience the sensuousness of life on the earth plane.

We live in the Spirit World eternally and immortally and we, as our Souls, cannot be harmed in any way. Our Souls can be developed on the earth plane as we use the emotions and senses we have to choose a life based on free will with the causal relationships evolving from those choices we make.

Spirituality is seeing Oneness in everyday things and having the opportunity of doing everyday things in appreciation of being part of such Oneness.

Being fearless to be Godlike in our every thought, word and action will eventually bring us the inner tranquility that is the hallmark of a spiritual person.

Stillness

As stated under the topic of Silence, stillness is the absence of inner turmoil from one's mind rather than the absence of noise. In such stillness, one can connect to Oneness/Source/God or one's Higher Power.

The biblical injunction from the Psalmists. 'Be still and know that I am God', is all you need to know under this topic of Stillness.

If you can create a bubble of stillness within you, then you can go to even the most traumatic of places and be immune to the outer world's panic and torment as you connect within to that bubble of stillness.

Stillness is the place of connectivity to Oneness/Source/God and the place of pure potentiality and pure creativity.

Whenever you can find that place of inner stillness you will be aware that you are at One with the One.

Strength

Strength is often confused with power. That is a mistake.

Being muscularly strong and being weak in your mind is not a good combination but is often the case. Being strong in mind and weak in muscular tone is a better combination for sustained success. Ideally, muscularly strong and strong in mind is the correct combination but is a rarity.

Once we go past the confines of our reptilian brain, we begin to realise that strength is not only about muscles and mind but also about humanity and the ability to give and receive love.

What could be stronger than love, especially if you believe that God is Love?

True strength is then being love and is far removed from muscular and mental strength, which are ego-based attributes, in the main.

What strength comes from integrity in the home and what weakness comes from immoral actions in the home?

How strong is a country who abides by moral codes and true justice leading to peace for all within and outside their borders?

How weak is a strong military country who is morally bankrupt and whose leaders are power hungry at the expense of their countrymen?

When is so-called strength a weakness and so-called weakness actually a strength?

We saw in the early part of the 21st Century that the so-called 'Nerds', as opposed to the 'Jocks', are the world's wealthiest people and many of them, with Bill Gates and Warren Buffet at the helm, are using their wealth for the betterment of all. This wasn't done when the 'Strong Men' in the corporate and industrial world were the world's wealthiest people over the past two hundred years.

The 'Giving Pledge' initiative of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is persuading many of the Top 1%'ers to give at least half of their wealth to charitable causes. This wasn't the case when the Titans of Commerce and Industry of the 19th and 20th Century ruled the roost.

Success

Once more the synchronicity is at play with Success following the topic of Strength.

Success is often used to measure one's gain. This could be in the competitive world of business, politics, sports, academia and so on. Success is used as a yardstick and as an incentive to others coming up behind to strive to better their performance. This success is ego-based, and the prizes given out for such success are meaningful in the moment and usually lose their value with the effluxion of time.

This success is goaded on by the attributes of action, audacity, character, consistency, determination, dedication, desire, devotion, discipline, energy, enthusiasm, excitement, hard work, integrity, intellect, loyalty, overcoming obstacles, patience, perseverance, perspiration, purpose, responsibility, self-control, sincerity, vision and will. I am sure that there are even more attributes than this, but this list should suffice for now.

Success, when measured by soul-based living, shows different attributes. Service to one's fellow man and other animate and inanimate objects should be carried out with character, compassion, courtesy and charity. It should be done in humility, with humanness and integrity, in generosity and kindness and love and be morally based. Nobility, tolerance and spiritual-based understanding all come into play with the well-being of all involved.

If, after each day, you can put your head on your pillow and say 'God, we did good today, together', then you can consider yourself to be a success for today and what more can you ask for than that?

Suffering

The suffering we feel is not because of what has happened to us but how we relate to what has happened to us.

As I write this today, on the 1 June 2017, our family dog, Patch, who was 16 and a half years old, passed away during the night and was discovered by my sons this morning.

His passing on wasn't unexpected as he had been ailing for a while due to old age. Our initial reaction was one of sorrow and loss, and our grief was accompanied by tears. I can't say it was a

pleasant day as we took his body to the Vet to be cremated. However, I have no doubt that once we have allowed ourselves time to grieve and we get used to not seeing him around, we will learn to look for the happiness, joy and love he gave us and that we gave him. In time, we will only remember the love that passed between us, as only love is real, because only God is real, as God is Love.

The mistake most of us make is believing that things are permanent in our life. Life is impermanent as are our partners, family, friends, work, homes, structures and even our countries.

We will lose everything we prize at different times in our lives and eventually we will lose the life in our bodies as our Souls return to Spirit.

Our desire to possess that which is not possible to possess, is the cause of our lack of understanding, and this creates the suffering we feel.

It is our ego-based self that believes that we should not be deprived of things that we treasure and even love. After all, reasons our ego, we want it and deserve to have it around forever. When our logical mind says that nothing can last forever, our ego argues that there should be exceptions to this logical rule.

For those who do not automatically come from soul-based love in life, and that includes most people, the suffering they feel usually drives them to consider a more spiritual perspective to try and understand how to deal with their current grief and loss that is causing their suffering.

This enables the concept of a Higher Power to be triggered in their minds. If they do not reject the notion straight away, then they may open a chink of inner light into their minds to contemplate the possibility that such a Higher Power may exist and that there is a reasonable explanation as to why they are suffering.

When this occurs, suffering may then turn one's mind towards God, and by opening this inner door in one's mind, the suffering becomes a blessing in disguise. There is a saying from World War 1 that states 'There are no atheists in foxholes!'

When we come to the realisation that God is in all humans, but that not all humans are in God, then we begin to see why suffering occurs.

The acceptance that God is your Co-Creator in life allows and enables you to accept that whatever happens to you in your life is for the highest growth of your soul. Then there is no need for unnecessary suffering once the initial grief and loss have been processed by you. Sorrow and loss and happiness and joy are two sides of the same coin. Only a belief that God is the Co-Creator of your life and that everything that happens to you is for the highest growth of your soul will return your life to happiness and joy. This is where it belongs, always and in all ways.

Surrender

To surrender in a spiritual sense is to let go of your ego and submit to the will of your Soul as part of Oneness/Source/God and that Higher Power's Will for you. Your ego will want to fight to prove its right, but your Soul knows that 'God's Will will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' (Mathew 6:10)

Surrender means letting go of the known and submitting to the unknown and the potential growth that awaits us in the unknown.

In this way, surrender is strength and is not the weakness it plays in the zero sum game of the ego world.

Surrender may very well bring an expansion of consciousness as the growth you experience by stepping into the unknown may be for the growth of your soul. Ego-based surrender usually plays out to being a captive of your enemy, whereas, submitting in surrender to your Soul usually means expansion and growth consciousness.

Soul-based surrender is acceptance of what is, in this present moment, whereas, ego-based surrender, is resistance to what is and conflicts with the inevitable strength and power of your Higher Power.

The surrender of an ego-based mind and the surrender of a soul-based heart allows and enables the heart to connect to your Higher Power where infinite wisdom resides.

This surrender is based on wanting to feel with your heart and hear with your ears. Considering that 'ear' is three of the letters of the five lettered 'heart', perhaps we should listen to the 'heart' and surrender to God's Will for us!

Teacher

A teacher is usually paid about US\$3000 to 5000 per month in the USA. In the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries teacher salaries are highest in Switzerland at around \$5700 per month with the United Kingdom lowest at \$3500 per month. Teachers remuneration is usually below the average remuneration in the relevant economies, with Switzerland being the exception to the rule. In the OECD, the average age of teachers is 48, and 68% of teachers are women.

Research into this topic shows that respect for teachers is highest in China but overall respect for teachers by their pupils and by the pupil's parents is not as high as it should be.

This lack of respect for teachers is a fundamental problem worldwide. Children are very impressionable and absorb certain information like blotting paper. If the respect for their teachers by their parents is not as high as it should be, then the children will also show lower than acceptable respect for them.

If the economy does not respect their teachers enough by paying them below average remuneration, then the quality of the teachers' output will reflect the low opinion the society has of them.

If there is not sufficient respect for the teaching profession and they are not remunerated sufficiently, then it would be likely that the potentially best teachers would find employment outside of teaching where they can be better respected and remunerated.

The losers here are the pupils to begin with, and then the society, and after that the economy. The reasons for these losses arise from the negative impact of the inferior teaching which results in inferior quality of the future workers and their resultant lack of productivity. Those people still choosing to become teachers, and existing teachers who remain in their posts as teachers give the impression of people who are prepared to be treated with less than the respect due to them and to be remunerated less than the average worker in the economy. (Of course, I am generalising here and ignoring those amazing, dedicated teachers who put up with everything thrown at them due to their devotion to their calling as teachers.)

In the USA the teacher attrition rate is alarming with 250 000 teachers leaving annually, and 40% of the new teachers leaving within five years.

This impoverishment from the lack of remuneration and respect is a loose:loose scenario for the pupils and for society as a whole, let alone the teachers, who, to my mind, have the most important job in the world.

A teacher's role is not to pump information into their pupils so that they can regurgitate the same information in their tests and exams and get them out of school as quickly as possible. A teacher's role is to draw out the pupil by igniting their minds with the quest for knowledge and information and hopefully find some wisdom along the way. By inspiring pupils to expand their minds and their imaginations they could become problem solvers and creators.

Only a dedicated teacher will rise above the norm and be such an inspiration to their pupils. Regrettably, only a handful of pupils will gravitate to such a teacher.

As I spelled out under the topics of Information and Knowledge, the rapid advance of Artificial Intelligence over the next 25 years is going to change the employment landscape radically. The pupils who simply want to escape school with minimal effort required to pass, are going to be either manual labourers or low paid workers doing jobs that Artificial Intelligence is too expensive for. The employment queues at McDonalds and KFC are going to be long!

The causal relationship in the USA between male school dropouts and prison inmates is that some 67% of prison inmates did not finish high school. Incidentally, it costs \$11 000 a year to educate a high school student and \$20 000 a year to keep them imprisoned in the USA! (Source:PBS.com)

It's time for a complete overhaul of the perception, respect and remuneration of teachers if we want to develop thinking, intelligent and competent pupils in society and the workplace to compete with Artificial Intelligence and become job creators and valuable employees.

Let me close with a quote from Albert Einstein (1879-1936), 'The most valuable thing a teacher can impart to children is not knowledge and understanding per se but a longing for knowledge and understanding, and an appreciation for intellectual values, whether they be artistic, scientific, or moral.'

Thoughts

There are two sub-topics I want you to consider under this one topic called Thoughts.

Firstly, non-thought and secondly, thoughts.

Non-thought occurs when you are in the present moment of Now, in God's Space, as I call it, in a Holy Moment. In this space and time of Now, your Soul is connecting to your Higher Power and your ego is absent. There is no need to think anything in this present moment of Now as God's Thoughts become your thoughts. You are led by Divine Inspiration, and these thoughts must always be preferable to any ego-based thoughts you might prefer to have.

Sports people, artists and creative people call this 'being in the zone' - when things happen perfectly with exquisite timing. Here you are riding the crest of the endless wave, and you are feeling exhilarated. Any thoughts entering your mind at this point will cause you to fall. This is the space of meditation, of no-mind, simply being and not consciously doing anything.

Thoughts that are past thoughts or future thoughts are driven by your ego's need to give you either hope or fear. As I have said numerous times, 'your thoughts create your reality' is a well-worn spiritual maxim.

You are today where your thoughts have brought you, and you will be tomorrow where your thoughts will take you.

Buddha (563 BC- 483 BC) said, 'The thoughts manifest as the word; the word manifests as the deed; the deed develops into the habit, and the habit hardens into the character. So watch the thought and its ways with care, and let it spring from love born out of concern for all beings.'

Your thoughts become you, and you become your thoughts. So you have both the power of creation via your thoughts or the power of destruction. Both these powers are in your hands as you chose your thoughts.

If your every thought is 'what would Love do now?' and you apply these thoughts, then your current and future happiness is assured as well as those in your orbit.

Time

Time is a construct of man. In reality, there is no time, simply Now points, one after the other.

Time is the ultimate wealth because if you lose money, you can usually make it back again, but time lost is lost forever.

Value is determined by supply and demand for something but time cannot be further supplied once it is gone, so it has the ultimate value.

The wealthiest man on his death bed is poorer than the beggar in the street who will see the sun rise tomorrow.

Time has a healing quality with which medicine cannot compete. Time does heal all wounds, eventually, as it marches on and the hurt lessens with time.

The exactness of time, or, of timing if you prefer, makes one either a hero or a 'zero'. Many a fortune has been made or lost simply because of the correct, or incorrect timing applied in the execution of an action. Many a battle has undergone the same result. Being at the right time in the right place has seen people rewarded disproportionately to their actions. Conversely, being in the wrong place at the wrong time could be physical, emotionally and financially ruinous.

Time, although measured by the second, or part thereof, operates at a constant interval. However, it does not appear to do so depending on the ego needs of the person involved. If you are waiting for someone or something, then time seems to crawl. If you are fearful of impending events, then time seems to race towards that fearful event. For those who grieve a recent loss, then time seems to virtually stop in emotional pain and distress. For those who are celebrating and rejoicing then time seems to fly past. For those who are in love, time seems to be eternal.

The truth be told, time is eternal, and it operates not horizontally, as in a time line, but vertically in a Now moment. Now the moment is followed by another Now moment, and its height and depth are unfathomable as it is in God's Space - the present moment of Now.

While time does appear to fly, you are the pilot and, if you are a spiritual person, then God is your Co-Pilot. You determine your flight path and how you intend to invest your time, or, spend your time, or, waste your time.

Your time is in your hands, Now!

Tolerance

Why is it so difficult to be tolerant of another who does not share your beliefs, views, religion, skin colour, background, education, opportunities, financial position and the like?

Why are we threatened by people or other animate and inanimate objects that differ from our experience of life?

Why do we feel superior or inferior to anyone or anything that is unfamiliar to us?

It can only be our ego that is telling us to watch out and be fearful of the unknown and the unfamiliar. The ego's role is self-preservation, and it is doing its job by warning us of the unknown and the unfamiliar.

However, you only grow once you get out of your comfort zone. A different approach is needed to embrace the changes waiting for you at the outer edge of your comfort zone.

Once we can move beyond the confines and constraints of the ego, then we can come from our soul based position and embrace one and all with Love, even if it is unknown and unfamiliar to us.

Everything was once strange to us, and it was unfamiliar and unknown, and yet, we embraced it and found great strength in such embrace. We initially took heed of our ego's warning bells but persevered to find that simply because something is unfamiliar and unknown does not mean it has to be feared. In time, we embraced it and called it familiar and known and it gave us hope and not fear.

The first day of school, the first day of work, first date etc, all came with a bit of fear and trepidation. Soon after that, you embraced your expanded comfort zone and you grew in many areas of your life.

By being tolerant and patient and getting to a place of mutual understanding and mutual respect, your expanded world will now benefit from these new experiences.

The fear of the unfamiliar and the unknown will be replaced with acceptance, and maybe, even admiration and respect, which for now will be new experiences. Hopefully, in time, like and even Love will replace the previous fear and trepidation you once felt when these experiences were unfamiliar and unknown.

The ignorance and fear accompanying this intolerance are usually a sign of lack of intelligence and the unwillingness to investigate and understand that 'different' does not mean 'wrong'. 'Different' is simply what we are 'unused to' and there are usually more things in common with people than that which is perceived to be different.

Of course, from a spiritual viewpoint of Oneness, we are all part of Oneness and therefore not different from our Source but merely differ in our beliefs and traditions. At our deepest beliefs we all want the same things - a happy home and to grow up with our family in love, peace, prosperity and good health.

Regrettably, the intolerance in our world today comes from brainwashing children with hatred of others because they are different and it will be difficult to change mindsets once this has been imprinted on very young children. The fanatics of many religions seem to have the world in the grip of fear and violence as they spread their hatred, intolerance, jealousy and violence throughout the world.

As Gandhi said, 'an eye for an eye and soon the whole world is blind' seems to have been forgotten by the governments and people reacting to the current fanatical, senseless violence of attacking innocent civilians in countries that have taken in refugees from war-torn lands. Whether some of these refugees are behind and involved in these senseless attacks on civilians in their adopted country remains to be seen.

Well, it seems like we are heading for a time when 'cometh the hour, cometh the man' is needed to open the eyes of those who have sight but no vision. Those of whom it is said, 'There is none so blind as those who will not see' - John Heywood (1546).

Tolerance is the solution, but that requires a soul-based love approach compared to the ego-based fear and hatred approach prevailing currently.

Trust

Trust is the adhesive that binds relationships. Trust can take a lifetime to build up and a mere second to fracture, forever. Without trust, you have someone putting sand into the machinery of your life.

Trust is not something you can buy, it's something you have to earn. It's the strongest part of a good relationship and the most fragile part of one too.

Once shattered it can never be regained and to feel untrustworthy of another is the terrible feeling that you have been disappointed. It also affects your judgements and feelings about others whom you currently trust, and you begin to doubt your ability to identify whom to trust.

It is easy to live a life of not trusting anyone so that you will not be disappointed. The work of the legal profession is largely based on representing or acting against people who have proved to be untrustworthy, or at least, putting the safeguards in place in case people prove to be untrustworthy.

I adopt another viewpoint and that is once I have assessed someone and decided to trust them, I trust them implicitly. Sometimes I am disappointed by the person due to their dishonesty, or their ineptitude, but I would prefer to live my life believing the best about people and to have a few disappointments, than not trusting people and believing people are trying to cheat me at every turn. My experience to date is that most of the people I trust raise their 'game' to meet my expectations of them.

Please forgive my immodesty here, but I am proud to say that in over 40 years of running my own business, locally and globally, I have never sued anyone or been sued by anyone. I believe that everything is negotiable and, if ego is taken out of the negotiations, solutions can be found. That does not mean that I have not been taken advantage of in a business or personal setting. I have, numerous times, but there is little to be gained in pursuing someone who is dishonest, and usually, only the lawyers make any money.

The times when I have suffered at the dishonest hands of someone, I simply tell them that they can keep the money because I can always make more money, but that their greatest loss is to no longer have my trust and friendship. I will do anything and everything in my power to help a friend whom I trust and my generosity is unlimited. I believe that whatever money I have made is God's

money and I am simply looking after it for Him/Her and, when the time comes, I will donate it all to worthy causes.

The acronym I use for TRUST is To Reach Unto The Heavens.

My trust in Oneness/Source/God is complete. I live my life knowing that my Higher Power can trust me to be the best person I can be and that this Deity will give me what I need when I need it for the highest growth of my soul. I live my life with such trust.

I hope you find such trust and that your nobility of character earns you the trust of all in your orbit.

Truth

Truth, like beauty and God, lies in the eye of the beholder. There is no absolute truth. There are only perceptions. Truth changes as man progresses and finds that the truth of yesterday has changed with the new knowledge of today.

The usual progression of truth is that:

firstly, it is ridiculed;

secondly, it is opposed by the establishment as it threatens their current concept of the truth;

thirdly, it became self-evident and accepted as the truth;

fourthly, it is dislodged when a newer truth arrives and starts being ridiculed, and the cycle turns once more.

Truth can be proved in mathematics where there is a finite answer to a numerically based problem. $1+1=2$ and will continue to do so until, possibly, one fine day, when it may be proved incorrect from a mathematical viewpoint.

Those of us who follow a spiritual path would like to believe that God is Truth and, one day, when we return to the Spirit World, we may be able to prove that, but we cannot prove it here and now.

Niels Bohr (1885-1962), a Nobel Prize winner in Physics in 1922, said, 'The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement. But the opposite of a profound truth may well be another profound truth.'

Understanding

Once again the synchronicity of Understanding following Truth amazes me.

For most people, understanding something is merely the juggling of their perceptions, beliefs, hopes, fears, prejudices, biases, likes and dislikes until they have something they can live with.

Understanding is often at odds with that perceived by others, proving that the information, knowledge and wisdom, or the events themselves, that warrant an understanding, will not matter one iota. Such so-called understanding is merely perception.

Witnesses to an accident, and especially those people involved in the accident, usually tell such different versions of the so-called truth, as they perceive it to be, that you have to wonder if it was the same accident!

To fully understand something or someone, you have to be fully empathetic and not only stand in their shoes but be in their mind as well. The essence of their perceptions, mindsets, beliefs, hopes,

fears, prejudices, biases, likes and dislikes, among other issues, needs to be fully comprehended as being their essence. Also, the inter-relationship of these issues have to be weighed and measured in the correct proportions to understand them fully.

If you can miraculously get all of this right, and, if in the interim, they haven't changed their mind about one of the issues and its importance weighting in their mind, then you may begin to understand them truly.

Let's bring this down to a human scale and use a husband and wife, or a couple who are living together, as an example and run the scenario above with the simple question of a woman trying on a pair of pants and asking her man, 'Does this make my backside look fat?'

Which man would be brave enough to state that he understands the question?!!!

Now take that scenario to fundamentalist religious fanatics believing that only they will be going to heaven or that non-believers should be killed, or that they are God's chosen people, or, or, or.....

Now we come to nations who are at odds with each other and staring at each other through the barrel of a gun. What possible chance can they have of seeking first to understand and then to be understood? Less than zero could be the correct answer!

Our understanding at a spiritual level follows on the same scenario. We believe what we want to believe because it makes us feel better about the world we live in. When this belief system is questioned by others, we vehemently defend our belief system, although, in reality, we have no proof that we are right or that they are wrong. Our insecurity and our need of wanting to truly believe what we believe makes us dig our heels in and fight to the death for this, hoped for, belief system.

What happens if we are all wrong? Say, for argument's sake, there is no hereafter, no God, no nothing; simply our bodies providing food for worms once we are dead. At this point who is to know what is right or wrong about our understanding of a Spiritual World?

So if we can't answer the question 'Does this make my backside look fat?' because we don't fully understand what is really behind that question, how can we possibly really understand what we are doing here on the earth plane? Sure, we have opinions, beliefs, perceptions and the like, but can you honestly state that you really understand?

Let me end with a quote from Carl Jung (1875-1961), famed Swiss Psychiatrist and Father of Analytical Thinking, 'That I feed the hungry, forgive an insult, and love my enemy - these are great virtues. But what if I should discover that the poorest of the beggars and the most impudent of offenders are all within me and that I stand in need of the alms of my own kindness; and I myself am the enemy who must be loved - what then?'

Virtue

When was the last time you heard someone talk about virtue or that someone was virtuous? Have you ever heard those words?

Virtue seems to belong to another era. Virtue was seen as the epitome of good behaviour and something to aspire towards. I can't think of a world leader today to whom the term virtue would be applicable, perhaps only the Dalai Lama. One assumes that the heads of the various religious orders worldwide, such as the Pope, would deserve that reputation.

To expect a business leader, politician, trade-union leader, even an academic head to be virtuous in today's world may be a bridge too far. The one sport where virtue is found is in golf, where certain golfers call a penalty on themselves if they infringe the rules of the game, unseen by their fellow competitors.

Perhaps virtue is the missing link of the 21st Century. If virtue was seen as the epitome of good behaviour and rewarded as such, it might be aspirational and create a following.

Currently, the headlines are made by the opposite of virtue as political leaders are jailed for corruption and sexual scandals, which have become an everyday occurrence. Business people put excessive profits way above the caring for the fragile environment as they irreparably damage the ecology in the name of a return to shareholders. Leaders of religious groups are caught with their pants around their ankles and a parishioner in their beds.

Currently, governments are printing more money and incurring more debt than ever before. Ageing first-world countries are creating mountains of debt for future generations to pay off while the current ageing decision-makers feather their own nests.

The world is playing 'pass the parcel' as people are driven by instant gratification and materialism and when the music stops, some future generation will be sitting with the 'parcel' on their laps and the world could blow up in their face.

To try and describe virtue in a word or a phrase is a difficult task. The best I can come up with is 'inner integrity', or as Shakespeare said, 'to thine own self be true'.

The nobility that comes with such virtue is not ostentatious. Quite the opposite, it is clothed in humility.

Virtue is its own reward and is experienced as inner harmony with All That Is.

Vision

Vision is often confused with sight, but it is so much more than the mere ability to see what is in front of you.

Vision sees the unseeable. Vision is insight. Vision is a belief which becomes seeing, in time. Vision is imagination and unlimited potential to create what one imagines. Michelangelo saw the form of David within the block of marble while those with mere sight only saw the block of marble.

Vision is preparedness and the ability to plan for the future. Sight's limitation is the horizon, and many people assume that their horizon is THE horizon, not realising that others may have better sight and see further than that limitation.

If there is a distinction to be drawn between sight and vision, then sight states that seeing is believing, whereas vision says, believing is seeing!

War

Where does war come from? What causes a man to want to attack another man, forcing the other man to defend himself?

EGO - Edging God Out - is the cause and how laughable is the argument that one side or the other, or both, are fighting a war for God! Why would a God of Love need an army to fight for Him/Her?

A pacifist 'army' of people spreading Love to one and all could be considered to be the 'army' of a God of Love.

An immature man who cannot persuade another man of his viewpoint will resort to using violence to achieve what his words were unable to do. The lack of understanding, compassion and empathy of the other person's viewpoint and, the inability to even reach a mature position of agreeing to disagree and moving on with one's life, is outside the ability of the immature man's ego. He reverts to resolving his issues with violence.

Has man not learnt anything in over 5000 years? Where did war ever solve an issue without damaging the loser and impoverishing the winner with huge debts to finance the so-called winning war?

The rise and fall of nations over thousands of years, and in current times, has a direct correlation to fighting and winning wars and having to raise loans and tax their countrymen heavily to continue to fight wars further and further from home.

The strength of these so-called winning countries is wasted as the blood of their young men is spilt, invariably on foreign soil, and they are then not available for positive growth in their own country.

Even winning countries suffer from war-fatigue, and while they are bleeding financially to support the war effort, their common people are also dragged down with fatigue as husbands and fathers come back damaged emotionally, physically and spiritually. Others come home in body bags leaving an impoverished family to cope by themselves without their breadwinner, or leaving the dead soldiers' parents without the help of their children as they age.

No one wins a war, and every soldier is wounded at some level by fighting a war.

The call for patriotism and the branding of conscientious objectors as cowards is all it takes to build up ego-based misguided national pride and belief that your country is right and the others are wrong.

The pacifists are shouted down as cowards and the blood lust of young people to 'fight for their country' is heard in the streets. Where were these young people when the hungry and poor of their own country needed to be fed and clothed. Where were these nationalistic heroes when their so-called beloved country needed building up with the sweat of their brow and their brainpower and when their countrymen needed uplifting? But the illusion of heroism dictates that by picking up a weapon to kill another fellow human-being, whose major difference is that he was born in another country, then you deserve a medal!

All wars are civil wars as we are all brothers and all part of Oneness/Source/God.

John F. Kennedy, (1917-1963), the assassinated USA President stated, 'War will exist until that distant day when the conscientious objector enjoys the same reputation and prestige as the warrior does today.'

Wealth

What is wealth? To every person, it has a different meaning.

To a rich man, it is the ability to show off his wealth and enjoy whatever his heart desires.

To a poor man, wealth means having enough money to feed himself his next meal and, hopefully, finding a dry, safe spot tonight to lay his head down.

To a man suffering from ill health, wealth is good health, and for a healthy man, wealth is to be able to enjoy his good health and not have to worry about his finances for the foreseeable future.

To a man on his death-bed, wealth is time, and to a child being born, wealth is a loving family to protect and nurture him into adulthood.

To an academically educated man wealth is the ability to learn even more without having to make a living.

To an uneducated man, wealth is the ability to obtain an education and a skill to make a living.

To a religious man, wealth is the ability to practice his faith without having to worry about persecution and the ability to earn a living without taking him away from his religious practice.

To an irreligious man, wealth has no religious and spiritual significance, and he can do whatever he wants to do to acquire wealth without having a conscience to account to.

To a spiritual man, wealth is knowing Oneness and inner peace and the Love and Light that comes from him being Godlike.

To a married couple or a loving couple living together, wealth is knowing the love and warmth of a happy and fulfilling relationship.

To a parent, wealth is a child or children to share their life with in love and happiness.

To a child, wealth is knowing the love and support of one or both parents.

To a grandparent, wealth is having loving grandchildren, good health and sufficient financial resources to be financially secure.

To a career-orientated person, wealth is the ability to increase their abilities and a career to enable them to grow and expand their skills and to experience enjoyment from their work.

To an entrepreneur, wealth is a positive cash flow!

To a teacher, wealth is enthusiastic pupils willing to learn and grow through their learning.

To a pupil, wealth is a teacher that is capable, willing and patient enough to nurture them with dedicated passion.

There are two common denominators to all the examples above, and that is wealth is health and time. Without good health, financial wealth is relatively unimportant, and without time no one has a wealth of any meaning as they do not have the time to enjoy any form of it.

I will leave the last word on wealth to Epicurus (341BC-270BC), a Greek Philosopher, 'Wealth consists not in having great possessions, but in having few wants.'

Wisdom

Many people assume wisdom to be knowledge, but they are mistaken. The Bhagavad-Gita (200BC), a Hindu Scripture of major importance to its followers, defines wisdom as humility; unostentatiousness; non-injury; forgiveness; simplicity; purity; steadfastness and self-control.

Other attributes ascribed to wisdom include God-realisation, self-realisation, knowing how little you do know, understanding, foresight, consciousness of Nature, acceptance, silence, listening, harmony, peace, questioning, observance, causal consciousness, loving kindness and non-force.

Knowledge is learnt from the past whereas wisdom anticipates the future, based on its understanding of the past, the present and the likely future.

There is a Japanese proverb that states: 'Knowledge without wisdom is a load of books on the back of an ass.'

Wisdom sees the miraculous where others see common things. Wisdom sees the 'burning bush' everywhere, and while we walk 'sightless among the miracles', those who are wise see the miracles we overlook.

A wise person will patiently listen to another with full attention. His consciousness will merge with the being of the other and create a unifying field of understanding and awareness. This allows him to tap into the space in the Now that I call God's Space, and in that Space obtain intuition and guidance from the Source of all knowledge and wisdom and so much more.

The wise person will then provide a solution and not merely an answer. A solution is more deep-seated than an answer. For example, giving a man a fish to eat today is the answer to the man's current hunger but to teach him how to fish, and to enable him with the equipment to do so, is a solution whereby he provides fish for himself forever.

Work

Work is one of the greatest blessings you are given. If you don't believe me, then ask someone who is unemployed, or underemployed, or someone forced to stop working for one of a multitude of reasons.

Work allows and enables us to create something of value that can be exchanged for money so that we can provide for ourselves and our families.

Whether you are self-employed or you work for a boss, you determine the amount you will get paid, and the boss only handles the paperwork ensuring you get paid. It's your hard work, ingenuity, creativity and level of perfection in completing the task that creates a value for the economy to exchange the labour of your sweat and your thoughts for money.

If you find your work fulfilling and you love what you do, then there is no limit to what you can earn. The more skilled you become, the more in demand you will become, and the value of your work rises accordingly.

If you are fortunate to have skills and abilities which are in short supply in the market place, then your value rises even further. It's all in your hands.

The nature of work is about to change more radically in the next 25 years than in the past 100 years. The rapid growth of automation and Artificial Intelligence as referred to earlier in this book

will see repetitive jobs being automated and Artificial Intelligence will replace many jobs. This will occur mainly where manual labour is concerned and where the collection and decimation of information and knowledge can be undertaken by non-human interfaces.

The introduction of faster computing and of the Internet over the past 25 years has reshaped many industries and shed and created new job specifications. Artificial Intelligence and improved automation and robotics will speed up this change more dramatically over the next 25 years.

The advances in health care are also undergoing dramatic shifts for increased longevity, and this will enable and allow, and in some instances, force people, to remain longer in the workforce as the financial provision for their retirement will be insufficient if their lifespan is lengthened.