

Go Beyond
'The Secret'



The Miraculous
Phenomenon of
LIFE RESPONSE

Sudden Good Fortune
Instantaneous Luck
The Cooperation of Life

Roy Posner

**The Miraculous Phenomenon of
LIFE RESPONSE**

**How Changes in Consciousness
Instantly Attract Good Fortune**

Roy Posner

FIRST EDITION

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“Our outward happenings have their seed within,
And even this random Fate that imitates Chance,
This mass of unintelligible results,
Are the dumb graph of truths that work unseen:
The laws of the Unknown create the known.”

-from 'Savitri' by Sri Aurobindo

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Foreword

All of us can recall some inexplicably wondrous moment in our lives when circumstances seemed to miraculously conspire for our advantage. Some call it luck or chance. Others name it fate, karma, fortune or the grace of God. No matter what we call it, wouldn't it be great if life would cooperate with us all of the time? That is the possibility offered by this book.

Life Response explains in crystal clear terms the true nature of our relationship with the world around us. It depicts life as a mirror. It tells us of the precise one-to-one correspondences between our inner consciousness and events in the world around us. It presents us with the secret code needed to decipher these correspondences. But even more importantly, it presents us with a set of inner keys for mastery over outer life -- it provides us with the remarkable knowledge of *how to make life respond*.

This is a marvelous book on a topic of extraordinary importance. It presents a knowledge that has been totally missed by modern materialistic science because it contradicts with conclusive evidence the scientific premise that the world around us is inanimate, unconscious, and totally disconnected with what we think and feel inside. This knowledge has also been largely ignored by spiritual traditions who in their quest for divine connection and immortality, sought liberation or escape from life in the world rather than earthly fulfillment.

Roy Posner has been studying the phenomenon of life for decades and meticulously gathering real-life evidence to document the validity of life response. His book is rich with real world personal experiences, as well as examples from biography, history and literature. Together, they provide overwhelming evidence that he is on to a profound truth of life.

Regardless of whether you are an entrepreneur trying to master the intricacies of the market, an aspiring artist seeking to create something unique, a teacher trying to inspire the youth of the world, an intellectual in quest of knowledge, or a householder striving to raise a happy and harmonious family -- this book offers a profound, invaluable knowledge for everyone. --Garry Jacobs (author of *The Vital Corporation*)

Introduction

In our current way of living, we experience little of the magic and mystery of existence. Though life may be astonishing in its breadth and haunting in its variety, it functions pretty much the same way as it has for millennia, despite ever-advancing technologies and other material benefits of the modern world.

What, however, if we were to discover a different way of living? What if all of life -- including all of the objects and players around us -- looked much the same as they do now, but where the dynamics of existence were fundamentally different?

What if our perceptions of what was possible were to change? What if our understanding of the relationship between cause and effect were to alter? And what if our view of space and time were to shift to something decidedly different?

More to the point, considering the subject of this book, what if we could *instantaneously* change the course of life outside ourselves by simply making an adjustment in consciousness. E.g., you overcome a virulent attitude toward another person, and 2-minutes later an unknown individual contacts you from half way around the world with news of a large business contract, or a huge financial windfall, or a phenomenal career opportunity.

Such incidents of “life response” occur all of the time, in endless variation, and in every field of life. All we have to do is open our eyes to see it.

- Life response was at work when a diligent, hard working executive at a major business institution overcame his reluctance to search through a pile of trash, which suddenly attracted a job out of nowhere that put him in a position to change the course of financial history.
- Life response was at work when a manager at a manufacturing plant in India changed his attitude towards his workers, which not only attracted an unexplainable sudden boost in sales, but also caused the machines in the firm to suddenly start operating at double their rated capacity.

- Life response was at work when a formerly unemployed woman made one great final physical effort that suddenly attracted the missing piece of evidence that enabled her to win a \$300 million legal settlement for her clients -- the largest of its kind in history.
- Life responded when an individual gave up his reluctance to work a second consecutive weekend, attracting the biggest sale of his life, propelling him from lowest rank amongst his peers to the number one salesperson in the chain.
- Life response was at work when an individual invoked a spiritual power that enabled an energy crisis affecting 35 million people to suddenly end.

These, and hundreds like it, are instances of sudden good fortune that I have documented over the years. Though they are extraordinary moments in people's lives, you too can attract these miraculous-like results once you discover the secrets of life response.

Three Keys

Though I will describe a number of the keys that attract these powerful outcomes, three stand out.

The first key is to recognize that this extraordinary phenomenon *really exists*. I will show you that it is constantly occurring -- whether in the smallest acts or the most important situations and circumstances of our lives.

The second key to attracting life response is to understand what it is about *life itself* that enables it to occur. To that end, I will reveal the profound relationship between our state of consciousness and the world around us. I will show you that our inner being and life outside us are not two separate entities, but are part of one contiguous thread of existence. Therefore, if you change your inner condition, the outer *instantly* responds in kind.

The final key to attracting life response is to practice those *human behaviors* that tend to evoke it. I will show you how a change in attitude, a shift from weakness to psychological strength, a move from selfishness to self-givingness, and other "reversals of consciousness" quickly elicit these marvelous results.

Organization of the Book

For your convenience, I have arranged the book into fourteen easy to read chapters -- each logically building on the previous. In the first few chapters, I explain what it is about *life itself* that enables these marvelous results. It is here that I introduce the principle of “inner-outer correspondence” as well as other forces and factors that contribute to a “physics” and “metaphysics” of life response.

In the next half dozen chapters, I probe deeper into the variety of *human behaviors* that attract these results -- including changes in attitude, higher levels of cleanliness and orderliness, expressions of psychological strength, and shifts to self-givingness, to name a few. Each behavior is illustrated by one or more powerful, true-life experiences that I believe will both startle and inspire.

In the next group of chapters, I reveal the *spiritual* powers that enable *ultimate* response from life. I begin by exploring inner techniques, such as “silent will,” where if you refrain from speaking what is on your mind, others will suddenly express it for you; and “equality of being,” where if you remain calm in a difficult situation, that problem quickly disappears. In addition, I will introduce you to the ultimate power of life response: that of the “spiritual Force.” I will show that if you open to the Higher Power before engaging in an activity, you will gain the full cooperation of life, as dynamic, unprecedented, positive outcomes will suddenly appear. This is perhaps the greatest secret revealed in the book.

Finally, in the last chapters, I describe how you can take control of your life and make life response your never-ending reality. I suggest that if you follow a *process of accomplishment*, you can attract your heart’s desire whenever you choose, and do so in an extraordinarily short period. What would have taken months or years to accomplish -- if at all -- will come about in days, hours, or even the time it has taken to read this paragraph.

I conclude by suggesting that by learning these inner principles and by having these miraculous-like experiences, not only will your level of success, energy, and happiness soar, but you will begin to look at life from an entirely new perspective. You will realize that you are not a limited individual, but a limitless being capable of mastering all of life’s condition from within. As a result, you will begin to live an unprecedented sort of existence -- one that I call “A New Way of Living.”

If you would like to take your life to a whole new level; if you want to view the world from a dramatically new perspective; if you want to gain a profound knowledge and wisdom into the workings and meaning of life; then this book can help you on your way.

With that in mind, I welcome you to the ultimate adventure of consciousness and joy!

1. Instantaneous Miraculousness

One day many years ago, I found myself in an awful predicament. Because I had not worked in weeks, perhaps months, my financial position had completely deteriorated. To make things worse, I had no idea how to remedy the situation. And so I sat there confused, helpless, frozen in time; and with every passing day, my situation became ever more perilous.

Then one day, I thought of something rather unusual. Since I wasn't doing anything worthwhile, why not take the time and clean out my refrigerator. After all, it hadn't been attended to for months -- perhaps years! -- and besides, what else was there to do with my time? And so without further hesitation, I took up that daunting task.

First, I began to remove all of the foodstuffs inside the box. Then I got down on my hands and knees, and proceeded to scrape away all of the crust and grime that had accumulated along the edges. Straining this way and that, I scraped and scrubbed until the refrigerator was spotless. After I was done, I slowly raised myself up from that strenuous effort, and let out a deep sigh. As I stood there with my heart beating rapidly, I noticed that I still hadn't finished the job: that the food I removed earlier was still piled high on the counter. And so I proceeded to return each of these items to their proper shelves. With that last task completed, I now felt relieved that the grueling episode was finally over.

Except there was one more thing ...

At the *exact* moment that I finished putting everything back, the telephone rang. I then scurried over to my answering machine, and carefully listened to the incoming message. It turned out to be my agent - - the person who provided me with the bulk of my instructional work. She was now leaving a message that I had been assigned to a host of new projects, and would I please call back as soon as possible!

When I heard the news, I experienced a surge of energy, which expressed in two ways. On the one hand, I was both stunned and overjoyed that I now had a steady stream of good-paying work to carry me through the coming months. On the other, I knew that because I had

made the intense physical effort to clean my refrigerator, I had attracted a magnificent response from life.

Such incidents suggest that there is a relationship between our behavior -- whether inner or outer -- and the sudden onset of good fortune. It appears that if we make certain adjustments in consciousness or take to certain actions, life suddenly cooperates, bringing us unforeseen benefit. Moreover, the manner in which these results come about strike us as nothing less than astonishing.

One reason this particular episode was astonishing was that I had not been in contact with my agent for several months. And yet because I had made that physical effort, a connection was reestablished between us, and through it a powerful positive result followed.

Another reason the incident was astonishing was that the response from my agent was *instantaneous* to the completion of the act. At the very *moment* I finished the last task of putting the foodstuffs in their proper place, the phone rang and I received word of a plethora of work filling my schedule. In other words, life not only responded immediately, but with *absolute micro precision*.

If such instances of “instantaneous miraculousness” are indeed real, then a number of possibilities suggest themselves. The first is that one can attract something outside one’s self *to* one’s self, even if one is not in physical proximity to, or in any way communicating with that individual or object. That would surely challenge our 100,000-year-old view of how objects and individuals relate in *space*.

The second possibility is that there are functionings and processes of life that do not conform to our commonly held notions about *time*. That we can instantly attract life to us, without having to wait for the normal duration of endless moments to unfold.

The third possibility is that we are capable of attracting vast, *infinite*-like results -- instead of the to-be-expected limited, finite outcomes. E.g., who would expect to receive *months’* worth of work by merely cleaning a refrigerator?

If these conclusions are in fact true -- i.e. if there is a phenomenon at play that defies our accepted notions of what is logical and possible; that turns our traditional view of cause and effect on its head; and that

shatters our normal beliefs about proximity, distance, space, and time -- then living such a life would surely revolutionize human existence.

And yet to the disbeliever, the skeptic, the doubting Thomas, such assertions are not to be taken seriously. For them, these occurrences are the result of chance, coincidence, or accident. And if not these, then they are due to some other obvious causality such as a ruse or a hoax, in which case, we are still making the proverbial mountain out of a molehill.

But what if this *is* a very real phenomenon of life. What if we really could think, feel, or act in a way that could *instantly* attract overwhelming good fortune from the world around us?

The Happy Gardner

Let me introduce you to Kat James. This young English woman had never been to college, yet was able to benefit from the boom in the economy, propelling her into the ranks of the professional. And yet in spite of her success, Kat was not feeling fulfilled by the work she was doing. Because the hours were long and the commute from Brighton to London exhausting, she often wondered if this was the lifestyle she really wanted. Despite her misgivings, Kat worked hard at her job, hoping that one-day one of her clients would offer her a high-paying position closer to home, freeing her from her drudgery and anxiety.

As it turned out, not too long after she did in fact receive an offer to run the public relations department of one of the up and coming telecommunications companies in the UK. To show that they were serious, the firm even offered to double Kat's current salary. At first, she thought that this was exactly what she wanted, but when she thought about the matter further, she realized that this was not what she longed for; and so opted out. Then the idea of moving to San Francisco came up; but once again, she turned down the notion. As a result, Kat James was still left in a quandary about what to do with her life.

One day when Kat was contemplating the issue for the umpteenth time, she came to a sudden realization. She understood that ever since she was a little girl, she wanted to be a landscape gardener. Though it might have seemed like a laughable idea, Kat was serious and thought why shouldn't she pursue the thing she always dreamed about.

Well, a few days later Kat attended a music festival, and between bands she had a Tarot card reading, which for her was more of a lark, than anything she believed in. The Tarot reader dealt the cards, read their

meaning, and then revealed to Kat that she would really be good at tending people's gardens! Kat was stunned by this news; especially when you consider that the reader had no knowledge of her intentions. Now sensing that her destiny was being written in the stars, Kat decided to take her new career to the next level.

Sometime after the incident, Kat told her neighbor about her new aspirations. As it turned out the friend had just thrown away a catalog of courses offered at Brighton City College. However, having learned of Kat's career intentions, she dug through the garbage and retrieved it. Kat then took the catalog home and discovered that the school offered an extensive horticulture program that awarded two-year vocational certifications. This was precisely what Kat was after. In fact, on closer examination she noticed that the first class would begin next week, *and* the enrollment session for the course was that very afternoon! Now Kat sensed that life was really conspiring on her behalf!

With astonishing event happening one after another, and a determination to follow this thread, Kat immediately went down to enroll. After she signed up for the horticulture course, she realized that she had to come up with a way to cover her expenses while attending school. She then learned that there was a big 100-year-old nursery in Brighton that would be an ideal place to work, since it dovetailed nicely with her new career interests. In addition -- and this made all the difference considering her last position -- it was only a ten-minute walk from her home!

Rather than hesitate, Kat immediately called the nursery to see if any jobs were available, but was told there would be no employment openings until the Christmas season. Still her contact at the nursery suggested that it wouldn't hurt if she stopped by sometime. Well, once again, instead of waiting around, Kat immediately headed over to the nursery, where ... you guessed it ... she was hired on the spot!

Five "coincidences" later -- after an unknown Tarot card reader indicated a horticulture career; a neighbor dug up a catalogue of classes needed; the existence of several courses; the availability of course sign up that very day; and the securing of a horticulture job when none was in sight -- Kat James was well on her way to fulfilling her dream. Somehow, life had cooperated from every quarter, providing situations and opportunities that hurled her towards her new career.

Three Attributes

These two episodes -- my refrigerator incident and Kat's new career incidents -- have something in common. In each case, a powerful response from life quickly came about because of an individual's change in consciousness. For myself, I decided to get up and do something, instead of fretting about my lack of work and deteriorating financial condition; which instantly attracted a plethora of classes and the end of my money woes. For Kat James, she evaluated her life and made a fundamental decision to change her career path, which instantly unleashed a plethora of events that catapulted her toward her career goal.

In fact, from my analysis of hundreds of such "life response" experiences over the years, I have identified three attributes that are common to all. First, the response from life was *sudden* -- or at least occurred very quickly in relative terms. Second, what came did so in large quantity or degree -- i.e. it was *abundant*. And third, the response unfolded in a way that defied normal views of what is possible -- i.e. it was *subtle*.

Let's briefly examine the two incidents again to see what I mean. In the refrigerator incident, I *instantly* attract months' worth of work, instead of having to wait for the to-be-expected lengthy period of time it would take to achieve such a result. For Kat, she was able to make *exceedingly rapid* progress towards her career goal, instead of having to wait the usual weeks, months or years to see tangible results. In both cases, the sudden movements of life all but overcame the limits of time.

I also said that life response comes in abundance, replacing the current finite, limited reality before us. In the refrigerator event, there was now a schedule *filled* with training classes, where moments before, there wasn't a jot of work in sight. For Kat, she was now well on her way to achieving her goal, when only a few days earlier she was starting out on what seemed like a very long road. In both instances, a once limited, finite reality was now replaced with an infinite-like abundance, expressing both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Finally, I indicated that life response is *subtle* because it does not follow the usual mechanistic, cause and effect view of how life unfolds, and how people and events interrelate. For myself, a response came unexpectedly from out of nowhere from someone I had not been in contact with or interacted with for months. For Kat, she was hurtled forward by people she never knew, and by opportunities she never would have dreamed possible.

Properties Of Life Response		
<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Overcomes limits of-</i>	<i>What occurs</i>
Sudden	Duration, Time	Timelessness replaces time
Abundant	Quantity, Quality	Infinite replaces finite
Subtle	Possibility, Association	Non-mechanistic cause and effect

The sudden, abundant, and subtle nature of life response indicates that the universe is organized in ways that defy our normal view of things: that there are forces and processes at work that challenge our normal human perceptions of how life unfolds. If this is so, then it would certainly be worth discovering what they are. Doing so would not only give us a glimpse into the secret workings of life, but would provide us with the key to evoking “instantaneous miraculousness” in our own lives.

2. Inner-Outer Correspondence

Sometimes we forget that the most profound wisdom of life comes from ages long forgotten. One particular insight from that ancient past is the notion that how you act towards life is how it will act towards you. In the West, it is captured by the aphorism “what you sow is what you reap,” while in the East it is expressed as the “law of karma.”

While sages past and present have confirmed that life does seem to have this quality, we may have also noticed it at work in our own lives -- or if not, then in the life of a relative or friend; or a character in a movie, or a famous person in history or in the news.

For example, consider a film in which we watch the actions of an unscrupulous villain. First, we observe his treacherous deeds, and the harm he has done to others. But then as the storyline unfolds, we see how this clever, but somewhat careless individual is unable to cover his tracks, leading to situations and circumstance that bring about his eventual downfall. In this unfolding, we clearly perceive how his negative intentions and behavior led to his end -- which is, in essence, captured by the principles of sow/reap or law of karma.

Of course, this profound truth of life does not only apply only to villains, but to each one of us as well. Invariably, life will turn our negative deeds back on us, which we unfortunately experience as difficulty, misfortune; even tragedy. E.g., if I continually gamble away my life's savings on meaningless sporting events, it is likely that one day my finances will be left in tatters; or that my marriage will fail, or that some other calamity will befall me.

Similarly, our *positive* deeds, actions, and behaviors tend to bring corresponding *good* fortune. E.g., if I make a greater effort in my work, there is a reasonable chance that my boss will promote me sometime thereafter. Or, if I give my children more love and affection, I will not only gain their respect, but when I have a critical need for their help, they will come through.

In considering the principle of sow/reap, law of karma, we would have to conclude that there seems to be a solid logic behind it. Despite the complexity of circumstance, and the long arc of time separating the

initiating actions and the returned positive or negative result, we recognize a flow of events that are logical in sequence, leading to a reasonable and just end.

In the case of the villain, we perceive how his nefarious deeds lead him to personal tragedy because we are privy to the workings of his mind and to the labyrinth-like meanderings of circumstance. On the other hand, it is more difficult to see this dynamic in our *own* lives -- as it is hard to separate ourselves from the life we live. And yet, if we seriously analyze our past histories, we too would see the logical sequence that led to the final happy or unhappy outcomes.

Therefore, we can conclude that whether or not we were aware of the quality of our behavior, and their relations to the fortunate or unfortunate results that followed, there is a solid logic behind the eventual helpful or harmful results produced by life.

Oneness of Life

And yet there is something limiting in this view, because it assumes that what returns to us only occurs after a certain period of time; after a series of logical consequences have had a chance to run their course. For example, in this view, if I overcome a wanting attitude, I will only see results after I have expressed that change to my associates, who gradually take notice, and after a reasonable time reward me with a complement or a raise or promotion.

And yet it is my experience that a shift in one's consciousness -- such as a change in attitude -- can also bring about *instantaneous* results; not waiting for the normal lengthy chain of events to unfold. In this existence, the principle of sow/reap, law of karma is thus extended beyond our linear, consequential, mechanistic, and time-bound view of life.

But if this instantaneous, timeless, spaceless version of sow/reap, law of karma is a true phenomenon of life, why does it occur? Why would life *suddenly* rush forward and bring me good fortune when I change an attitude, or otherwise elevate my consciousness within?¹

In my view, this extreme hyper-unfolding occurs because there is a fundamental law of life at work, which I call the principle of "inner-outer

¹ Or attract ill-fortune when there is a degradation in consciousness.

correspondence.” In essence, it indicates that everything outside ourselves is a reflection of our inner condition. Therefore, if we change our inner status, corresponding elements and circumstance on the outside *instantly* respond in kind. In this way, inner-outer correspondence is the reason for, the fundamental principle behind the phenomenon of life response.

But why are the inner and the outer related? Why does life suddenly respond with good fortune when I change my inner condition? The answer is that in reality there *is* no “inner” and “outer” to begin with! They are not two separate entities, as we have come to believe, but are part and parcel of the *same* contiguous reality. Though our senses tell us that there is a world outside that is separate and apart from our own selves, from a deeper view there is no such division. Because we share this continuous stream of existence, when I change the inner me, the outer -- which is really inseparable from myself -- instantly responds in kind. In other words, the inner and the outer are One.

If this is true -- if our actions and behavior are able to attract instant results from the world around us because of this fundamental Oneness -- then a number of questions arise. For one, why does a *particular* object or individual suddenly move toward me in a life response event -- why not a *different* one? Also, why do I experience *positive* results when I uplift my consciousness -- why not something neutral or even negative?

To answer these and other intriguing questions, I would like to share with you the following true story.

A Pleasant Holiday Surprise

As the holiday season was approaching a number of years ago, I realized that I didn't have enough high-paying training and consulting work to see me through that period. Although I made a concentrated effort to fill up my schedule, I was unable to generate anything substantial.

And yet despite my inability to secure the work, there was another possibility available to me: that I could use that “quiet time” to take up one of several projects that were on the back burner. One project that was particularly appealing was to learn a new software application that interested me. I thought that acquiring this new skill would help me acquire new types of business in the future. In fact, when I thought about it further, I sensed that this it was the *perfect* time to take up that effort.

And so without hesitation -- and without a schedule of work to detain me! -- I plunged into the application.

Though I got off to a good start, I soon realized that my heart wasn't into it. I was simply too preoccupied with other matters to maintain my concentration. Each time I opened the manual and started a lesson, that gnawing feeling that I did not have enough training and consulting work for the holiday season returned. After grappling with my emotions over several days, I finally made a psychological breakthrough. I not only knew that this was the right time to learn the application, but if I did, life would cooperate with my effort. And so once again, I plunged back into my studies -- this time with even greater resolve.

When the next day rolled around, I received a most unexpected call. It was from my agent, who informed me that an *avalanche* of work had suddenly come in -- which meant that my entire holiday schedule was now completely filled!

After getting over the shock, I settled down and thought about the matter for a moment. Then it dawned on me that not only was I in a much better work position, but that I had experienced another instance of life response. Furthermore, it was crystal clear that I attracted the powerful response because I had shifted my psychological condition, i.e. my attitude, to the positive.

Examining the incident a little closer, we see that there were actually three determining factors: (1) the psychological adjustment I made by reversing my attitude of reluctance; (2) the decision I made to go back and learn the program; and (3) the spiritual-like faith that life would work in my interests. As a result of these *inner* movements, I quickly attracted *outer* circumstance that overcame my predicament.

Incidents like these suggest that there is a fundamental relationship between our inner condition and the situations and circumstances of life around us. That if we reverse ourselves in a particular way, and with a certain degree of intensity, the outer conditions instantly move in our favor. Moreover, the reason that the outer responds to the inner is that they are not two separate entities, two distinct divisions of reality, but share the same contiguous stream of existence. Therefore, if I make an adjustment within, the "outer" reality, which is really a part of, an extension of the inner instantly responds in kind.

Confirmation from the World of Science

Now that we know that life response is a real phenomenon of life, and it is based on a fundamental oneness between the inner and the outer, several other issues suggest themselves. For example, though we have identified the mechanics behind this miraculous-like event, we have not yet identified the *force or power* that enables it to happen: i.e. the *substance* that binds the inner person and the outer world. Second, we still do not know why a *particular* object or individual -- in this case, my agent -- suddenly appears on the scene and works on my behalf. Why not someone else; or no one at all? Finally, we do not know why this individual or object brings me *good* fortune. Why not something neutral, or even negative?

Surprisingly, recent developments in the world of science may shed some light on these issues. Extraordinary findings in the field of quantum physics -- i.e. the study of the *very small* -- confirm that there can be an instantaneous connection between physical objects that are extremely far apart. For example, for over half a century scientists have known that a shift in the “spin” of an electron of an atom can *instantly* affect the spin of another electron of that *same* atom even if the two particles are on opposite sides of the world -- or the other end of the galaxy! Like the principle of inner-outer correspondence, the phenomenon of “non-local connections” between objects corroborates the fact that there is an extraordinary, super-subtle relationship between objects, defying our commonly held beliefs about what is possible; of how cause and effect interrelate; and the nature of space and time.

The difference, however, is that whereas the scientific view of non-local connections indicates that changes in *material* properties -- like the spin of atoms -- can affect related properties of objects thousands of miles away, the principle of inner-outer correspondence extends that to include *non-material* changes as well, including variations and fluctuations in our *feelings, emotions, attitudes, thoughts, and beliefs*. Thus, if I change my emotions and attitude *here*, it can instantaneously connect with and attract good fortune from another object or individual from anywhere on earth.

Energy and the Web of Life

And yet as extraordinary as the principles of inner-outer correspondence and non-locality appear to be, we are only addressing one dimension of the issue. Though they establish the *context* for the

phenomenon of life response, we still have not identified the actual *substance* at work in these incidents. I.e., we still do not know what *force* or *media* is at play that binds and aligns me with a particular object or element when these life response events take place. Even in the case of the two corresponding electrons of the same atom at vast distances from one another, science has not yet determined what interceding *substance* is at play that enables the remarkable non-local connection and interchange to take place.

Well, it turns out that if we penetrate the surface of things, and probe deeper into the hidden forces of life, we *can* identify the substance that binds two entities in a life response event. In fact, not only can we identify what that substance is, but we can distinguish several different properties and formulations of it. We can even go a step further and identify how this binding force and substance relates to the very fabric of life itself.

To that end, I would like to present five insights that describe the substance, medium, and power that binds the outer world to the inner person, accounting for the extraordinary life response events we experience:

1. *Energy*

The first insight is that in every life response event, the individual initiating the response generates a certain amount of *energy*. That energy then moves out into the field of life and connects with related energies, elements, individuals, and circumstance across space and time, enabling the life response effect to occur. Thus, energy is the essential binding force between the inner me and the outer world in every life response incident.

2. *Four Types of Energy*

The second insight is that any of *four* types of energy are at play in any life response event – physical, vital, mental, and spiritual. For example, when I move my body and act, I generate *physical* energy. When I express a desire for something special to happen, or feel an intense emotion during a concert, I generate *vital* energy. When I exercise my mind and take an interest in a subject matter or think my way through an important issue, I generate *mental* energy. And when I have inner experiences of deep calm, serenity, and well-being, I generate *spiritual* energy. In every

life response event, one or more of the four energy types are released by the individual, which connects with corresponding energies of related people, objects and circumstance at the receiving end.

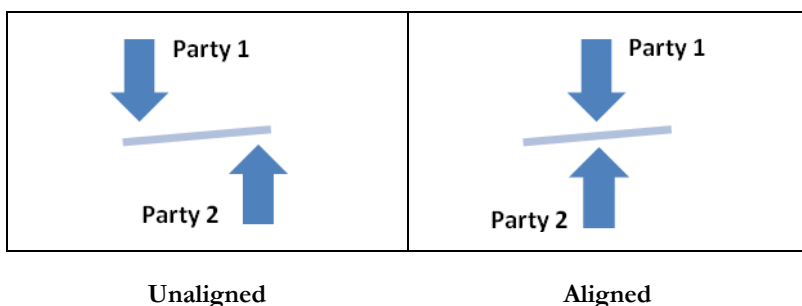
3. *Required Intensity*

The third insight is that for a life response event to occur, a certain *minimum* amount of energy needs to be released by the individual commensurate with life's conditions at the time. I.e. in a given instance, our change of consciousness needs to reach a certain pitch or level of intensity -- a *threshold*, if you will -- for the life response incident to occur. Anything less will not produce the desired results.²

4. *Common Purpose and Intent*

The fourth insight is that as these powerful energies flow out from our being, they link up with individuals, objects, and circumstance with whom we share a *common purpose* -- whose intentions we are *aligned* with. Thus, when I reverse my negative attitude about my work, I align with the intentions of those individuals, objects, and circumstance with whom I share a common purpose, which formulates into an act and movement of life that crosses my field of vision as an experience of an instance of life response.

² There are many factors that contribute to the play of energy in a life response event. For example, looking at it from its widest scope, we see that the response is not only dependent on the energies produced by the *individual*, but by the supporting or opposing energies of the *environment* -- such as the attitudes and feelings of other people and the community. In an atmosphere that is positive, the energy generated by the individual tends to be *reinforced*, leading to the greater likelihood of sudden good fortune for that person. In an atmosphere that is negative, positive energies released by the individual may not be enough to produce the positive life response effect.



5. *Coordinating Action of the Web of Life*

The fifth and final insight is that these pulses of energy are able to flow between the initiating and receiving parties because there is a fundamental *communication and transport system* at work in the universe. Imagine that the energies we generate move out across a kind of cosmic highway -- a “web of life” if you will -- that correlates and coordinates related elements and circumstances along those pathways. Thus, e.g. when I change my attitude from a limited view of the marketplace to a broader one, I set in motion a burst of mental and vital energy that move out along one or more of the *strands* of this cosmic system, connecting and aligning me with the intentions and movements of corresponding energies, elements, and circumstance.

Just as a telecommunications system coordinates currents of electricity that allow sound waves to be transported between particular points on a grid, so too energies produced by our change in consciousness are directed and correlated with corresponding elements and circumstances along specific pathways through this cosmic web of life.

Mira Alfassa, known to her followers as “The Mother”, and the partner of the Indian sage and seer Sri Aurobindo, commented on this apparent cosmic transport system in the early 1970s:

“I have a curious impression of a kind of web -- a web with ... like very loose threads, I mean not tightly meshed, connecting all events, and if you have power over one of these webs, there’s a whole field of circumstances that apparently have nothing to do with each other but which are linked together there in such a way that one necessarily implies the existence of the other ... And I have the impression it’s something that envelops the earth.

And it's not mental. They are circumstances that depend on one another, in a completely invisible way outwardly, without any mental logic, and yet as though connected to one another.

If you are conscious, really conscious of that, that's how you can change circumstances."



If this extraordinary cosmic transport system really exists, then one wonders what could account for it in the first place. It is my view that behind this cosmic web -- in fact, behind *all* existence -- there is a fundamental *spiritual* plane of existence. That spiritual Reality in turn provides the ultra-Intelligence and Power behind the cosmic web of life, giving it its subtle power to bind and coordinate all activities, purposes, intentions, and circumstances among individuals and objects in the universe.

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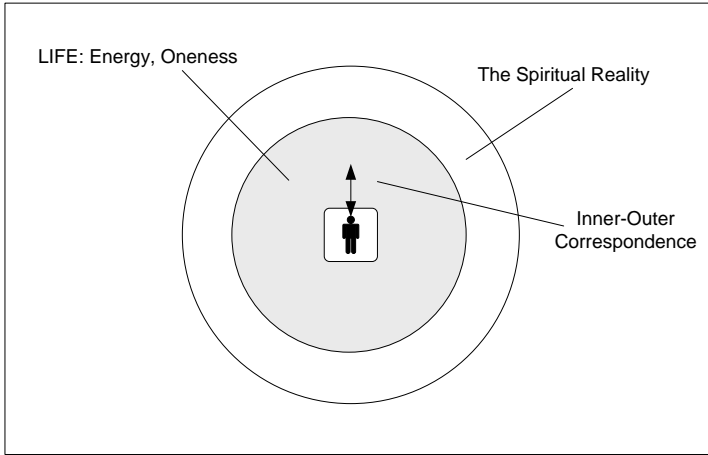
Towards a “Physics” of Life Response

In the final analysis, we see that there are actually two fundamental aspects of life response. The first is captured by the principle of “inner-outer correspondence,” which states that the world outside is not separate from our inner selves, but shares the same continuous stream of existence. Therefore, if we change our inner condition, the outer instantly responds in kind. Thus, inner-outer correspondence provides the *cosmic foundation* by which every life response event is made possible.

The second fundamental aspect of life response is the generation, movement, and association of *energy*. It is the essential force, substance, and media that moves and flows in any life phenomenon event. Without it, life would not respond, for there would be nothing to respond to.

And so we begin to see the emergence of what might be called a “physics” of life response: a conglomeration of factors and a variety of

processes that allow it to take shape. In concise terms, we can conclude that life response takes shape through an energy flow process that occurs within the context of a universal Oneness.



And yet if we are to truly accept this cosmic causality, we still need to be convinced that life response truly exists; that it is not some anomaly or a random quirk of existence, but is rather a fundamental process of life.

To that end, I would like to show you that not only is life response a very real phenomenon of life, but is one we can consciously evoke at any moment in time.

KEY IDEAS

-The way you act towards life is how life will act towards you is captured in the aphorism “what you sow is what you reap,” and in the “law of karma.”

-In this principle, we recognize a flow of events that are logical in sequence, and that lead to a reasonable and just end.

-And yet a shift in one’s consciousness -- such as a change in attitude -- can also bring about instantaneous results, not waiting for the normal lengthy chain of events to unfold.

-The instantaneous nature of life response is made possible because of underlying principle of “inner-outer correspondence.”

-This law indicates that the inner and the outer are not two separate entities, but share the same continuous stream of existence. Therefore, when I change my inner condition, the outer instantly responds in kind.

-Inner-outer correspondence thus indicates the fundamental Oneness of life.

-Nonlocal connection of quantum science confirms that there can be an instantaneous connection between physical objects that are infinitely far apart.

-Inner-outer correspondence extends that to include non-material changes as well, including variations and fluctuations in our feelings, emotions, attitudes, thoughts, and beliefs.

-Energy is the binding force between the inner person and the outer world in every life response event.

-Any of four types of energy are at play in any life response incident -- physical, vital, mental, and spiritual.

-For a life response event to occur, a minimum amount of energy needs to be released by the individual commensurate with life’s conditions.

-These energies flow out from our being, and link up with individuals, objects, and circumstance with whom we share a common purpose; whose intentions we are aligned with.

-These pulses of energy are able to flow between the initiating and receiving parties because there is a fundamental communication and transport system at work -- a cosmic web.

-Behind everything, there is a fundamental spiritual Reality that provides the ultra-Intelligence and Power to the cosmic web of life.

-Life response takes shape through an energy flow process that occurs within the context of a universal Oneness.

ONE STEP FURTHER

Life Response and Equilibrium of Energy

Here is another way of looking at a “physics” of Life Response. Imagine that the universe is an ocean of energy that is in a state of equilibrium. When we make certain changes in consciousness, we “disturb” that equilibrium and smooth flow of life relative to the point we are involved. (This can be a positive or negative disturbance, and points in between.) The universe however always seeks to restore energies back to a state of equilibrium. It does so through a fresh act. That fresh act is the life response coming back to the individual from a corresponding element across space-time (as a positive, negative, or neutral response). As a result, the equilibrium is restored; or we could say that a new equilibrium is created. Life then waits for the next cycle to unfold ad infinitum throughout the seen and unseen universe.

3. The Power of Conscious Choice

One day several years ago, I was driving along the Embarcadero in San Francisco, a wide avenue that hugs the shoreline of the bay. Though I was in a familiar setting, I noticed a particularly nice panorama that I wanted to capture with my new digital camera. Inspired by this breathtaking view, I pulled over and began taking shots on what proved to be another glorious day of deep blue skies.

However, when I got back into my car and looked at the photos through the attached viewing screen, I was reminded of my constant frustration with the camera: that it would continually wash out the brilliant blues, destroying the contrast and drama of every shot. And so once again, I sat there deflated, knowing that my photo-taking efforts were wasted. It was now painfully clear that I had a digital camera that was not performing the way I had hoped.

Not being a technically-savvy individual -- especially when it comes to the hardware side of technology -- I resigned myself to the fact that the only thing to do was to try to adjust the camera's software settings. Unfortunately, my efforts there also proved futile, when the new pictures I took looked no better -- often worse -- than the earlier ones. Once again, I felt frustrated -- not knowing what to do, or where to turn.

As it turned out, a friend of mine accompanied me on this picture-taking outing, and noticed my mounting frustration. This was not the first time I had experienced disappointment with the output of the camera in her presence. And yet once again, she remained calm, sympathetic, and immune from the storm that was building inside me.

As I sat there exasperated and helpless -- after all, I had purchased an expensive camera, which had not met my expectations -- I knew the issue had come to a head. And so at that moment I cried out "I don't know *what* to do. It's so damn frustrating" -- or words to that effect!

That anguished outburst was followed by a long silence. After several tense moments, my friend suggested that we consider purchasing a light-filtering lens for the camera -- something we had discussed several times in the past. Though I did not disagree with her suggestion, I was in no mood for practical advice, especially where it required additional effort

on my part! All I wanted was to capture the blue skies *now* -- not some time in the future. It was clear that I was now fully irrational.

Fortunately, my friend was unaffected by my behavior, and waited patiently for me to settle down. Several moments later, she softly suggested that we drive over to the nearby Sony Metreon Center and see if they had the light-filtering lens in stock. However, still in an irrational state, her suggestion only increased my frustration; and so I responded with, “Well, the photos I took are ruined, so what’s the point of getting the lens now?” My infantile behavior would not relent.

There was another moment of nervous silence. Fortunately, this time, I was able to take control of my emotions, and several moments later, I began to feel like my old self. Now only was I now calmer, but a certain mental clarity took hold. When I then contemplated the situation, I realized that I had been acting foolishly -- caught up in my own sense of entitlement. In addition, I now had the presence of mind to remember the principle that if you are caught in an emotional frenzy, it is best to defer to the advice of others. And so I began to shift from my own obsessions about the camera to my friend’s practical advice about purchasing the lens.

On further reflection, I now clearly saw that her suggestion was the only way out of my dilemma. So after a few deep breaths -- and the swallowing of my pride -- I said, “OK, let’s go and get it.” “Get what?” she responded. “Let’s go over to the Metreon and pick up the lens.” “Now?” “Yes, now!”

So off we drove to the entertainment complex in the heart of San Francisco’s bustling south of Market (SOMA) district. We then parked on the roof of the huge lot, rode the elevator down to street level, and quickly walked across the busy intersection into the colorful Metreon complex.

Once inside, we headed over to the Sony Center area, where we saw the latest consumer products on display. When we arrived at the camera department, with its plethora of state-of-the-art devices, we wondered if they had the somewhat obscure light-filtering lens that we were after.

I looked around and quickly got the attention of an attendant, who greeted me with a smile. Straight away, that struck me as a good sign. Then, with great emphasis, I described the lens filter we needed. Without a moment’s hesitation, he set off directly to see if the part was in stock. I took his helpfulness and responsiveness as yet another positive indicator.

I then stood there for several moments in a relatively calm state, yet still focused and intent on the outcome. After a few moments, the salesperson returned with the very lens I had hoped for! When I inquired about the price, he told me it was \$90. Without hesitation, I agreed to take it.

In what seemed like a flash, we scurried back across the street and into the multi-level parking lot, took the elevator to the roof, and got into my car. I then pulled out the camera, attached the new lens, and began to take shots of nearby buildings.

The structures adjacent to the lot were light colored and quite bright, reflecting the sun; thus providing an excellent test for the new lens. I also noticed that the deep blue skies were directly in view above the buildings, providing an excellent contrast. As I took shots of the building, I wondered if the lighting would come out right. When I finished the shooting, I anxiously looked at the tiny LCD viewing monitor on the camera to preview the photos. I squinted my eyes and looked closely at the results, and voila, the pictures were perfect! I saw white buildings reflecting a bright sun, contrasting with the deep blue sky above -- just what I wanted! I was ecstatic, knowing that months of frustration had finally come to an end. A joyful sensation washed over me, as I now felt I had entered photographer's heaven!

One Good Turn Deserves Another

Because of these happy developments, I was now able to take clear, colorful, and beautiful photographs in the days and weeks that followed. In addition, these very satisfying results inspired my friend and I to go on a number of day-trips along the shores of San Francisco Bay. There we were able to capture its beauty through our now fully functioning and responsive camera. On these outings, we became like modern-day Lewis and Clarks³, exploring regions of the bay rarely visited -- including the many inlets, eddies, and sloughs along its 200-mile perimeter. On these happy mini-adventures, we learned a great deal about the delicate nature of this magnificent estuary, which inspired us to explore its recesses even more.

³ The famous 19th century pioneer explorers who took an epic journey across the American West.

There is one addendum to this story. Our effort to explore and capture the current condition of the bay created a life response of its own. It turns out that through our picture taking outings, we became interested in understanding the problems of the bay; particularly how commercial salt mining operations dotting its edges had done serious damage to the estuary's ecosystem. As it turned out, just as our picture-taking excursions and interest in environmental problems reached its peak, we learned that the major salt-mining company on San Francisco Bay had decided to pull back its operations -- handing over a large swath of shoreline to the public trust. That meant that the brackish waters would now be flushed with the less-salty waters of the bay, restoring that habitat to its natural state -- including the revival of marsh and wetlands, and the return of a variety of species of birds, fish, and other wildlife. These developments would in essence reverse a hundred years of environmental degradation.

What better response from life could I have received than this news about improvements in the ecology of the Bay I cared so much about! It struck me as the crowning moment; the culmination of events originating a year earlier when I reversed my attitude and made the decision to purchase the light-filtering lens.

On-Demand Response

In this episode, life responded to a change in attitude, which attracted a cooperative salesperson and an in-stock lens that not only led to perfect picture taking in the short term, but to wonderful adventures long term. In the incident, I perceived several possibilities, and then managed to *choose in the right direction*, which attracted powerful positive response. Had I *not* given up my wanting attitude, my picture-taking predicament might have continued indefinitely.

Thus, we see that in any given moment, there is a spectrum of choices before us. When we perceive them and then consciously choose in the *right* direction, the conditions of life quickly turn in our favor. On the other hand, if we fail to choose rightly, then life remains in stasis, or falls back. It is thus in those precious moments when all the world waits on our choice that determines whether or not we will invoke the miraculous.

There is also one other point to consider. Not only can we evoke life response by understanding the current conditions and choosing correctly,

but we can do so at any moment in time, “on demand.” In this way, life response can become our never-ending reality.

Inner Orientation

And yet to achieve this lofty goal, several issues need to be addressed. First, how can we have the mindfulness and wherewithal to perceive the possibilities before us? And second, even if we had this capacity, how do we know which choice is the best one to make?

It turns out that we can resolve both issues if we make the effort to reorient the way we live our lives. If we examine how we function, we will see that we are normally caught up in the visual and auditory influences taking shape in front of us; by the surface information that is streaming into our minds through our five senses. As a result, we tend to focus on objects, colors, and motion; instead of concepts, ideas, and insights. With limited knowledge of the current conditions, we are unable to make the right choices that will trigger life response events.

If I am at the checkout line at the supermarket and focus only on the physical movement of the people in front of me, I will miss other information presenting itself in that moment. E.g., I may not catch the fact that I am getting impatient, or that the person ahead of me is having trouble loading items onto the conveyer belt, or that the cashier is overwhelmed with too many customers. That in turn prevents me from taking to inner or outer actions that can evoke a response.

However, if I were stationed in a deeper poise within -- in a state of stillness and calm -- I would be less likely to be taken in by the surface influences and more attuned to the truths unfolding before me. With this more complete understanding, I am more likely to take right actions that will attract immediate response. E.g., I would allow the person behind me to move ahead of me, or suggest to an elderly person that they use the empty adjacent checkout stand, or I would take control of my own irritation. As a result of these inner and outer behaviors, life will tend to quickly respond: e.g. the jammed food conveyer belt suddenly starts working; or several extra baggers suddenly arrive on the scene; or an expensive product I put in my cart now turns out to be on sale.

Crossroad Decisions

And yet as powerful as this inner approach is, it might be a little too much to ask of the average person. Changing our orientation from the surface to the depths is not an easy thing to acquire. It takes months, even years of dedication, discipline, and practice; something not everyone is cut out for. Therefore, it would be helpful if there were a set of simple guidelines that we could follow when we find ourselves in these sorts of crossroad situations. While there are no hard rules, the best choices are:

1. those that are *helpful* (over that which is uninvolved or harmful)
2. those that *focus on the needs of others* (over that which serves our own self-interest)
3. those that are *positive and upbeat* (over that which is negative and glum)
4. those that engender *calm and patience* (over that which is disturbed and impatient)

The key point is that if you make the right crossroad decision in a given situation, you will immediately attract the cooperation of life. For example, in the lens incident I described earlier I actually made several crossroad decisions. First, I shifted out of turmoil and anguish to a state of calm (guideline #4 above). Then, I shifted out of ego and opened to the influence and recommendation of my friend (#2). Finally, I did something helpful by acquiring the lens, rather than avoiding the matter (#1). The net effect was to instantly attract a cooperative and friendly sales rep; the availability of an obscure filtering lens; an immediate improvement in the output of my camera; and years of happy picture taking!



The Response that Changed My Life

The choices we make are obviously critical to successful and happy living. If we are constantly mindful and aware of the possibilities, and choose in the right direction, we will live a life of never-ending abundance and success. That's only common sense. What may not be so obvious, however, is that if we make the right, conscious decision, we can instantly evoke the miraculous. In fact, a *single* correct crossroad decision can literally change the course of our lives.

Many years ago after graduating Syracuse University, I decided that I wanted to move from the East Coast of the US to California on the West Coast, 3000 miles away. And so one day I filled up my van with my possessions, picked up three fellow travelers, and made my way across the great American landscape. When I arrived in San Francisco, I made many friends and had a wonderful time. Unfortunately, I was never able to fend for myself and earn a living.

One day while wandering about the Berkeley campus, I met a girl, and we developed a close relationship. As our romance developed, we decided to meet up in Europe to begin a month-long trip across the continent. Several weeks later, we met up in Brussels where we began a wild journey across Europe. However, when our relationship failed to catch fire, we decided not to continue together to the Middle East. As a result -- and in a scene worthy of a romantic film -- we said our tearful goodbyes at the Athens airport. I then flew on to Geneva, Switzerland before arriving at my final destination, New York City.

When I arrived back at my parent's house, I was more confused than ever. In particular, I anguished over whether to remain in NYC, or make another go of it in California. It did not take long to realize that I was bored at home, and wanted to make my way back to the West Coast. But was I going to take the same approach I took the first time around -- i.e. have no real plan to earn a living?

It soon became clear that I had a choice between merely heading back out without a strategy, or making a serious effort to find work when I arrived. After mulling over several ideas, I decided that I was going to take up my parents friend's invitation to work at one of his giant home improvement centers in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles.

And so once again, I headed across country, and arrived in San Francisco, where I stayed at the home of several friends. There I took on a short job that enabled me to earn enough money to make my way south to Los Angeles, where I found a place to live on the beach in Santa Monica. After a short stint working on several small projects, I finally came around and contacted my parent's friend, and told him that I was ready to begin work ASAP.

Though I worked on the job for several weeks, I must say I did not enjoy it. In the back of my mind, I hoped to earn a living by doing something I really cared about; that somehow melded with my deepest interests and aspirations in life.

Then one day, I decided to visit the East-West Cultural Center near downtown Los Angeles -- an organization dedicated to social and spiritual integration between East and West, and a place where followers of the Indian sages Sri Aurobindo and The Mother met. Since I had a deep interest in their teachings, I thought I could introduce myself to the people there, and see what comes of it.

And so on that auspicious day, I drove from my beach house in Santa Monica to the East-West Center. There I met a woman who told me that there were several individuals in the nearby San Fernando Valley importing goods from the international spiritual community of Auroville and Sri Aurobindo Ashram, and they might have need of my services. It just sounded too good to be true.

Shortly thereafter, I contacted the people in the Valley and arranged a meeting. When I arrived, I could sense the wonderful, serene atmosphere enveloping that place. I also felt a deep connection and bond with the people I met. We then got down to business and discussed the possibility of our collaboration; in particular, how I could sell their imported goods to retail stores throughout the area. And so in the days and weeks that followed, I began my first-ever sales effort in earnest. As it turned out, I would never look back.

In fact, in one respect my entire life has been a footnote of that one auspicious moment in time when I linked up with the people from the Valley. Everything that has happened to me -- the sales company I built in California, the computer training and consulting company I founded (GuruSoftware), the birth and development of the Growth Online, the books I have written on life response, spirituality, and other subjects -- is an outgrowth of that fateful day when I made the link between my career and my deepest aspirations in life.

And yet none of it would have happened if I hadn't made a conscious choice several months earlier; choosing *work over leisure* for my next stint in California. As a result of that decision, life responded in overwhelming fashion, attracting the greatest blessing of my life.

KEY IDEAS

- At any moment, there are infinite possibilities before us.
- The more we are cognizant of the possibilities, the more likely we are to make the right choice.
- The right choice tends to evoke instances of sudden good fortune.
- When we live on the surface of life, dominated by the auditory and visual, we perceive few possibilities.
- When we live in a deeper consciousness within, we are more mindful and aware, which helps us perceive the possibilities that can lead to conscious choice that attract powerful life response results.
- At various points in time, we are confronted by crossroad decisions. When we make the right choice in those moments, life instantly responds in our favor. The wrong choice can instantly attract the opposite.
- The best life response-inducing behaviors are those that are helpful (over that which is uninvolved or harmful); those that focus on the needs of others (over that which serves our own self-interest); those that are positive and upbeat (over that which is negative and glum); those that engender calm and patience (over that which is disturbed and impatient)
- Even a single, well-formed decision can attract circumstances that change our lives forever.

4. Life Response in Literature and Film

One of the best ways to observe life -- including the miraculous-like phenomenon of life response -- is to read the great literature of the world. From such works, not only are we privy to the many fascinating experiences of its characters, but with a sharp eye, we can detect a number of powerful life response results as well.

It turns out that there is one great work of literature that I have found particularly compelling when it comes to life response. It is Jane Austin's masterwork *Pride and Prejudice*. Its rich story, its variety of fascinating characters, and its several dramatic turns not only contribute to an absorbing read, but also reveals a *cascade* of powerful life response incidents. In the pages that follow, I would like to describe several of these. However, since some of you may not be familiar with the story, I will begin with a brief overview.

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Pride and Prejudice opens with the arrival of two dashing and prosperous young men, Mr. Darcy, and his friend Mr. Bingley. Their unexpected arrival stirs the English community of Meryton into a frenzy, since there are now apparently two very eligible -- and very *wealthy* -- bachelors available for their daughters.

This excitement is shared by the Bennet family, who have five eligible daughters; two of whom -- Eliza and Jane -- are starting to move beyond the prime age for marriage. This puts pressure on the parents to find suitable husbands for them. There is also an added pressure coming from their cousin, Mr. Collins, who has made a claim of inheritance on the entire Bennet estate as the rightful male heir, which means that in the event of the parents' death, the daughters would be left without a home, wealth, and social status. Because of these perceived threats, the Bennets are therefore eager to marry off their daughters, preferably to prosperous men. And so, when the very excitable Mrs. Bennet learns of the arrival of two well to do and handsome young bachelors -- i.e. Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley -- she along with much of the community are stirred into a state of frenzy.

Immediately after, the town elders spring into action and arrange a ball -- inviting all eligible bachelors and maidens in the region. That will of course include the five Bennet daughters, as well as the intriguing monsieurs Bingley and Darcy.

Unfortunately, things do not get off to a very good start for two particular individuals at the dance -- Eliza Bennet, the middle class daughter of a gentleman farmer, and Fitzwilliam Darcy a very wealthy member of the aristocracy. At one point, when Darcy is prodded by others to dance with Eliza, he outright refuses. He does so because as an aristocrat he feels it is undignified to intermingle with the rough-hewn, crude, and vulgar members of the lower classes. In fact, at one point Eliza overhears Darcy's callous remarks that Eliza "is no great beauty," which causes her to take great offense.

Darcy's self-righteous views are reinforced by what he considers the wild dancing, prancing, and other forms of ill-mannered behavior by the middle class members at the ball. Not the least of these indiscretions comes from the oppressive, piercing vocal outbursts of Eliza's own mother -- the thoughtless, churlish, loud-mouthed Mrs. Bennet. And so the story of *Pride and Prejudice* takes shape from this contentious beginning.

Interestingly, as the story unfolds, Darcy has a surprising change of heart, as he begins to fall in love with the same woman he had earlier insulted -- Elizabeth Bennet. He is gradually taken in by her intelligence, her independence, and "the bright light in her eyes." Eventually, the two reconcile their differences, find love, and marry. Likewise, Eliza's sister Jane will marry Darcy's best friend, Mr. Bingley -- though they too go through their own painful courtship. As a result of the marriage of the two sisters to two very rich men, the Bennet family -- who just a short while ago were feeling insecure about their future -- are suddenly catapulted into the upper class.

A Meeting at Pemberley

Which brings me to the two powerful life response incidents I promised. The first involves an incident involving Darcy and Eliza that occurs after he changed his feelings about her, fallen in love, and proposed marriage (which she rejects this time because of his previous prideful and arrogant behavior).

The incident begins one day when Eliza's cousins -- Mr. and Mrs. Gardner -- invite her to visit the countryside of Derbyshire, where the couple lives. As they drive through the lovely landscape, they suddenly come upon the magnificent Pemberley estate. As Eliza gazes at the gorgeous mansion with its spectacular grounds and its great reflecting pond, she is overwhelmed by its majesty and beauty. Mrs. Gardner then casually points out that this is in fact the home of Mr. Darcy! Eliza is thunderstruck by this revelation. She then falls into a momentary reverie as she realizes that had she accepted Darcy's earlier proposal of marriage, all of this could have been hers: that she could have been the Lady of the Pemberley estate.

Not perceiving Eliza's anguish, the Gardeners suggest that since Darcy was out of town on business and would not be returning for several days, they should all take a tour of the estate. Eliza, however, is mortified by the idea, fearing that Darcy would suddenly return and see her there -- something she could not bear since she had already had a very uncomfortable relationship with him. However, after her emotions settle down, and she considers the matter further, she gives in and agrees to the proposal.

When they arrive at Pemberley, the caretaker gives them a tour of the magnificent house and grounds. At one point, as they pause to examine several items inside the stately home, she stops to point out what a fine man Mr. Darcy is. With earnestness and deep affection, she then tells the guests what a *privilege and joy* it has been to work for a man of such *noble* character. On hearing this heartfelt expression of admiration for Darcy, Eliza once again feels a thunderbolt in her heart. After all, Eliza now had living proof that the man whose temperament she had condemned might in fact be a true gentleman with a noble and self-giving nature.

A few moments later, with her emotions quieted down, Eliza begins to develop a very different view of him. Instead of feeling hostile, she now has a much softer and kinder perspective of the man: even the beginnings of a deep admiration and affection.

Now comes the response. The party continue their tour outside, where they walk among the beautiful grounds and gardens. At one point, as they hover near the edge of a lovely pond and observe the serene setting, Eliza once again thinks about the fact that she has been very wrong about Darcy; that he was in fact a man worthy of deep admiration, not disdain.

At the very moment she experiences this deep change of heart, who should turn up at the scene, but Mr. Darcy! Standing there in wet clothing with a diffident look on his face, he seemed to have appeared out of thin air! As the party stood there open-mouthed, as if looking at an apparition, Darcy explains that due to his change in schedule, he came back several days *early* from his business trip. And when he approached the estate, he decided to simply swim across the pond, which accounted for his wet attire.

As Darcy stood before the party, dripping and smiling, Eliza was in a state of shock. Darcy, on the other hand, was calm and relaxed. In fact, he was so comfortable before the group that he proceeded to graciously invite the Gardners and Eliza to dinner.

While several commentators have attributed this stunning meeting at the pond to coincidence, or even accused the author of manipulating the story for dramatic effect, in fact what occurred was *exactly true to life*. What attracted Darcy from seemingly out of nowhere was Eliza's *complete change of attitude* toward Darcy. When she shed her negative opinions and cast aside her hostile feelings toward him, as she had done just a moment earlier, life *instantly* responded with the sudden arrival of the man she would come to love and marry.

As we see in this and other life response incidents, "Nature" -- which is another way of describing the movement of Life -- is continually throwing up situations and circumstances that touch our sensibilities. How we choose to react to these challenges, determines whether or not we attract instances of good fortune. When we make a decisive move towards the *positive*, we instantly evoke powerful positive results. Otherwise, life remains in stasis or unfolds through its slow, meandering, and difficult course. In Eliza Bennet's case -- being a rational, intelligent, and perceptive individual -- she confronted the reality she saw before her, and chose on the side of truth, discarding her negative view of Darcy, which instantly attracted results that would change her life forever.

A Father's New Perspective

Now let us move on to the second major life response event in the story. It is centered around the well-known "elopement episode", where the most intense action and intrigue in the story takes place. Again, let me set the stage for you so that you will perceive the response in the clearest light.

Early on in the story, the five unmarried Bennet daughters walk through the English countryside and make their way to the nearby town of Meryton. When they arrive, the girls unexpectedly meet a group of soldiers, who happen to be friends of Lydia -- the bold, irrepressible, and boisterous youngest daughter. It is here that we are first introduced to one of those soldiers -- the handsome, suave, smooth-talking, yet treacherous Mr. Wickham. In their interaction, we not only see how smitten Lydia is by Wickham's charming manners and exceptional good looks, but how her elder sister Eliza shares those same feelings. Moments later, however, the scene takes a dark turn when Darcy suddenly appears on the scene, and we witness the animosity that exists between him and Wickham.

Some weeks after this telling meeting, a letter arrives at the Bennet home. The note reveals that the Bennet's youngest daughter Lydia has suddenly run off and eloped with the duplicitous Wickham. This naturally comes as a shock to the family, as it not only threatens to scandalize and disgrace them, but virtually cancels any chance the two elder daughters had of attracting prosperous suitors.

Thus, in effect life has presented a set of difficult circumstances that challenge the sensibilities of several individuals -- including Eliza, her sister Jane, their father Mr. Bennet, and their mother Mrs. Bennet. The question then becomes how each will respond to this most difficult of situations -- for it is often how we react to the perceived pressures that determine whether or not we will attract sudden good fortune.

For now, let us focus on the reaction of the two parents -- Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. It turns out that *Mrs.* Bennet reacts rather predictably to the crisis by immediately descending into a state of hysteria. But then what of her more-rational and intelligent husband, *Mr.* Bennet? How will *he* respond to these extremely difficult circumstances?

To examine Mr. Bennet's response, let us take a moment to understand his state of mind prior to the elopement. Mr. Bennet is a gentleman farmer, and is the husband of the vivacious, ill-mannered, and often impossible Mrs. Bennet. He originally married her for her beauty, but now with her good looks fading, there is little for him to appreciate; and so he constantly retreats to the safe haven of his study. Mr. Bennet is also the father of a brood of five daughters, who range in character from silly to lively to intelligent. His favorite is the second eldest, Eliza, who like her father shares a rational, intelligent, and insightful nature.

Mr. Bennet's problem is that despite his many positive attributes, he is negligent in the rearing of his own children -- leaving that chore to his wife. Instead of taking an interest in their concerns and daily affairs, he is content to withdraw to the calm and serenity of his library. There, he can immerse himself in his books, and find peace and tranquility apart from what he considers the silliness of his daughters, and the unbridled offensiveness of his loud-mouthed, churlish wife. The one exception to his indifference is the bond he shares with his favorite daughter, Eliza. Unlike the distant relationship he has with his other children, Mr. Bennet is emotionally attached to the mentally sharp, insightful, and forward-thinking Eliza; and often makes the time to converse with her about important matters.

With this in mind, let us now move ahead in time to that inglorious day when Mr. Bennet receives word that his wild, irrepressible youngest daughter, Lydia, had eloped with the treacherous and duplicitous Mr. Wickham. Now, instead of a content, carefree Mr. Bennet -- absorbed in his work, or by himself in his library apart from the mischief of his family -- we find a tortured man, head in hand, pained and anguished by the potential scandal that threatens to ruin him and his family. Instead of a relaxed, untroubled spirit, we see an unsteady, shaken individual, frightened that his entire world -- including his estate, his fortune, and his family's future -- is about to fall apart.

Given his predicament, one wonders how Mr. Bennet will react. Will he retreat into his study and plunge further into despair, or will he somehow muster the strength and courage to rise above the fray?

Fortunately, Mr. Bennet was a thoughtful and reasonable man, and therefore, in the moments that followed, he had the presence of mind to consider the source of his awful predicament. For one, he thought about the sequence of events that led up to the elopement and soon realized that it was *he* who had allowed Lydia to go to the coast to cavort and play in the first place -- despite protests from his insightful daughter Eliza. More troubling still, he also now clearly understood that he never really had *any* control over his unbridled and impetuous youngest daughter Lydia. Finally, and most powerfully, it struck him that his own *indifference* to his family was the root cause of the awful situation he found himself in; that his reluctance to participate in the rearing of his children planted the seed for the current scandal that threatened to ruin him and his family.

Staring in the face of these awful truths, Mr. Bennet did what a thoughtful and rational individual would do in that situation: he took responsibility. Specifically, he made a personal oath that he would never take his family for granted again; and that from now on he would change his relationship with his children from one of indifference to one of personal involvement.

And yet, even as Mr. Bennet grappled with his conscience, even as he acknowledged the root cause of the situation, and even as he promised himself that he would change his ways in the future, he was still gripped by fear and despair of impending disaster for his family. In his state of desperation, he could only cling to a fleeting hope that somehow life would spare him and his family from a terrible tragedy.

As fate would have it, life *would* smile down on Mr. Bennet. Shortly after, the shaken father receives word from his brother that not only had the eloped couple been found, but that the two would be returning home as a *married* couple; thus ending the taint of scandal for him and his family!

As he read the letter aloud to his daughters, Mr. Bennet knew that his hopes and prayers had been answered: that the devastating situation that threatened to ruin his world had been thwarted. With heart-felt emotion, Mr. Bennet expressed deep gratitude to his brother, as well as any other force that might have contributed to the elopement's resolution. And so in that telling moment of his life, Mr. Bennet unburdened himself of his terrible anguish and pain, and with deep emotion thanked his lucky stars.

What had actually occurred was that life had suddenly responded with overwhelmingly good fortune to Mr. Bennet's change in attitude. Because he acknowledged his own culpability in allowing Lydia to run off to the coast; because he now accepted that he never controlled her wild behavior in the past; and, most of all, because he came to terms with his own negligence as a father in rearing his children, life suddenly brought forth a magnificent response from life.

From this cursory examination at *Pride and Prejudice*, we have seen two powerful instances of life response. On both occasions, situations arose that challenged an individual's sensibilities, forcing them to come to grips with old habits, or wanting attitudes, or limited perceptions and points of view. When they then shed that limited quality, and substituted a more

positive one, powerful energies were released that quickly aligned with and attracted powerful positive results.

When Eliza gave up her prejudice and changed her attitude toward Darcy while visiting his estate, she attracted his presence from out of nowhere, setting the stage for their romance, marriage, and their ultimate happiness. Likewise, when Mr. Bennet changed his attitude and took responsibility for the elopement episode, while promising to involve himself in the rearing of his daughters, he quickly attracted the cancellation of the scandal that threatened to destroy him and his family.

In both cases, an inner psychological change in attitude precipitated a powerful response that changed the course of two people's lives -- in fact a *number* of people's lives. By making an inner adjustment in consciousness, two people were able to take a step out of their narrow field of existence, and open to a wider one, enabling the infinite potentials of life to rush in.

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A Captain's Change of Heart

By now, some of you may be wondering what *fictional* accounts have to do with the subject of life response. After all, they are not real, but are fantasies conjured up in the minds of the author. The answer is that every writer has within him or her, to a greater or lesser degree, a subconscious knowledge of the workings of life. Therefore, when that author portrays a scene through the expressions of one of more characters, there is an instinctual sense of how life really operates under those conditions. It is not that they have a knowledge of the phenomenon of life response per se, but a sense of how life flows and what scenes, events, and outcomes would naturally arise from their predecessors. The greater the artist -- e.g. a William Shakespeare, Alexandre Dumas, or Jane Austin -- the more they capture the subtle nuances of life, and hence are more likely to express life response incidents in their stories.

As it turns out, it is not only in great literature that we can perceive life response outcomes, but in great cinema as well. In recent years, some have even suggested that film is actually replacing literature as the major form of fictional expression for the masses. While film may not have the depth and beauty of language that literature has, it still does a very good job of conveying the subtle and not so subtle unfoldings of life, including the phenomenon of life response. In fact, it is often far easier to spot a

life response event in film because it is such a visual medium. In literature, you have to work a little harder to conjure up a vision of what is happening and how a response has taken shape, whereas in film it tends to jump at you.

Strange as it may seem, over the years I have actually watched films with the sole purpose of indentifying life response in the story. When you observe a film this way, it is fairly easy to pick out one or two instances of the phenomenon. Sometimes the response is incidental to the tale; other times it is crucial to the final outcome.

With that in mind, let us then turn to several examples of how shifts in consciousness attract sudden good fortune in film. The first one I would like to discuss is *Master & Commander: the Far Side of the World*, based on the novel by Patrick O'Brien.

In the 19th century and the British naval frigate HMS Surprise is pursuing the Acheron, a large and powerful French war vessel that is sailing off the coast of South America. At one point, the Surprise, commanded by Captain Jack Aubrey, is herself 'surprised' when she is attacked by the Acheron; badly damaging the ship and wounding many of its crewmembers. As a result of these events, Stephen Maturin, the ship's doctor and close friend of the Captain, comes in conflict with him over his relentless pursuit of the enemy ship. The doctor insists that it is better to retreat, regroup, and consider a new approach rather than further endanger the crew. When Captain Aubrey rebuffs him, Maturin tells him that he is acting irrationally and fanatical.

At one point, Doctor Maturin suggests that they stop for a while at the Galapagos Islands, where he can gather sample specimens of some of the rarest plants, insects, and animals on earth. However, the driven Captain indicates that there is no time for such trifles, and they immediately head out to complete their mission.

Several days later, there is an incident aboard ship where the doctor is accidentally wounded. The Captain, concerned about his friend's condition, orders the ship back to the Galapagos where Maturin can heal. With the doctor near death, the Captain senses that had he listened to his old friend's suggestion, this dire situation would never have happened.

Fortunately, in the days that follow, the doctor recovers, and the Captain guardedly allows him to go on the outing to gather the rare specimens on the island -- the trip he rejected earlier in order to pursue the Acheron. At one point on his field trip, Maturin climbs a hill, gazes

out to sea, and then to his utter amazement sees the Acheron sitting there docked at the edge of the island! What had eluded the crew for months was now suddenly docked at the doorstep, and in an extremely vulnerable position. Quickly the crew seizes the opportunity, devises a plan, and destroys the Acheron.

This is a perfect example of the life response in action. When the Captain changed his attitude and took responsibility for the grave conditions of his friend by heading back to the Galapagos where he could heal, he created an opening that allowed the doctor to discover the vulnerable ship. By changing his perspective, the captain aligned with powerful positive conditions that enabled him to fulfill his and his crew's mission.

Calm in the Face of a Storm

Often when I watch a movie, I am able to pick out one or more life response incidents. If I watch the film exclusively for the purpose of discovering life response, then I am likely to discern half a dozen occurrences or more. Each of us are capable of doing the same, once we know how to recognize life response in action. If we have personally experienced the phenomenon, and if we understand the factors that precipitate it, we can easily recognize its dramatic effect in the story.

As I mentioned earlier, there are times when the response is obvious and jumps out at you, as was the case in *Master and Commander*; while other times, it is more subtle, and requires one to tap into a deeper knowledge of the phenomenon. And yet even a subtler form can be the basis for a powerful, even life-changing response -- as we shall see in the 1935 film classic *The Story of Louis Pasteur*.

In the film, famous scientist Louis Pasteur is trying to discover a cure for hydrophobia -- also known as rabies. This life-threatening disease ordinarily comes through a bite or contact from a rabid, infected animal.

At this point in the story, it is Pasteur's belief that if he gives a mild dose of the disease to an animal, it will build up resistance, which will in turn overcome that illness if it were actually to arise in that person. This will in fact be the approach Pasteur will take to cure rabies and other infectious diseases throughout his career: i.e. give the sick patient a mild dose of the virus, which will cause the body to spontaneously resist it;

which will in turn push it out of the system when an actual infection arises.

In this particular moment in the story, Pasteur believes he has a cure for hydrophobia/rabies, but many in the scientific community are skeptical. In fact, one key member of the establishment, Dr. Charbonnet of the French Academy, is so sure that his method is wrong that he comes to Pasteur's lab, grabs a syringe filled with a concentration of the virus-based cure, and injects it into his arm! Pasteur is mortified by this action, believing that Charbonnet has now sealed his fate. Not only was the serum not intended to be taken in such concentrated doses, but it was meant only for sickly individuals.

As it turns out, Charbonnet not only survives the inoculation, but the next day seems to be perfectly fine! In fact, after 30 full days, he still shows no signs of any illness. While Pasteur is baffled by this development, Charbonnet flaunts the fact by parading around Parisian scientific and social circles, boasting how utterly fit and healthy he is. In one scene, he calls out to the gathered crowd that the more he takes of the allegedly lethal serum, the healthier he feels! As a result of his public posturing, Pasteur's image is greatly tarnished in both scientific and social circles.

Then one day an associate rushes into Pasteur's home to notify the great chemist that he has been made a mockery of throughout the country. Pasteur, however, is impervious to this information, not reacting at all. A moment later, however, his wife Marie has the thought that perhaps the dosage Charbonnet took was of an *old* batch, and therefore had lost its potency to affect him. Pasteur then hurries into his office to test out the hypothesis, which he verifies to be true. A second later, it occurs to him that that he should give infected animals with the disease a low dosage of the serum, and then gradually increases the amount, thereby creating immunity without killing them. This new idea that sprung forth in Pasteur's mind like a revelation will not only alter the course of his career, but of medical history.

What does this story then teach us? From the point of view of life response, it is at once subtle and straightforward. Because Pasteur did not respond emotionally to word of his public humiliation, his wife Marie instantly came forward with the remark about the old serum; setting in motion events that would lead to one of medicine's greatest discoveries. It is an illustration of how inner calm and equality in the face of negative

circumstance can instantly attract good fortune from the world around us.



The Panorama of Life and Life Response

In the end, we see that great literature as well as great cinema can serve as an invaluable instrument for perceiving and understanding the phenomenon of life response. By presenting us with a diversity of characters navigating their way through an array of situations and circumstance, these fictional forms not only help us observe the subtle and not so subtle unfoldings of life, but are windows into the inner and outer behaviors that attract these miraculous-like results.

And yet great literature and cinema will only reveal these profound insights if we are willing to penetrate the surface narrative, delve deeper, and discover the subtle causality at work. Then these works will reveal all of life's marvelous secrets, so we too can quickly attract the miraculous.

INCIDENTS SUMMARIES

Pride and Prejudice: (1) Eliza gives up her negative attitude -- i.e. her prejudice -- toward Darcy, and he suddenly arrives at the pond, setting the stage for their romance and marriage. (2) Mr. Bennet takes responsibility for his daughter's action, and changes his attitudes about the future rearing of his children, which instantly attracts the cancellation of the elopement, saving him and his family from social disgrace and financial ruin.

Master and Commander: The Captain takes responsibility for the accident involving the doctor, returns to the Galapagos so he can heal, which attracts the enemy ship which the doctor sees on a field trip. The Acheron is then destroyed, fulfilling the Captain's mission and then some.

The Story of Louis Pasteur: Pasteur does not react when faced with social ostracism, which instantly attracts an insight from his wife that changes the course of his life and medical history.

THINGS TO DO

-The next time you watch a film, look out for one or two life response incidents in the story. For example, if there is a sudden positive development in the plotline, see if you can trace it back to a person's shift in attitude, or a decision or action taken, or the expression of intense desire or intention.

-Do the same for negative life response. When ill fortune arrives, trace it back to a wrong movement on the part of that or another individual.

-The next time there is a positive or negative development in your own life, see if you can relate it to a previous behavior on your part. If there is a positive result, try reinforcing the behavior that precipitated it. If it is negative, try avoiding it in future.

ONE STEP FURTHER

Dual Transition and Alignment in a Life Response Event

So far, we have been talking about life response as if it were a *one-way* operation. I.e. I change some wanting quality or otherwise raise my consciousness, and the other party responds in kind. While this is how life responds to *your* action, it does not take into account that you are also responding to them. In other

words, in a life response event *both sides are actually moving into alignment with one another*. Without that dynamic, a life response would hardly ever occur.

For example, when Darcy suddenly appeared before Eliza at the pond of his Pemberley estate, he had *also* made adjustments in consciousness that allowed him to be there at the very moment as well. Though we are not privy to the details, we can speculate that Darcy did something that enabled him to cut short his business trip, or made some other adjustment in consciousness before meeting Eliza and the Gardeners at the reflecting pool.

Imagine two satellite dishes facing different points in the sky. Then because of some new conditions, they begin to point towards one another, thereby coming into alignment, so they can now more directly communicate with one another. This is analogous to what happens in a life response event. Both parties move towards and come in alignment with one another.

5. Four Human Behaviors that Attract

My first objective has been to show you that life response is a *real* phenomenon of life -- i.e. it truly exists. I hope you are convinced! However, if you are still somewhat skeptical and need more proof, then I urge you to read on, because I have a number of astonishing true-life stories to relate.

My second objective has been to explain the *nature* of life response -- i.e. *why* it occurs. To that end, I have described the phenomenon from two perspectives -- from the standpoint of life itself, and from the view of us as individuals.

From the perspective of *life*, I have indicated that life response occurs because of the subtle relationship that exists between our consciousness and the world around us. That instead of being two separate realities, the inner me and the outer world share the same continuous stream of existence. Therefore, if I change my inner condition, the outer *instantly* responds in kind.

From the perspective of *us as individuals*, I have suggested that when we take to certain inner or outer behaviors -- such as shifting away from a negative attitude or remaining calm in a difficult situation -- we tend to quickly evoke these miraculous-like results. In the remainder of this chapter and in the several that follow, I will be focusing on these inner personal keys to life response.

Searching for Patterns

In preparing to write this book, I examined hundreds of life response incidents, including those drawn from my own experiences, as well as those of friends, associates, the famous, individuals in history, and characters in literature and film. After accumulating a large cross-section of incidents, I organized them in ways that I hoped would be useful for you the reader. One result of that effort was that I was able to identify a core group of several dozen human behaviors that attract these astonishing-like results. In addition, I also managed to discover a smaller

pool of *four central behaviors* that *every* life response event draws from. It is this core pool of four that I would like to discuss with you now.

1. Having the Right Attitude

Shedding the Negative

The first item in the core pool of four that all life response incidents draw from is taking to a higher *attitude* -- whether it means shifting from a negative one, or forcefully expressing a positive one. As it turns out, expressing the right attitude was present in an *overwhelming majority* of life response incidents I reviewed. In fact, *no other human behavior attracted life response as often!*

First, let's consider some examples of shedding negative attitudes and life response in literature and film. As you recall, when Eliza Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* changed her attitude toward Mr. Darcy during her tour of his vast Pemberley estate, he instantly appeared out of nowhere, which kindled their romance and led to their happy marriage. Likewise, when Mr. Bennet shifted his attitude away from aloofness to taking full interest in the rearing of his daughters, he instantly attracted the end of the elopement, thereby preventing his family from utter ruin.

Then there are the real-world incidents in which shifts in attitude precipitate such response; beginning with the camera lens incident. As soon as I reversed my truculent attitude and embraced the suggestion of a friend, I quickly secured the camera lens that produced perfect photos and years of happy picture taking. Likewise, when I reversed my reluctant attitude and learned the new software program during that quiet holiday season, I instantly attracted a plethora of training, when not a jot of work was in sight.

As we see, when we overcome a wanting attitude, we move out of our limited plane and embrace a wider sphere of existence. In that process, we release powerful energies that move out into the field of life and align with powerful positive conditions, which we perceive as powerful life response results.

(Because so many of our attitudes are wanting, I thought it would be helpful to create a comprehensive list of them, which I have compiled below.)

**List of Negative Attitudes that Attract
Positive Life Response when Overcome**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has hostile feelings towards others ● Has prejudiced view of others ● Is unwilling to do the current work ● Is uninvolved and aloof ● Is insensitive towards others ● Is reluctant to do things, take action ● Has a poor self image ● Is prideful and egotistical ● Feels superior to others ● Blames others for problems ● Cowers before others ● Doesn't listen; take other's advice ● Has pessimistic outlook ● Has a cannot-do attitude ● Doesn't think for one's self ● Seeks the approval of others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Insists on one's viewpoint ● Is jealous of others ● Is cynical or argumentative ● Is rigid and close-minded ● Is mistrustful of others ● Has limited view of what's possible ● Is swayed by social influences ● Is reluctant to get involved ● Is unable to make decisions ● Is dishonest or insincere ● Puts off things for tomorrow ● Is afraid to act ● Is rebellious and unaccepting ● Does not want to change a habit ● Has little faith in life; is cynical ● Has little faith in others |
|---|---|

Expressing, Expanding on the Positive

Though life responds to shifting away from a negative attitude, it does the same when we simply and boldly express a *positive* one.

For example, a professional woman I know of in Europe hoped to secure a new job. At the same time, she needed to purchase an expensive new computer. Because she had to deal with both at the same time, she found herself in a rather pressure-filled situation. And yet she had a unique capacity to maintain her poise and retain a positive attitude in these sorts of situations.

And so the first thing she did was apply for the job; which she then followed up by purchasing the computer. Well almost *immediately* after buying the machine, she received word that she had secured the job she was after. Because her *attitudes were positive and expansive* -- boldly taking up the challenge without complaint -- life instantly cooperated, bringing her precisely what she had hoped for in the shortest period of time

Here is another example of expressing a cheerful, positive attitude in work. In the 34-part British TV series *The House of Eliot*, two sisters have built up a high-end dress-designing business in 1920s London. As you might expect, from time to time difficult situations would arise. Sometimes it involved a recalcitrant and problematic employee; other times, unscrupulous individuals seeking to take advantage of them, and so forth. In these instances, there was thus ample reason to feel wronged, or be angry, or hold a grudge against the offending party. And yet Evie -- the younger of the two sisters -- had this unique ability to look at these sorts of situations in a positive light. As a result, every time she expressed her cheerfulness and goodwill after a difficult situation, good fortune would immediately follow -- whether in the form of a spike in sales, or a new unprecedented opportunity arising, and so forth. When you maintain a positive attitude, remain cheerful, enthusiastic, and upbeat, life tends to quickly work in your favor!

2. Aspiring for Something (Power of Intention)

The second item in our pool of four human behaviors that all life response incidents draw from is having an *aspiration* for something. We can also call it our “intention.” When we yearn for something to come about or be accomplished, life quickly conspires to make it happen.

One of the best examples of this phenomenon is found in *Pride and Prejudice*. From the outset, we see how deeply and persistently Mrs. Bennet aspires for her daughters to marry -- particularly to prosperous men. That intention is only heightened when their cousin Mr. Collins arrives on the scene and threatens to take over the family’s estate through his right of male inheritance. Well it turns out that just as Mrs. Bennet’s aspiration in these matters reach their peak, two eligible and very prosperous young bachelors -- monsieurs Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley -- suddenly arrive on the scene! It is a powerful, direct response to the intensity and depth of Mrs. Bennet’s aspiration. (By the way, they will marry her daughters in short order, completing and fulfilling her intense aspiration.)

Then there was the case of Kit James that I described at the outset of this book. We saw there that when she focused her intention on a new career path as a professional gardener, she quickly attracted a series of remarkable outcomes that rapidly hurled her towards her future. A school was suddenly brought to her attention; courses were readily made

available; a desperately needed job appeared out of nowhere; even a fortuneteller she never met before implored her to move in that direction. As a result of the intensity of Kat's aspiration, life took over and rushed her towards her goal.

It is interesting to note how aspiration/intention and attitudes relate. When we develop the intention for something to happen, it tends to occur. However, sometime life does not respond because a negative attitude blocks the force behind our intent. However, when we give up that negative attitude -- whether a hostile feeling towards a co-worker or a reluctance to do a work -- the energies solidify, attracting positive conditions that fulfill our aspiration. For example, one individual I know of wanted to increase sales in his company, but it did not happen. However, as soon as he gave up a corresponding wanting attitude, sales suddenly took off!

Focus and Interest Too

Closely related to aspiration/intention is our ability to focus our minds or take an interest in a matter or thing. When we do either with the necessary intensity, life quickly brings closely related circumstance back to us. For example, if you focus on reading a chapter you have avoided in the past, you suddenly get the opportunity to use that very same information to solve a critical problem. Or, you think of a music group that you had had not thought of in 20 years, and 10 minutes later you see them on TV, when they had not been mentioned in the media for over a decade.

Over the years, I have experienced such focus and interest-induced life response hundreds if not thousands of times. And each time it occurs, whether trivial or important, it is a wonder to behold!

By the way, the reason these striking events happens so frequently is that we are constantly focusing our mind and taking an interest in particular issues or matters. As a result, we quickly move in sync and align with related conditions.

It is actually quite common to have such experiences. With minimal mindfulness and awareness, the average person can experience this phenomenon at least several times a day.

3. Making a Firm Decision

The third item in our pool of four human behaviors that all life response incidents draw from is making a *decision*. Whereas an aspiration is primarily a desire, a hope, a wish for something to come about, a decision is a firm *commitment to a course of action*. When we decide on a thing, we release formidable mental and vital energies that quickly attract powerful positive conditions; often producing results we would never have imagined.

Recall the situation in *Pride and Prejudice* where the youngest daughter Lydia and the nefarious Mr. Wickham have eloped, threatening to tarnish the image of the Bennet family. In that episode, when Lydia's father Mr. Bennet became aware of the scandal, he went through a wrenching period of introspection. Fortunately, he was able to take responsibility for his daughter's actions, and then went a step further and made the firm commitment to be involved in his children's future rearing. As a result, he *quickly* received word that the elopement had ended.

When we make a decision for something to come about, life instantly conspires to make it happen. Even if we do not physically act on it, that inner resolution sets in motion events that quickly overcome the negative and attract the positive.

4. Taking a Physical Action

The fourth and final item in our pool of four human behaviors that all life response incidents draw from is taking a *physical action*. At the point that we act in life, positive conditions quickly present themselves. This is especially true when we act with great vigor, or when we take action in areas we were formerly hesitant, negligent, or indifferent.

For example, in the refrigerator episode I described at the outset of this book, I not only aspired and decided to do so, but I actually got down on my hands and knees and made that physical effort. At the very *moment* I completed that difficult physical ordeal, the phone rang and I received word that I now had months' worth of training work, when a moment before I was desperate for anything.

Likewise, in a similar incident, right after I made the physical effort to learn a new software application -- something I had been reluctant to do until that point, -- word instantly came that my entire holiday work schedule was now filled; again coming at a time there was nothing on my calendar.

Finally, when the captain in *Master and Commander* reversed himself and navigated his ship back to the Galapagos Islands so his doctor could heal, he quickly attracted the very ship he was after. Because he took action -- *right* action in this case -- life rewarded him with a sitting duck ship that his men proceeded to destroy.

A Sale to Remember

In the final analysis, we see that there is a pool of four determinants that every life response event draws from -- right attitude, aspiration for something to come about, decision to a course of action, and action itself. More often than not, two, three, or even all four of these determinants are at play in any life response incident. For example, in the episode involving Mr. Bennet, three out of the four determined the outcome. After the elopement scandal broke out, he changed his blasé *attitude* about the rearing of his children, developed the *aspiration* to actively be involved in their future rearing, and then made the firm *decision* to do so. (The only factor that was not present was actually implementing his decision through a physical action, which was not required from the vantage of the response.) With three of the four determinants at work, he could not help but attract a powerful positive result; one that not only saved his family, but catapulted them into a whole other level of financial well-being and social status.

Interestingly, in studying many cases of life response along the way, I have actually seen a significant percentage of incidents where *all four* factors were at play. When that happens, life cannot help but generate *overwhelmingly* results. In fact, we saw that in *Master and Commander* where attitude, aspiration, decision, and action were all at play, and precipitated the dramatic, final outcome of the story. I also had the opportunity to experience this first hand, as you will see from the following important episode in my life.

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In the early 1980s, I was introduced to the emerging world of personal computers. After getting my feet wet developing a small spreadsheet program for an energy conservation company, I decided to make a career of it in personal computers. However, the first thing I had to decide was where to start since there were endless opportunities in the field. After consulting with several friends and associates, I decided to

begin at the bottom, which in those days meant working in a retail computer store.

And so a short time later, I secured a position as a salesperson at one of the 400 Computerland outlets -- this one located in nearby Oakland, California. There I got the chance to cut my teeth in this fast-emerging field by selling computer systems and software directly to walk-in customers from the local business community. Though being indoors was a dramatic change in my lifestyle, I believed that this was the right first step to take in my nascent computer career.

As it turned out, my first day of work on the job really opened my eyes. As I looked around the showroom, I saw seasoned salespeople with considerable technical knowledge of the computer. Unfortunately, I was neither sales-savvy, nor particularly computer literate. However, I did bring certain strengths to the table, including a native intelligence, and several years of experience running my own business.

Though I worked hard, and found the work enormously challenging, after several months I was unable to climb out of the lower tier of salespeople when it came to generating monthly sales. Even when I steeled myself and made a determined effort to rise to the next level, I found myself still ensconced at the bottom. This remained the case for well over a year.

Then the busy Christmas season of 1984 approached. Because business was particularly brisk at that time of the year -- it was after all, the height of the holiday buying season, and was when many PCs were purchased for end-of-year tax write-offs -- a shortage of salespeople was beginning to develop. As a result, my boss approached me and asked if I would be willing to work an occasional weekend to take up the slack. Begrudgingly, I accepted his offer.

However, when the holiday season arrived, my boss upped the ante, and asked me to work a *second* consecutive weekend. I told him that I would think it over, and get back to him with my decision. Over the next several days, I mulled over the issue in my mind. Quite frankly, I was opposed to the idea, since I longed for *more* free time, not less. Because I was in a perpetual state of physical and mental exhaustion during that period, I longed for more rest and relaxation. Ultimately, however, I had to admit that these were merely excuses for something much deeper. The fact was that I did not really enjoy my job at the computer store. Instead,

I longed for the freedom of my previous work, where I owned my own business, made my own decisions, and came and went as I chose.

Fortunately, before responding to my boss's request, I felt compelled to consider the issue once more. After wrestling with my emotions for the *n*th time, I finally concluded that since life was obviously pushing me in this direction, I should oblige and accept his offer. And so shortly thereafter, I told my boss that I would report to work that second consecutive weekend as he had asked.

When that Saturday arrived, things were quiet around the lovely Lake Merritt area of Oakland, California, where the store was located. Because most businesses were closed that day, there was little street traffic, and, as a result, only a few customers appeared at our doorstep when we opened that morning.

Several minutes later, however, I noticed one particular individual wander into the store. After sizing him up, I thought that he did not seem the type who would purchase a computer. Rather, he struck me as someone who did not know much about these systems, and was simply there to find out what all the fuss was about. (At the time, the personal computer was still something of a novelty.) I also found him somehow non-descript -- unlike the polished, professionally dressed, energetic businesspeople I normally dealt with during the week. It also occurred to me that he might have been there to make a small purchase -- perhaps a box of computer disks -- or was simply there to pick up a few brochures.

In any case, noticing that he was not being attended to, I gingerly walked over to greet him. After a short discussion, we sat down at a small table in front of the showroom to discuss his computer needs. *That* was a bit of a surprise -- for I never suspected that he was actually interested in acquiring a system. After a few minutes, however, he did something even more surprising -- he placed an order for one! Then, a few moments after that, he inquired about a printer, and then a plotter to complement his new computer -- and to my amazement, purchased these as well! Then he asked me about *additional* systems for a *network* he envisioned, and then proceeded to purchase these also! As I sat there stunned at this very unexpected turn of events, I hurriedly wrote down the details of his ever-expanding order!

A typical computer system sale at that time cost in the range of \$2-3000. However, when I tallied up this individual's order, it came to over \$20,000! He had thus placed an order nearly *ten times* the size of an

average system sale! As it would turn out, this was not only by far the biggest sale I had ever closed at the store, but it was also the biggest sale of *my life* till that point – computer system or otherwise. Perhaps more importantly, it resulted in the biggest commission I had ever earned on a single sale. The nearly \$3000 I netted for that single transaction would turn out to be equal to *two months* worth of pay.

But the story did not end there -- as the episode continued to reverberate forward in the days and weeks that followed. Because I was so energized by the transaction, during the remainder of the month I racked up *another* \$50,000 in sales -- bringing my monthly sales total to over \$100,000. (My previous high had been just over \$40,000.) That tallied to over \$6000 in commission for the month, when I had never made more than \$1500 in that period in the past. (You can at triple these amounts in current 2009 dollars.)

As a result of these circumstances, I became the highest selling salesperson in the history of the four-store operation. I.e. out of several dozen of my peers, I had the single highest month of sales, profits, and commissions ever recorded in the local subchain's history. In addition -- if you consider the fact that the city of Oakland was the world headquarters for the 400-store Computerland chain, and that the Oakland store I worked at was, in essence, its global flagship location -- the achievement seemed to border on the profound.

As it turned out, there was a wonderful postscript to this story. At the end of the year, and just after the holiday rush, the entire staff, including spouse and friends, gathered for a Christmas Party in Jack London Square, a harbor and resort areas at the edge of San Francisco Bay. At this formal gathering, held in a large catered hall, we participated in a glittering affair where we had a sumptuous meal and were provided with fine, fun-filled entertainment.

When the award-ceremony took place, top management announced to the audience that I had received the highest retail sales in the group's history. When I then walked up to accept my award, I received a standing ovation from the nearly 150 people gathered in the hall. As I basked in the glow of appreciation, I looked over to the side, and saw Janice -- the individual who hired me for the job in the first place. When I then examined her face more closely, I noticed that tears were welling up in her eyes. In a flash, I recalled that she was the one person who had faith in me -- hiring me on when I had little technical knowledge and

experience in the computer field. She was also the one individual who showed confidence in me when my sales effort was flagging -- i.e. when I was practically dead last amongst my peers in monthly revenues.

Now as I gazed at her face, I just knew that she was proud of my accomplishment. She had watched me climb out of the depths, and rise to the pinnacle of success in her company. In that moment -- now forever frozen in time -- I returned her smile, and expressed my heartfelt appreciation for her faith in me. When I then thanked the crowd and carried off my award, it was the crowning moment of my nascent computer career. It was also the final act of what turned out to be the most powerful and profound life response event of that period of my life.

Four-Fold Change

If we examine this episode, we see that each of the over-arching human behaviors from our pool of four were present, enabling the powerful response that followed. To begin with, I overcame my reluctance to work that second consecutive weekend -- in essence, reversing my wanting *attitude*. That in turn released the will and *aspiration* in me to work weekends. I then made the firm *decision* and commitment to come in that Saturday, which I then implemented through a *physical action* when I actually arrived and worked that day.

As a result, several moments after the doors opened that morning, the individual appeared who would change the course of my career. Not only was I able to attract the biggest sale of my life -- catapulting me to the top amongst my peers, and bringing a financial windfall -- but I finally had the confidence to make personal computers my chosen field. That has been the case until this very day.

**Four Human Behaviors
that Attract Life Response**

- Having the right ATTITUDE
- ASPIRING for Something
- Making a firm DECISION
- Taking a physical ACTION

KEY IDEAS

-There are four major determinants of life response -- having the right attitude, aspiring for something to come about, deciding on a course of action, and taking a physical action

-In every life response incident, one or more of these are at play. Often, two, three, or even all four are present.

-The most common cause of a life response is overcoming a negative attitude -- whether towards others, one's self, or life itself. Common examples are overcoming reluctance or disdain towards others

-There are dozens of negative attitudes that we are capable of expressing. We each have a propensity towards particular ones. Overcoming them tend to attract powerful response from life.

-Expressing wanting attitudes also tend attract negative circumstance.

-If you stay fully positive in a situation or otherwise raise your level of cheerfulness and enthusiasm, you attract positive conditions.

-When we focus our thoughts, interests and emotions on anything, life tends to bring more of it to us.

-When we aspire to achieve something, life quickly conspires to bring it about.

-When we commit ourselves to a course of action -- i.e. take to a decision -- life moves in our favor.

-Life also responds to taking a physical action.

-In an event where all four determinants are at play, we likely to attract overwhelming, even life-changing response from life.

A SHORT QUIZ

Let's try something a little different. Please read over the following true story forwarded to me by a friend and see if you can determine which of the four determinants precipitated the life response outcome.

“Well here is a good one, from today! After putting off, and putting off scheduling a surgical procedure for a hernia, I finally decided to move forward and do it. As it turns out, after much fear and trepidation, I was referred to a

very competent doctor at Beth Israel Hospital at 10 Union Square South in Manhattan.

Well it turns out that no sooner did I commit to the much-needed operation than I received a call from a former business associate who said she referred a prospect to me who was in need of production services for an upcoming public relations event at -- you guessed it -- 10 Union Square East! The response was instantaneous! Mind you, in close to 3 years in the business I have never, ever had the slightest inclination to prospect business at Beth Israel, let alone receive a referral on a July 4th week, which is traditionally a very slow business period. Well, I think I'll go clean out my fridge!"

[Then this follow-up report from my friend arrived:] "In error I wrote that my medical appointment was 10 Union Square East and the potential sale was for 10 Union Square South. *Both* were in fact 10 Union Square *East!* In addition, I just received an email from the prospective client stating that the actual event production is going to be held in the hall adjoining the very room where I had my consultation!"

Were you able to figure out which of the four determinants -- attitude, aspiration, decision, and action -- were at play in this astounding true-life story?

6. Embracing the Conditions of Life

In the last several chapters, I began to direct our discussion of life response back to the *individual's* role in evoking these marvelous results; as opposed to the *underlying principles* of life that enable it to occur. Though an essential Oneness between the inner me and the outer world is the foundation that makes life response possible, it is really the way we live our lives that ultimately determines whether or not we will evoke these miraculous-like results.

In the last chapter, I indicated that there is a pool of four essential human behaviors that every life response event draws from. E.g. when I came in and worked that second consecutive weekend shift, invoking the biggest sales and paycheck of my life, we saw how *all four* behaviors were at play -- i.e. a shift in attitude, an aspiration to work, the decision to do so, and the physical act of actually coming in that fateful Saturday morning. The result was a magnificent response that took place within moments of completion of that fourth and final behavior.

In addition to this essential pool of four that all life response events draw from, I have also identified a second group of several dozen behaviors that were prevalent among the hundreds of incidents I examined over the years. In fact, over the course of the next several chapters, I will reveal many of them to you. As I present each of these other life response-inducing behaviors, I think you will find the entire subject taking on a new richness and power. As you see these ideas in action, you are more likely to relate it to your own situations and circumstance, which will inspire you to evoke these miraculous-like results in your own life.

With that in mind, I would like to begin with the extraordinary true story of one of the world's business pioneers.

Garbage Rummaging that Changed the World

In his autobiography *The Birth of the Chaordic Age*, thinker and corporate pioneer Dee Hock not only describes the major events of his life, but gives us a detailed analysis of his visionary business philosophy,

including his profound insights into the nature of organization and human collaboration.

Rather than the traditional top down, “I am the boss and you follow” approach to business organization, Dee envisions a future where groups of individuals share their ideas in a respectful, collaborative, and creative way. Such “chaordic” forms of organization -- i.e. spontaneous creativity within an organized format -- will invariably generate the best ideas, and therefore the wisest decision and actions, leading to the largest boosts in productivity, revenues, and profits.⁴

As it turns out, Dee developed his profound business philosophy while working as a high-level executive for several of the biggest banking institutions in the world. Though Dee had many fascinating experiences on his long and winding road to the top, he also encountered many obstacles, not the least of which was corporate resistance to new forms of collaborative, *non*-hierarchal business functioning and decision making. In response to these experiences, Dee would go to develop his innovative ideas about “chaordic cooperation” in business and society.

As I read through his fascinating experiences and visionary philosophy, I was struck by one particular episode in his life: one that occurred midway through his career. It demonstrated in dramatic fashion how life can respond overwhelmingly when we accept the given conditions of life -- i.e. when we take up in full what is before us, rather than reject or avoid it. Here is a capsule of that inspiring story:

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One day, midway through a very successful business career in which he had risen to the top of the executive food chain, Dee Hock decided that he had had enough. Tired of climbing the corporate ladder, or as he put it, “the greased pole to the top,” Dee decided to get out of the rat race and “downsize himself.” And so in the days that followed, he did something quite unusual for someone in his position; he went off to find a lower -- a *much* lower -- job position! In fact, not long after he made that decision, Dee accepted a job as a lowly bank clerk at a local branch of the National Bank of Commerce in Seattle -- the very company he helped run at corporate headquarters!

⁴ He was two decades ahead of the Internet and collaborative social networks!

There were several reasons why the position was ideal for Dee. First, compared to his role as a high-level executive, a bank teller seemed to be a relatively simple and easy job. Second, the low-level position provided Dee with a degree of anonymity and solitude; something he desperately longed for. Third, the role allowed him to reflect on his 16-year professional career, and to contemplate where he wanted to go next. And last, it enabled Dee to look at the entire banking industry with the fresh eyes of an entry-level employee. Taken together, the humble position of bank teller seemed to Dee just what the doctored ordered.

Though the polished and brilliant former executive found the work straightforward, he did run into one obstacle: he found it extremely difficult to get along with his supervisor. She was an older woman, whose job it was to teach Dee the ropes. He found her assertive and abrasive; at a time when he was in no mood to be ordered about. And besides, Dee had his pride. He was after all, a man who had helped oversee a banking empire, and the last thing he wanted was to be pushed around by an ornery, elderly, female boss at a lowly bank branch.

Then one afternoon after the bank closed, Dee and the supervisor were tallying up the day's transactions to insure the books were in balance. Though the two co-workers checked their figures several times, they could not get the numbers to tally. After considering the cause of the anomaly, Dee's superior suggested that the problem might be due to a missing deposit slip. She then informed him that the misplaced piece of paper was probably located in one of the garbage bins located in the bank's basement, *and* it was Dee's responsibility to retrieve it!

Needless to say, the former top executive, now humble bank clerk, was not very happy with the idea, since it was another affront to his pride. Still Dee was able to hold his anger in check, and proceeded to make his way to the basement where it was his task to locate the missing piece of paper.

Unfortunately, when he arrived, he became even more agitated when he realized that the bins he had to rummage through were actually giant 55-gallon disposal units, each stuffed with paper, food, and other horrid detritus of the day!

Though on balance, Dee had been enjoying his "vacation" from the corporate world, at that moment he had a very different perspective. Standing before several huge containers of foul refuse, Dee Hock not only felt distraught about the effort he had to make, but was utterly

humiliated that his life had reached this low-point. After all, he had walked the halls of the corporate elite! He had been a man of influence, who had shaped the lives of many! And yet now as a lowly teller in the basement of a small branch bank, he had to rummage through containers of rank trash in order to find a missing bank deposit slip to balance the day's receipts.

As he contemplated the daunting task, he began to lash out at the world, muttering under his breath that he would be damned if he was going to pick through that mess to find a meaningless piece of paper; that he would be damned if he would take orders from that insufferable woman. As he stood there in anguish, Dee Hock now realized that he had come to the lowest point in his professional career -- perhaps his entire life.

And yet Dee had a peculiar way of looking at things. Somehow, the absurdity of the situation amused him. And so a moment later, a smile spread across his face; and a minute after that, he laughed out loud at the utter absurdity of it all.

Then Dee recalled that whenever he found himself in a tough spot in the past, he had a peculiar ability to separate himself from the situation, and see it in a positive light. It then struck him that his current plight was no different. In fact, it was not unlike the times he shoveled manure on the family farm as a young man.

And so as Dee stood in front of the foul containers, he was able to reverse his hard feelings and shrug off his humiliation, and take up the task at hand.

First, he took off his coat. Then he removed his tie, and finally his shirt. Then he tipped over the first disposal unit, and searched through its awful contents. When he didn't find anything there, he tipped over the second can and searched through it. When he failed again, he rummaged through the next one, and the next. Interestingly, the more he worked at it, the more he saw the ridiculousness of the situation, and therefore the more he laughed!

After a while, something even more remarkable took place: Dee actually began to take *pride* in and *enjoy* this most unsavory of tasks! Brimming with energy and intensity, Dee Hock continued on his mini-quest to find the missing deposit slip for the next hour.

Then at one point in that herculean effort, Dee's supervisor arrived on the scene and informed him that their problem had been resolved!

Dee was surprised to hear this, and wondered what in the world could have happened. It turned out that their inability to tally the day's transactions was not due to a missing deposit slip as they had thought, but was simply the result of a math error! As a result, Dee's supervisor now happily informed him that the day's transaction were now fully in balance!

You can imagine the expression on Dee's face when he heard that news. You can also picture what he might have said next. Though he did indeed express his outrage -- lashing out at her for putting him through the humiliating ordeal -- he quickly regained his composure and put aside all hard feelings. In fact, the two would soon walk off and have a good laugh about the matter.

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Though the story at this point seemed to have a happy ending, several reverberations followed. A day or so after the episode, Dee's manager at corporate headquarters left a message that he had important news to share. When Dee arrived at the corporate office the next day to find out what was going on, his former boss told him that their company, the National Bank of Commerce, had agreed to become a franchisee of Bank of America's credit card program. That meant that NBC would now be issuing BankAmericard credit cards to all of its own customers.

Then the real bombshell hit when Dee was told that he had been selected to head up the entire operation.

Though Dee was at first reluctant to accept his former boss's offer -- mainly because the current bank teller position allowed him to lay low and reflect on his career -- in the end he could not pass up the offer. It also put him in a great position to be involved in the newly emerging credit card industry, something Dee was very interested in.

In fact, only later would Dee truly understand how profound this job change would be. Working in the new position, Dee eventually developed a radical new idea for the credit card business. Rather than having major banking institutions like Bank of America franchise their own credit cards to other banks like NBC (who would in turn offer it to their customers, like you and I), Dee devised a *centralized umbrella organization* that would instead franchise its own credit cards to large banking institutions like Bank of America and Wells Fargo. As history recorded it, Dee Hock

went on to found that organization, and the world famous credit card that bore its name -- Visa.

There is no better example of the life response power of embracing the condition of life than Dee Hock's experience. When he overcame his reluctance to hunt through barrels of rank trash; when he shed his anguish and humiliation, turning it into a occasion for joy and pride in work, he opened the portals of possibility. As a result, the next day an opportunity arrived that catapulted him into a position to change the course of financial history.

As we have seen throughout this book, life responds to the quality of our attitudes -- whether it is about our work, the people around us, or life itself. One particular attitude is how we relate to the givens put before us. If we embrace them in full, we move out of our small stream of existence and join the wider ocean of life, where we align with powerful, life-changing results.

To embrace the current conditions is to be absorbed in the *present* -- instead of being influenced by the past or seeking to escape to a better future. When Dee Hock fully accepted the needs of that moment -- forgetting his previous high position and the humiliation of what he had to do next -- he lost himself in the eternal Now. In that way, Dee moved beyond the bounds of time to a wider sphere where our deepest aspirations in life are fulfilled.

Four Little Episodes

Over the years, I have attracted similar results by embracing life's requirements. Though the outcomes were more modest than Dee's, the outcomes were nevertheless striking, as you will see from the following sample mini-episodes.

The Printer Cartridge

The first one took place several years ago when I found myself hesitant to purchase an ink cartridge for my printer. After all, I reasoned, the cartridge was not yet empty, so why bother spending good money on a new one. Though I knew that the ink supply was getting low, I was still unwilling to act on that fact. Fortunately, my better angels took over, and

I saw the practical value of purchasing the cartridge, which I proceeded to do a half hour later.

When I arrived at the superstore outlet, I looked around and quickly found what I was after. And while the purchase itself was uneventful, what happened next was certainly not. As it turned out, when I arrived back at my office with ink cartridge in hand, I was delighted to discover that a previous substantial order from one of our customers had now suddenly *doubled* in size.

Then, as is often the case in these situations, I wondered what could have caused this sudden change. It only took a moment to make the connection between my earlier effort to purchase the cartridge and the wonderful response that followed. Because I gave up my reluctance and accepted the current conditions -- i.e. the need to replace a near-empty printer cartridge ASAP -- life rewarded me with a sudden and most unexpected substantial boost in sales. Or, to put it another way, because I did my duty of embracing life, life did *its* duty of responding!

Earned Value

Then there was the time I was scheduled to meet with a client of mine to provide some project management expertise. When I first arrived at the office, I was told that my contact was not yet available to meet with me. Since I now had time to kill, I thought it best to brush up on several topics in my software manual.

After leafing through the heavy tome, I came to the subject of “Earned Value Analysis” -- an arcane area of project management that relates to business accounting. It turns out that whenever I came across this subject in the past, I thought it too esoteric and hard to grasp, and therefore not worthy of my attention.

This time, however, something in me switched gears, and I thought, “Wait a minute. I now have some time, so why not use the opportunity to learn something new.” “And besides, it’s about time you tackled a subject you have been avoiding all of these years.” And so for the next several minutes, I plunged into the esoterica of Earned Value analysis.

A few moments later, I was told that my contact was ready to see me. And so with carrying case (and heavy manual!) in hand, I headed to her office. When I arrived in front of a bank of computers, she proceeded to explain her dilemma.

At first, I struggled to understand her problem. However, when I probed a bit further, I began to perceive her plight. I then offered several practical solutions; but when I tried to implement them, they failed to produce any beneficial results. It was clear that I had now arrived at an impasse.

And so for what seemed like an interminable moment, I sat there confused and deflated. However, just as I was about to give up, an idea suddenly came to mind. When I realized what it was, a chill came over me. I then turned to the client and asked her if she had ever heard of “Earned Value analysis.”

After I described how this feature might solve her problem, there was another pregnant pause. Then she looked at me and erupted with, “That’s exactly what we need! That’s the perfect solution we’ve been looking for!”

In the next several moments, I sat there stunned by what had just taken place. And yet there was no time to dwell on the miraculous, as I had to implement the solution. When I completed the work and departed the premises a little while later, my contact praised me to the high heavens; using the term “brilliant” several times, when in fact I only thought of Earned Value because it was fresh in my mind! As I walked out into the street and took in the bright sunlight, I felt like I was walking on air!

In the end, we can readily see what happened. Because I embraced a subject I avoided in the past, life put me in a position to use that very knowledge to solve an intractable problem. By shifting from reluctance to acceptance, I opened the portals of possibility, attracting a response and solution from right out of nowhere!

The Sports Teams

Then there was the time many years ago when I watched a football game on TV involving my favorite team. As I took in the game, I knew that the fate of my squad and several others I was pulling for was in the balance. As it turned out, at that particular moment, *all* of my teams were behind in their respective games. Since this meant that they might all fail to qualify for post-season play, I felt quite disappointed -- a fact any sports fan can appreciate.

Well, just as my anxiety was peaking, I remembered that I had to take care of several personal chores -- including showering, getting dressed,

and otherwise preparing for the day. However, due my excitement, I put these aside in order to follow the fortunes of my team. However, I soon noticed that the more intently I watched the match, the further behind all of them fell!

Then I remembered the principle that when you find yourself in this sort of crossroad situation, it is best to take care of the *necessities*, rather than do what is pleasing. And so I quickly took my shower and got dressed. After I completed these chores, I thought about my teams again, and so I turned the TV back on. Not a minute later, I not only learned that my own team's fortunes had reversed, but so had *all* of the other teams I was rooting for!

Again, I wondered what could have precipitated this startling outcome. I then quickly realized that because I took care of the essentials -- i.e. I embraced in full the need to get my day underway -- life instantly responded by reversing the situation for all my teams! Because I made the conscious choice to take care of the demands of the *present*, the *future* was completely righted in my favor. That is the life response power of embracing the requirements and conditions of the Now.

The Token Effort

Finally, there was the time a friend of mine was offered another in a series of short-term assignment as a temporary employee. At this particular juncture in her life, she was quite frustrated because she had not worked on a single long-term assignment in years. Thus, when this very small job presented itself, she was not eager to take it on. In addition, it involved a difficult rush-hour commute across San Francisco Bay.

When my friend informed me of her decision, I told her that she was making a mistake, and that she should contact the agency immediately to accept the assignment. My reasoning was that though this was a small job, she was in no position to turn down *anything*. (I had other reasons for my suggestion as well, though I did not express them at the time.)

Fortunately, she reconsidered her position and called the agency back to accept the short-term assignment. When the day of the job rolled around, she made that difficult commute, and then began the work at the client company. Though the mini-assignment did not amount to much, something unusual *did* happen. Over the next several days, weeks, and months, one *long-term* assignment after another started coming in! This

was a stunning development for my friend, when you consider that she hadn't worked on a single long-term project in a decade! Equally remarkable was the fact that each of the assignments required short commutes!

Though my friend was startled by this sudden and most unexpected change in fortune, she later understood why it happened. Because she broke through her resistance and accepted the given conditions -- in this case, the very smallest of assignments that required a difficult commute -- life immediately responded with a series of long-term assignments, ending years of failure and frustration.

As we see, when we embrace the demands of the present, infinite-like possibilities open up. When we shrug off past influences, disassociate ourselves from some hoped for future, and embrace the requirements of the Now, life immediately moves in our favor.

There is one final aspect of this story that I would like to share. Recall that I held something back when I first urged my friend to take on that small temporary job. Well, I later told her that sometimes life puts forth small situations that become "tests" for us. If we pass them, a big opening invariably follows. In other words, when we make the necessary "token effort" by embracing that tiny work or small circumstance that life presents us with, we open the portals of infinite possibility.

Because of my friend's mounting frustration, I sensed that this small project *was* just such a moment; that life was compelling her to embrace it so that a much larger opening could follow. I was therefore very happy when my friend took my advice and followed the thread that life presented her, which attracted a powerful, career-changing result.⁵

Blizzard of Good Fortune

I hope you now appreciate the power of embracing the current conditions of life. Doing so can make the difference between vast success and humdrum achievement; between ordinary and extraordinary living. I also hope you are beginning to examine your own life and see where you can practically apply this principle, so you too can attract these marvelous life-altering results.

⁵ In fact, these long term assignments led to a full time position that has lasted over a decade.

Remember, what matters is not the size and proportion of the work before you, but your attitude towards it. If you take the high road and embrace the needs of the present, life's vast bounty will quickly move in your direction!

Having said that, we can take this approach a step further. It is one thing to accept the work before us; it is another to do it with *great interest and enthusiasm*. In fact, over the years, I have seen that when we feel passion and zeal in our work, powerful positive conditions follow.

For example, just the other day, I was working on this chapter of the book. At one point, I really felt the power of the argument; its clarity and rhythm; and how it could really benefit the reader. As a result, I suddenly felt an intense wave of emotion come over me that expressed as enthusiasm and joy.

When I then settled back into my normal writing routine, I suddenly received a phone call. It turned out to be a new potential client inquiring about our training services. I thought this was a nice little development. Then a few minutes later, another company representative called with a similar inquiry. Then another; and then another! Finally, someone phoned asking how to purchase one of our high-priced online services. Now all at once, I found myself in a blizzard of inquiries! Nothing like this had ever happened to me before.

This was startling episode for me for two reasons. First, all of the calls arrived at around the same time. Second, our business had been off for several months with only a handful of inquiries, and now in a short 15-minute span, we were *inundated* with them!

What happened?

The answer is simple. Because I earlier felt that burst of unbridled enthusiasm about the current work I was doing, I released a burst of energy that quickly attracted a torrent of positive results. When I saw the power in the argument, the beauty in the expression, and its utility for the reader, I spontaneously felt a deep emotion that immediately attracted a plethora of responses. Coming at a time of very few inquiries, it struck me as nothing short of miraculous!

A New Partner

So far, we have focused on the life response power of embracing the given conditions of life. We have also seen that if we engage in that work with great interest and enthusiasm, powerful positive conditions follow. Well, it turns out that there is third, less psychological but more physical dimension to this phenomenon. If we make the *full, determined physical effort* to accomplish a work, life will also respond overwhelmingly -- often taking us to the pinnacles of success.

Recall that when life required Dee Hock to dig through barrels of foul trash, he not only shifted his attitude from reluctance to acceptance, but physically threw himself into that work. As a result, the next day, life responded with a job that changed his life, and altered the course of financial history. Likewise, when I made that extra physical effort by working nearly 14 straight days at the computer store, I not only attracted the sale of my life, but now had the confidence to make personal computer my chosen career.

The fact is that when we make an *extra, all-out physical* effort -- whether it involves working longer hours or extra days; or 50% harder -- life quickly begins to move on our behalf. Over the years, I have seen this principle at work countless times; and each time it occurs, it is a profound reminder of the power we have to move life.

For example, over the years I have seen that whenever I made the extra effort to help my students -- whether giving them more individual attention, or taking extra time to resolve a thorny issue -- positive conditions suddenly presented themselves. E.g., within 24 hours, I receive word of a plethora of new work, or an unexpected opportunity, or a sudden infusion of capital, or some other unexpected positive development

I have also noticed that if an individual not only makes an extra effort, but an *exhaustive* one -- utilizing *every last drop* of physical, emotional, and mental energy at our disposal -- life will take over and move us to the next level of achievement. Or, to put it another way, when we exhaust our efforts at the *current* level, life will catapult us to the *next* one. Here is a case in point:

One time early on in my career, I was selling a line of fashion ware to boutiques and gift stores in Northern California. Though I had worked assiduously to sell the products, in the end I had little to show for my

efforts. The fact was that the line just did not seem to interest the clientele. However, rather than give up, I decided to make one final push.

So one day I methodically went store-to-store to sell these apparently difficult-to-sell wares in the chic Cow Hollow district of San Francisco. As I continued to push on, my effort began to take on the air of a quest. In essence, I was willing to do whatever was physically necessary to move the merchandise -- even if meant pushing myself to the brink of exhaustion. And yet at the end of the day, for all of my physical and psychological effort, I still had nothing to show.

Wearied and too tired to go on, I then wandered into a small Italian restaurant to relax and have some dinner. To my surprise, I recognized an individual there whom I had met several years earlier. When he approached me, we talked about where we had first met, and then discussed how I got involved in the sale of imported goods from India. As we continued our conversation, I was surprised how intrigued he was about my work. Then most unexpectedly, he asked if there was a sales position available for him in my company. Taken aback, I wasn't sure how to respond at first, but then I told him that I would think about it and get back to him shortly.

When I arrived back at my office, I immediately thought about my friend's proposal. It quickly dawned on me that perhaps we *could* work something out. Besides, he had initiated the idea, which suggested to me that I should respond positively. A little while later, I called back and informed him that there was indeed a sales position available; and if he wanted it, he could start right away.

Not only did he accept my offer, but over the next several months, he would generate the overwhelming majority of the company's sales! In fact, we would soon go into business as partners, creating a new enterprise called Kenroy Company -- named after Ken and myself. As it turned out, this new arrangement would change the entire dynamic of my career, as I now essentially moved out of day-to-day sales, and instead became the operations manager of the business. In sum, one day I was a struggling salesperson; the next, I had a dynamic new salesperson, a new company, and a new role for myself in the business.

As we see, when we make an exhaustive effort at our current level of functioning, life takes over and catapults us to the next one. When I made that one final all-consuming, quest-like effort to move a product that was not selling, I attracted circumstance that changed the course of

my career. When we expend all of our physical, emotional, and mental energies on the work before us, life tends to lift lifts us to an entirely new level -- e.g., a project manager becomes an administrator; a regional consultant becomes an international high-flyer; a local leader is elevated state official. When we make a total exhaustive effort in our current work, expending *every drop* of energy, life takes over and lifts us to the stars!

Erin's Superhuman Effort

Then there are those very special occasions where individuals are not only challenged to make an exhaustive effort, but a *superhuman* one as well. When they do, they attract results that are the stuff of legend.

Perhaps you know the story of Erin Brockovich. It is the real world experience of one woman's extraordinary effort to overcome the injustice perpetrated on the citizens of a small rural community in California. It is not only a heroic story of one woman's effort to right a wrong, but an illustration of how making the ultimate physical effort can attract overwhelming, life-changing, even society-changing results. Because of the enormity and power of this episode, I would like to present Erin's story in detail.



Acts of Desperation

As we pick up on Erin's life, we find her in the midst of great turmoil. She is unemployed, twice divorced, and desperately trying to raise three children, including a newborn baby. She is low on funds, and the bill collectors are literally at her doorsteps. To overcome her plight, Erin interviews at one company after another, desperately seeking employment. Unfortunately, after considerable effort, she is unable to secure a job; primarily because she lacks the skills for the work she applies for.

In the midst of this frenzy, Erin gets into a car accident and injures her neck. Rather than let the incident slide, she decides to take legal recourse to win a financial settlement. She is, after all, desperate for any source of funds, and is willing to try any tact to keep her family from coming apart.

Somewhere along the way, Erin is referred to the law offices of Masry Vititoe in Southern California, where she meets Ed Masry, the

partner and owner of the firm. After listening to her desperate plight, he agrees to take up her case. A trial follows, which ends in utter failure for Erin -- due in part to lack of real evidence, and in part because of her vulgar outbursts in the courtroom. With so many obstacles in place, the court rules against Erin. Left without the settlement money she hoped would lift her out of her misery, Erin then turns her anger against her attorney Ed Masry outside the courtroom for failure to win the case! After expressing her frustration and anger in front of a crowd, she rushes off in a huff.

One day, in an act of utter desperation, Erin reappears at the office of Masry Vitoe. She informs Ed that since he lost the case, the least he could do was offer her a job at the firm! Stunned by her brazenness, Ed nevertheless is willing to listen to what she has to say. In his office, Erin then forcefully tells him "I'm smart, I'm hard working, and I'll do *anything* to get a job." In part out of pity and in part because it is difficult to stop this extremely determined individual, Ed relents and gives Erin a position at the company.

Opportunity of a Lifetime

Like many attorneys, Ed Masry performed *pro bono* work -- i.e. free legal assistance -- as a service to the community. It was in fact now one of Erin's tasks at the firm to scan the list of such cases, and suggest interesting ones to Ed.

One day, Erin came across a particularly intriguing project -- one that involved certain real estate transactions that had taken place in the tiny desert town of Hinckley, California. Demonstrating a natural curiosity, Erin probed deeper into the case, and discovered that Pacific Gas & Electric, the \$20 billion electric utility company, had purchased several homes in the Hinckley area. Erin found it rather odd that a utility company would get involved in purchasing people's residences. On further investigation, she discovered that PG&E had in fact purchased several homes that sat on land containing groundwater contamination. Digging deeper still, Erin then discovered that the utility company had also paid doctor bills for several individuals who suffered physical ailments due to the contagion.

Energized by these shocking discoveries, and bypassing Ed's skepticism, Erin made the unilateral decision to take on the case! Over the next several weeks, she went out and interviewed several

householders in the Hinckley area whose family members had fallen ill due to the contamination. Their tragic reports of suffering -- including revelation of tumors, cancers, and failing internal organs -- were heartbreaking for Erin. In fact, their feelings of helplessness resonated so strongly with Erin's own sense of vulnerability and victimhood that she was now more determined than ever to champion their cause.

As she probed deeper into the case, Erin discovered that the problem was far more serious than she originally thought -- involving dozens, even *hundreds* of victims. Now, with a tidal wave of evidence mounting, as well as Ed's backing and blessings, Erin charged full-bore into the case against PG&E.

A short time later, the Masry Vititoe law firm won a crucial legal decision at the local level. Despite the utility company's best efforts to block Erin's action, the court ruled that the case against the utility was a worthy one, and should proceed to trial at the district level.

With evidence now mounting against them, PG&E representatives informed the plaintiffs that they were now willing to negotiate a settlement. As a result, Ed and Erin began to have direct talks with PG&E officials to come up with a cash payment for the victims. Unfortunately, as each side maneuvered for advantage in the negotiations, no settlement was reached, and the case dragged on in the courts.

The Demands of Nature, and the Final Release

Often in a great work, as was Erin's, there is one final great obstacle to overcome; one final piece of the puzzle to resolve before life cooperates and offers its bounty. For that to happen, life demands a corresponding change in our behavior -- perhaps a dramatic shift in attitude, or taking to a critical decision, or making an ultimate physical effort. In situations where *great* things at stake, as was the case here, life often requires a *superhuman* transition of consciousness before that enormous boon can be released.

With that in mind, let us see what happened next.

Though there was ample proof that local PG&E officials were negligent and therefore culpable of contaminating the groundwater around Hinckley, -- causing many to suffer and die -- there was no concrete proof that officials from its corporate headquarters in San Francisco had any direct knowledge and involvement in the case. Since

Erin and Ed's case was in fact against *corporate* -- the entity that would be responsible for any payout to the victims if found guilty -- it was incumbent upon them to show proof that top officials at PG&E headquarters were at fault.

There was one other problem. If the case was going to have any merit in court, they needed to have *each* victim sign their own copy of a document verifying that their earlier testimony was true. While they were able to secure the signature of most at a town meeting, there were still over a *hundred* that remained unsigned, meaning that someone had to go out to *each* of these households!

These two factors put an enormous strain on the law firm of Masry Vitoe. The case was already costing a fortune, and Ed, who had built up a successful practice over the years, was in danger of losing his own home to fund a project that might never produce a return. As a result, a critical juncture had now been reached. Life now presented them with several huge obstacles that would have to be resolved if they had any chance of success.

Interestingly, though Erin now faced the biggest challenge of her life, she maintained a positive outlook throughout. Her determination and will to see the case through remained intact. Realizing that the outcome was now in her hands, Erin took it upon herself to secure all of the required signatures. And so in the days that followed, Erin Brockovich began her herculean effort to visit every remaining victim in the Hinckley area.

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Though Erin exhibited uncommon grit and determination, her near-superhuman physical effort began to take its toll. In fact, several days after she began, she collapsed under the strain, and was taken to a local hospital where she was diagnosed with meningitis. Surprisingly, she was released after several days, and then, remarkably, resumed her effort to secure the signatures despite near total exhaustion.

Now the story takes its decisive turn.

One evening after another grueling day of visiting families in Hinckley, Erin stopped off at a local restaurant to relax. When the bartender saw her, he commented on how tired she looked, and then offered her some coffee. In the meantime, a strange looking man sat a few seats over from her at the bar, and began to observe her in a way she

found menacing. Because Erin had always been concerned that someone on the other side of the case might take hostile action against her, she now felt threatened. Then Erin remembered that she had seen this strange man before at a picnic she and Ed had thrown for the victims -- which only heightened her anxiety. A moment later, the man moved closer and took the seat right next to her, and then began to speak in a low, sullen voice. At that moment, Erin Brockovich was afraid for her life.

However, as this person continued to speak, Erin soon realized that his intent was not hostile at all; that he had in fact approached her to let her know that he had worked at the contamination storage facility that Erin was investigating. Stunned by this revelation, Erin and the man sat down at a nearby table for more privacy, and then continued their conversation. He then revealed that PG&E corporate had in fact *ordered* the shredding of documents, thereby implicating top company officials in allowing the groundwater contamination! Erin was utterly shocked.

On the other hand, if the evidence was shredded, then Erin would have no case against the company. When she then asked him about that, the mysterious man smiled at Erin and told her that he had made a *copy* of the documents before shredding them. As a result, now Erin had the incriminating evidence she needed to win the case!

A short time later, Ed and Erin presented this information to their partners and financial backers, who sat there in stunned silence at their presentation. Not only were all of the signed documents from the victims laid out on the table before them -- itself an incredible achievement in such a short time -- but they were now holding a folder containing the damning evidence that directly implicated top PG&E corporate officials. The bewildered look on their faces said: "How did you do this? Where did this evidence come from? How is this possible?" Erin and Ed smiled in recognition of these stunning turn of events.

At the end of a lengthy process, PG&E paid out an incredible \$333 million settlement to the victims -- the largest of its kind in history. For Erin Brockovich, it meant the end of a life of misery, poverty, and insecurity; and the beginning of new, happy existence. For the long-suffering people of Hinckley, it was an acknowledgement of the wrong perpetrated on them, as well as a handsome financial arrangement.

In the final analysis, what ultimately attracted the man with the incriminating evidence was Erin's unyielding, herculean *physical effort* to

secure the signatures from the victims. When she accepted the difficult conditions of life, and through sheer will power, perseverance, and grit overcame one final great obstacle, life took over and brought forth the individual who would turn the tide.

As we see, when we make the full exhaustive effort, life responds in overwhelming fashion. When we meet the demands of life, and expend every ounce of physical, vital, and mental energy, we are catapulted to the next level in our lives. Or, as in Erin's case of Erin Brockovich, to the very pinnacles of success.

Life Embracing Strategies that Attract

- Accept the work before you in full, rather than what you want.
- Be positive, cheerful, and optimistic in everything you do.
- Do the work in ways that generate unbridled enthusiasm and joy.
- Make the full, exhaustive effort to accomplish the work.

Astounding results will follow!

7. The Great Secret: Organization

Life is complex. There are so many things to attend to in the course of the day. Imagine, however, if there was no semblance of order to our lives.

Upon waking one morning, we would see our clothes strewn across the floor, and books and papers piled up everywhere. Since no plan had been developed for the day, we would not know what to do first. When we *did* take an action, it would be out of sequence -- e.g. we would dress before showering, or have our breakfast before brushing our teeth, or meet with the client before we ever established an appointment with that individual.

In this unorganized world, life would be a cacophony of chaos -- a meandering, pain-filled existence devoid of sense. Not only would our own individual lives be chaotic, but so would the world beyond us. On that confused morning, we would open up our curtains and see cars whizzing past, moving in every direction -- instead of following an orderly and directed path to their destination. Likewise, trains would come and go without schedules, as stranded riders call out in anguish. Children, separated from their parents, would run wild in the streets. Teachers would arrive at empty classrooms, since students hadn't been informed of their schedule. Salespeople would wander aimlessly through buildings in a futile attempt to secure clients. Elevators in those buildings would stop at random floors -- if indeed floors even existed. Laborers would construct the roof of a building first, and the foundation after. The second phase of a project would begin before the first. A manual belonging to an architect would show pages in random order, and would be missing an index to guide him. In fact, there would be no such thing as an architect, or a lawyer, or a doctor, since such designations hadn't been devised.

In this chaotic world, society *itself* would not exist as we know it; including its institutions and methods of functioning. Even Mother Earth herself would not have formed its essential systems that enable life to exist and flourish. Nor would the planets whirl orderly around the sun. In

fact, life as we know it would not exist -- as there would simply be a swirl, a deployment of energy randomly set loose throughout the cosmos.

To know what organization is *not* is to know what it truly *is*. To imagine an existence without structure and order is to appreciate how organization has shaped every aspect of existence in the universe.

Then what is organization? Organization is the ordering mechanism that coordinates and integrates all aspects of life, providing a foundation for stable existence. E.g., when I organize the chapters and other elements of this book, disparate information is coordinated into a structure that your mind can understand. Moreover, because of that stability, life is now capable of producing useful and beneficial results. E.g. now that this book exists in an organized form, you the reader can more easily learn how to evoke life response.

One other benefit of organization is that life can now function with *relative ease*. E.g., when I organize the book by adding an index and table of contents, it becomes easier for you to navigate the volume. Or, if a highway has sequentially numbered signs, it makes it easier to tell which ramp to exit. And so forth for all aspects of life.

In addition, organization is a power that turns unruly, unordered, disparate existence into a manageable, utilitarian reality so that life can *thrive*. E.g., as a result of organizing elements of this book, you have access to a knowledge that you can use to dramatically improve your life. Or, because signs exist on the highway, you can easily arrive at your destination so you can get on with what is important.

And yet despite its infinite power, “organization” is not a subject that ordinarily excites us or makes a distinct impression -- despite the fact that it is everywhere and serves us in every conceivable way. Thus, we can say that organization is “the quiet marvel;” always there in the background, supporting and energizing every aspect of our lives.

Benefits of Organization

- Provides foundation for stable existence
- Enables life to function with simplicity & ease
- Enables life to progress and thrive

Cleanliness *Is* Godliness

And yet even if we acknowledge the vital role organization plays in our lives, does it mean that if we take to it in greater measure we will evoke a response from life? From hundreds of incidents I have examined over the years, there does appear to be powerful correlation between higher levels of organization and the sudden onset of good fortune. In fact, I have already described several of them. For example, when I got down on my hands and knees and cleaned out my refrigerator, I instantly evoked a response in the form of months' worth of work -- at a time I was desperate for anything. That indicated a correspondence between a particular form of organization -- *cleanliness* -- and life response.

I cannot tell you how often I have seen this dramatic relationship at play. You clean something that is filthy or neglected, and suddenly a spate of good news arrives. In fact, I would suggest that in decades of observing the phenomenon, there is *no faster way* of evoking life response than raising one's level of cleanliness! Actually, I would go a step further and suggest that if you want to evoke a life response in the next few minutes, then go ahead and clean something that has been sorely neglected. Then watch as extraordinary conditions unfold in the minutes and hours that follow!

Because cleanliness has this startling capacity to evoke good fortune, it is often the first recommendation I make to my management-consulting clients. Whether I ask them to straighten out a neglected showroom, or tidy up a filthy inventory area, or request the owner to straighten up a cluttered desk, good news follows after they make that effort. E.g., at our next meeting, I learn that there has been a sudden spike in sales, or a big opportunity has arrived, or there has been a sudden infusion of cash. Though the client might not see the causal relationship between their cleaning efforts and the remarkable results that follow, they do somehow sense that taking to higher levels of cleanliness was worth the effort.

Gold Out of Carbon

I should point out that I am not the only consultant who has had this sort of experience. Several of my colleagues have seen the same effect with their clients. When they take to higher levels of cleanliness, startling developments invariably follow. Here's a case in point:

A management consultant friend of mine was providing his expertise to an Asian company in the business of manufacturing carbon brushes -- a part used in the construction of automobile motors, starters, and other components. As it turned out, this particular client was a subcontractor that catered to a much larger manufacturing concern.

One thing often observed in these relationships is that a smaller company will be at the mercy of the larger one -- especially when it comes to money and price. In fact, in this instance, the larger auto manufacturer would twist the arm of the subcontractor at every turn. For example, though the smaller firm found it necessary to raise the prices of its products to its customers, the larger manufacturer ignored these terms for years, squeezing it in the process. It was at this point that my associate friend entered the picture.

When he arrived at the plant of the subcontractor, he noticed that the entire facility was littered with carbon particles. When he suggested to management that a thorough cleaning was in order, they looked at him in disbelief. This was after all a place where dirty black carbon was used in the manufacturing process of its products. Why would they clean that? One worker even exclaimed, "Do you expect us to derive gold from a factory using carbon as its raw material?" Despite their derisive remarks, my colleague stood firm, and in the end prevailed.

In order to carry out his recommendations, however, it was necessary for the firm to shut down the facility for several days. To assuage the directors, the consultant guaranteed them that any potential loss coming from the temporary closure would be more than offset by the positive results that would come through the cleaning. Whether or not they understood this subtle principle, in the end they trusted the consultant and took up his advice.

A few days later, the director of the company saw the consultant shopping at a store nearby. He then rushed up to him, tightly held his hand, and proceeded to thank him profusely for the services he had rendered. The director then informed him that people at the larger

manufacturing company had unexpectedly brought in high-ranking Japanese officials to visit the unit the subcontractor company just cleaned. Interestingly, the foreigners appreciated the cleanliness of the unit so much so that they recommended that their *entire* brush requirements be produced in the subcontractor's facility! In addition, the larger manufacturing company now agreed to change their position and fully accept the higher prices that the smaller subcontractor firm had requested earlier!

It was another astonishing example of how higher levels of cleanliness evoke the miraculous. In this case, the initiative to clean out a very dirty place -- a request once mocked and ridiculed as absurd -- quickly attracted an astounding series of events that brought great benefit to a once vulnerable small manufacturing firm.

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Aside from cleaning a neglected area or object, you can also raise the *general* level of cleanliness in your environment. For example, you can increase the overall cleanliness of your home or office by 25-50%. Individuals who have taken this steady, ongoing approach have also experienced remarkable life response results.

This being the case, why not come up with a short list of areas or objects that need attending to -- whether a cluttered desk, an overburdened closet, a disorderly bookcase, a messy room, a chaotic warehouse, or other areas of your home or office -- and make them spotless. There is no faster way to attract good fortune!

Also, consider what attitudes you or others have about your surroundings that allow things to fall into this state. Then come up with a plan to change those habits in order to avoid these situations in the future. Just making the psychological effort to change one's attitude -- without ever acting on it -- can evoke a powerful positive response!

Wardrobe Upgrade

Keep in mind that cleanliness is not confined to improving one's surroundings, but to our own *physical person* as well. If you upgrade your grooming, hygiene, and dress, life will also respond to that effort.

For example, one day several years ago, I was looking at myself in the mirror, and did not like what I saw. Looking disheveled and frayed

around the edges, I made an on-the-spot commitment to upgrading my wardrobe. I also decided that I wanted to look as sharp in my office as I would when visiting an important client.

And so I headed out to the shopping mall and purchased several new garments. Well, wouldn't you know it: at the very *instant* -- i.e. down to the *second* -- I finished changing into my new wardrobe, I received a call from a client who placed an important new order. In essence, when I completed the transition to improving my appearance, life responded with *absolute micro-precision*, bringing forth the fortuitous result.⁶

Orderliness, Too

Though cleanliness is a great organizational power, it reaches its apex and perfection when accompanied by *orderliness*. When we put things in their right location, arrange objects in the proper order, sort items into logical groupings, categorize them for easy access and retrieval, etc., life immediately responds to that effort.

For example, a number of years ago, I was doing some management consulting work for a company in the retail and wholesale carpeting business. To create their custom products and services, they utilized a number of tools and machines that were stored in a large open area in the back of the large facility. Aside from making general recommendations on how to improve their business, I made one suggestion that may have seemed peculiar at the time. I asked top management to straighten out the storage yard containing their tools and machines. That not only meant cleaning up the mess that had accumulated there, but putting each tool back in its proper location.

Time passed and I met with the client for a follow-up meeting. Someone brought it to my attention that they had taken my advice and straightened out the entire tools/staging area. I was gratified to hear this, though I half-consciously expected a follow-up to that news. When I then shifted back to my primary role of evaluating big-picture problems

⁶ Interestingly, as I was writing these words, I received a phone call from a vendor who was inquiring if I wanted to reorder brushes for my electric toothbrush -- a product used for personal cleanliness and hygiene! I cannot remember ever having received a phone call related to this subject in my entire life, and yet it occurred at precisely the moment I was writing about hygiene's life response power!

in the company, I was told that there had been a sudden and most unexpected surge in sales. When I probed a little deeper, I also discovered that there had been a sudden upsurge in the firm's financial position.

Though I was quietly thrilled to hear these reports, I did not impress upon them that their effort at cleanliness and orderliness was what precipitated these results. But that is precisely what happened. When we clean up what is filthy, or strewn about haphazardly, or otherwise looks unpleasant, and then add a modicum of orderliness to that effort, we generate concentrated energies that attract fortuitous circumstance -- whether a sudden spurts in sales, an improvements in cash position, or other dramatic results.

By the way, what holds true for business also works for the *individual*. E.g. if I not only retrieve the papers, folders, and books left scattered about my office desk, but organize, sort, and categorize them in a logical way, life will respond to that effort as well. Recall once again the familiar refrigerator incident. In that episode, I not only scrubbed the appliance down to a shine, but I also returned the edible foodstuffs back to their respective holding areas. In that way, I added a modicum of orderliness to my effort of cleanliness. As you well know, when I got up from that strenuous effort, I instantly learned that I had secured months' worth of work, when a minute before there was absolutely nothing in sight.

Cleanliness and Orderliness Strategies that Attract

Strategy 1: Take the least clean or disorderly location in your home, office, or personal location and make it as perfectly clean and orderly as possible.

Strategy 2: Increase the overall level of cleanliness and orderliness of your home, office, or personal environment by 25-50%.

Strategy 3: Improve your outer appearance through better grooming, hygiene and dress.

The First Order

Cleanliness and orderliness are two powers of organization that are mostly *physical/material* in nature. And yet orderliness also has a *mental* component to it. E.g., when I arrange the books in my cabinet, I am not

only moving objects with my physical body, but I am also using my mind to determine the logical sequence of their arrangement. In essence, I am using the *dividing power of mind* to arrange, sort, categorize, or otherwise compartmentalize objects and elements of life.

Another power of organization that uses our mental capacities is “systemization.” And like cleanliness and orderliness, when we take to it in higher order, it too attracts powerful results from life.

Let’s examine the nature of systemization a little closer look. To systematize a thing is to organize that object or matter into orderly and logical patterns that *maintain themselves* and *repeat*. When we organize something into a system -- whether it is an activity in a company or a routine in our lives -- we use mental powers of organization to insure that it unfolds in an orderly fashion; on its own; and at repeating intervals.

Consider the *business* world where so many activities take place -- such as sales, marketing, customer service, accounting, research, production, engineering, estimating, recruitment, training, and communications. Each would not function if there weren’t a stable, organizing mechanism to support their operation. *Systems* is that mechanism. For example, when a company engages in its accounting activities, it uses standard operating procedures that determine when, where, and what order that activity should occur. These “SOPS” are in essence the system for the proper carrying out of that activity. The company thus has systems -- whether computerized or not -- for every major activity it engages in. Without systems, life in the firm would turn to chaos.

Just as systems exist in business, they are also found in the wider *society*. There they are used for facilitating such ongoing activities as transportation, government, and education. If you look around, you will see an incredible array of systems just for transport alone -- including signals on streets and highways, ways of coordinating air traffic, and many others.

Finally, we too as *individuals* have devised systems for coordinating and organizing the activities of our own lives. We have systems to track our schedules, pay our bills, and do our work, to name a few.

Thus, like other powers of organization, systemization provides a foundation of existence so that life can thrive. However, unlike cleanliness and orderliness, systems enable *complex* activities to maintain themselves, and repeat -- turning complexity into simplicity and ease. And yet perhaps the most interesting aspect of systemization is that when

we take to it to a higher degree, we attract powerful positive conditions. Let me give you an example.

Several years ago, GuruSoftware, the company I founded in the mid 1990s, launched a new software application for business users. Though we put considerable time and effort into developing the product, after several months we had nothing to show for it. The fact was that our target audience was simply not responding. I then figured that since we had not yet secured a single order, *any* effort to improve the product would attract positive results.

Therefore, the first thing I did was reorganize the software's manual for greater consistency and clarity. Then I adjusted several parts of the application itself to make it more accessible for the user. Finally, because I now understood the program that much better, I developed several new features, which were then integrated into the software's existing components. Through that effort, I was able to improve, standardize, coordinate, and integrate the product -- providing more simplicity, utility, and power for the user.

The next day I turned on my computer as I do every morning. But then when I went to our company's web site, I discovered that we had secured our *first order* for the product! At first, I sat there stunned at this most unexpected development, but then I quickly understood what brought it about. Because I made the effort to organize and systematize the software, life responded with the product's first order. By streamlining, clarifying, coordinating, and integrating the application, a concentration of energy was generated that quickly aligned with and attracted the object of my desire.

Power of Life ... and Life Response

In these incidents, we not only see the power of organization at work, but the variety of forms it takes. Each formulation we have examined -- whether cleanliness, orderliness, or systemization -- represents a unique shading. Whereas *cleanliness* makes objects more presentable and appealing to the eye, and *orderliness* puts them in recognizable patterns for easy access, *systemization* goes further, organizing activities into repeating patterns of functionality; turning complexity into simplicity, efficiency and ease. And yet each has an equal power to evoke the miraculous.

In addition to these, there are other forms of organization to consider. For example, *coordination* and *integration* are two great organizational powers that link activities and systems to one another, creating sophisticated relationships that also attract life response results. E.g., if as manager I establish a new system link between the sales and financial departments, not only will there be more coordination and integration in the firm, but I am likely to attract a powerful response -- such as the sudden arrival of huge order, or an unexpected partnership with a prestigious competitor, or a financial windfall from the government. That effort of higher organization concentrates the atmosphere and attracts positive conditions.

(Below I have listed a number of the powers of organization that attract; with the five we have discussed in bold.)

Powers of Organization that Attract	
• Cleaning	• Planning
• Ordering	• Conceptualizing
• Prioritizing	• Clarifying
• Relating	• Simplifying
• Sequencing	• Streamlining
• Systematizing	• Synthesizing
• Standardizing	• Analyzing
• Coordinating	• Maximizing
• Integrating	• Perfecting

Miracles of the Mind

So far we have examined the life response power of organization through the various forms it takes shape, such as cleanliness and orderliness. And yet there is one other way we can view this infinite-like power. We can also examine the *parts of our own being* that were at play when we engaged in an act of organization.

For example, in several instances we saw how life responded to *physical* effort -- as was the case when I cleaned the filthy refrigerator; or when my client gathered up the tools that were strewn about in the stockyard. In other instances, we saw how life responded to *mental* effort,

as it did when I streamlined, clarified, coordinated, and integrated the software application.

Thus, we can say that organization occurs along a continuum from physical to vital to mental. We can even see shadings of organization within each. For example, within the mental plane we can engage in basic thought; or higher-level mental activities such as *analysis* (i.e. the breaking down) and *synthesis* (the building up). The interesting point is that when we take to these forms of mental organization, we attract breathtaking life response results. Here are three examples.

The New Category

Periodically it is my task to categorize the thousands of thoughts in the knowledge base area of Growth Online: a web site dedicated to personal growth that I founded in 1997.⁷ Well one day I was gathering together a number of these ideas for a *new* category I was developing. Essentially, I would sift through the knowledge base area, look for a trend, and compile them into the newly formed category. Once I complete that task, I would normally upload the content to our web server so that the thousands of people worldwide who visit the site daily can have access to the information. However, in this instance, I decided that before uploading, I would check my email for any messages. After I opened my Outlook application, I noticed that I received a single message in my inbox. It turned out to be from a Growth Online reader who was inquiring about a particular subject matter. When I examined it a little closer, I was astonished to see that it was on the very subject I had just created a category for!

To appreciate why this was astonishing, consider the following facts. First, there are hundreds, perhaps thousands of topics addressed at Growth Online. Thus the chance of receiving a response on any particular subject, like this one, is extremely low. (I only receive a few emails for Growth Online per day.) Second, the inquiry was on a subject that did not even exist at the site, since I had not uploaded it yet. Third, the response was on the very topic I was *about* to upload. And finally, the reader's message was the *only* email I received when I opened my Outlook email program just before uploading that information. The chances of any one of these things happening are extremely remote --

⁷ www.growthonline.org

perhaps one in ten thousand. The chance of *all four* happening simultaneously is off the charts. For all intensive purposes, it was an impossibility. Yet it occurred.

Think a Little; Receive a Lot

Now for the second mental organization episode. Over the years, it has been one of my tasks as an educator to take difficult ideas and present them in ways that are easy for others to understand. I have performed this function countless times -- not only for the thousands of students who have attended my training classes, but for the hundreds of thousands of readers who have read my articles at Growth Online. Of course, in order to offer such pre-digested knowledge to others, the concepts have to be clear to me in the first place. That has not always been the easiest of chores -- especially when it involves turning arcane technical jargon or dense philosophical arguments into simple, easy-to-understand concepts. What has been particularly striking, however, is that nearly every time I exercise my mind in this way, a powerful response follows.

For example, one time I was straining to understand a complex metaphysical concept. After considerable effort, however, I still could not grasp the underlying principle. Then I tried to break it into smaller components; but the divisions I developed were still incoherent. After racking my brain, I finally gave up, hoping that a clearer understanding would come on its own if I forgot the matter.

The next morning, when I opened my email program, I saw a message from my spiritual teacher. After reading a portion of his remarks, I soon realized that he had written to me on the *very subject* I had been struggling with the previous evening! It was remarkable not only because he had no idea I was thinking of that topic, but because out of the *hundreds*, if not *thousands* of subjects we have discussed over the years, he happened to pick the one I had been struggling with. Perhaps even more striking was the fact that the email contained not merely a few paragraphs on the subject, but an *entire paper* on it -- with extensive *detailed analysis!*

When I thought about it, I realized that my efforts to organize a dense metaphysical concept into a series of newly developed precepts triggered this remarkable life response event. The response from my teacher not only clarified the overall issue, but through his extensive

paper, illuminated in painstaking detail all the salient points. In the end, because I made a small effort at organizing knowledge, life responded with a torrent of information on that very subject. It was for me a breathtaking moment: an instance of pure magic.

Organizing Organization

Finally, there was the time I began organizing the chapter you are now reading: “The Great Secret: Organization.” At one point in that effort, I took a short break to check my messages. When I opened the email app, lo and behold there was a message from a reader inquiring about that very same subject of ‘organization!’ It was remarkable not only because it arrived just as I began developing the chapter, but it was the first inquiry I had *ever* received on the subject of organization from any reader in all the years Growth Online had been in operation! Again, the probability of that happening is beyond calculation.

But the story didn’t end there. When I then asked a management consultant friend of mine -- with whom I had been out of touch with for a long awhile -- if he had any ideas that would be helpful for this individual, he said that it was ironic I had contacted him now since he too was deeply engrossed in thoughts about organization! In fact, he told me that he was in the process of developing an entire organizational plan to help a large Indian media company improve their business operations. It was clear that my intense effort to organize a chapter on the topic of organization continued to reverberate forward in time.



Tapping into the Infinity of Objects

When we experience these marvellous results, it is not only because organization has that inherent power, but because we subscribe to and believe in these methods. The fact is that some people really believe in having a clean and orderly environment; and others will go to great lengths to make sure that an idea is conveyed in a clear and coherent manner. In fact, all of the organizational techniques we have described so far -- including cleanliness, orderliness, systemization, and thought processing -- are all organizational values that we can subscribe to.

Well it turns out that there are several other organizational values that can evoke the miraculous. One is “maximum utilization” -- i.e. the desire to derive the most out of a given resource.

Let's face it; we live in a throwaway society. When a resource is depleted, we discard it -- looking for another to take its place. Moreover, when we use a resource, we are more concerned with the benefits it brings than whether or not we are using every last bit of it. For example, if I drive my car to an important appointment, I am more concerned about getting there than whether I have received the maximum mileage from the fuel. Gas may be expensive and precious, but arriving at that meeting is far more critical.

And yet with a little effort, we can also learn to derive the maximum use from the resources we employ -- whether it is a machine, materials, or something else. Doing so will not only save us money and help maintain supplies, but will also trigger powerful life response results. To show you what I mean, I would like to share with you an entry from an associate of ours in charge of a manufacturing concern in India.

“Low Carbon Ferro Manganese is one of the main raw materials we use in the manufacturing of welding electrodes. One day the manufacturer who supplies us with this material informed us that their plant was shutting down for maintenance, and as a result, there would be no supplies of the resource coming for the next two months.

Now this is an expensive material, so the stocks we kept on hand were held to a minimum. Also, there were only a few companies that manufactured this particular item. What's more, the suppliers were all located in faraway places. In this dire situation, we had little time to arrange supply from other sources; and stocks on hand were now sufficient for only 5 days of production.

In this difficult state, we made the decision that not a *single particle* of LCFM should be wasted. To that end, we alerted all the workers to be extra careful in its use. In addition, the shop floor was swept thoroughly because in our desperation even *spilled* material was collected, screened and used.

Remarkably, two days later, from out of nowhere, the Managing Director of a company manufacturing LCFM in Orissa -- which is about 1300 kilometers away from our Pondicherry location -- visited our unit. Then over the phone, he instructed his plant to immediately dispatch all the needed material to us!

There was more to the story, however. Where previously we were buying the material from a supplier on a *cash* basis, the new company now offered us 30 days *credit*. In addition, we no longer found it

necessary to negotiate any pricing terms with them, since they now agreed to supply materials in the future at that *same price*. (This is significant because they knew of our precarious situation, and yet despite our weak position, they did not take undue advantage of us.)

By the way, till this day we are continuing with this new supplier!”

When you try to derive the maximum use from a resource, life responds with more of it – arriving in ways you would never have imagined. When the manager of the company made the decision to make the most of its current, scarce resource by using every bit available, life returned the favor with fresh new supplies at a time when conditions were dire. In addition, several other astonishing developments followed in its wake.

In this way, each of us can examine the way we relate to the resources we use -- whether it is machines, materials, money, time, or people, -- and come up with strategies to maximize their use. When we implement that strategy, powerful positive conditions will quickly move in our direction.

The Cash Cow

In addition to making the maximum use of a resource, there is one other organizational value that has great life response power. It is giving an object -- whether a person, place, or thing, -- more personal attention.

Those of you who have a pet know how they respond to your attention. Without it, they sulk and become despondent. With it, they spring to life, and express their energy, love, and affection. That is also true for our children, our friends, our employees, and other individuals who depend on us. What is not normally understood, however, is that when we give that attention, good fortune showers down on *us* as well. For example, one business owner I know of gave more attention to his unskilled production staff, and out of nowhere attracted a sudden doubling of revenues. Even the machines they employed started working at double their rated capacity, though nothing had been outwardly done to improve them! That is the life response power of giving greater attention to people.

This same principle applies to physical objects, such as machines and utensils. When we clean, fix, test, or otherwise attend to and improve their working condition, not only will that object function better, but

positive conditions will suddenly come our way. Here is one powerful example.

One day, a management consultant friend of mine was called in to help a proprietor who needed some sound advice on running his business. In analyzing the firm, the consultant noticed that one of the machines at the company was in a sorry state of disrepair. It had reached that point because the owner thought it was not worthy of any attention. After all, he reasoned, the machine was not being used to generate income, so why bother with its upkeep.

Familiar with the subtle workings of life -- including the life response power of organization -- the consultant asked the proprietor to go ahead and give the machine attention anyway. Specifically, he asked him to repair, repaint, and otherwise keep it in perfect working order: maintaining it as if it were actually being used for production purposes. When the proprietor heard this suggestion, he laughed, and told the consultant that the machine had been idle precisely because there were no orders that required its use; and, therefore, it was a complete waste of time and money to restore it. Instead, he would repair the machine only *after* his company received such orders.

Naturally, the consultant believed the owner was looking at things in the wrong way. He told the proprietor that if he kept the machine ready for production, *and* if he genuinely wanted the machine to yield profits, orders would come *on their own*. Uncertain of this extraordinary claim, but still trusting in the consultant's advice, the owner followed the suggestion.

A day or two later, the owner's cousin, an engineer, suddenly appeared at the factory. For some reason, the newly painted machine attracted his attention. The cousin then told the proprietor that he wanted to start a new business, and, if the owner was willing to part with the machine, he would use it in the new venture. The cousin then told the proprietor that he could generate revenues and profits from the new enterprise within a month, and would gladly share in those earnings. As a result, an agreement was struck, and in a short order, the machine became a moneymaker for both individuals.

In this incident, we see that when you give an underutilized and unattended resource more attention, it has a funny way of attracting luck -- in this case, the sudden and unexpected arrival of the cousin who took an interest in the machine and turned into a serious moneymaking

venture. That being the case, why not look around and see where you can give objects and individuals more attention. If you then make that effort, you will not only generate practical results, but powerful life response ones as well!

The Great Secret

I hope you now appreciate the extraordinary power of organization. Without it, there is confusion and chaos. With it, there is a solid foundation so life can thrive. In addition, when we take to it in greater measure, good or even great fortune can follow.

So why not take advantage of organization's infinite-like power. Read over the summary at the end of this chapter and refamiliarize yourself with its various shadings. Then examine your own life, see where you can make improvements. If you then carry it out with energy and enthusiasm, life will quickly move on your behalf, producing results that will simply astound.

I have one other suggestion; something that you can do immediately. Look around and see what is filthy, messy, cluttered, disordered, or disheveled -- and change it. There is no faster way of attracting the miraculous than by increasing the level of cleanliness in your surroundings.

Finally, keep in mind that as you implement these strategies and attract these marvelous results, you will begin to appreciate the profound role organization plays in our lives. You will see that it exists everywhere, and in everything -- playing a central role in the unfolding of life. At that point, you will truly understand why organization is considered the Silent Marvel, and the Great Secret of life.

Powers of Organization that Attract

- Higher Levels of Cleanliness
- Higher Levels of Orderliness
- Systematizing Life's Activities
- Organizing Facts into Ideas
- Maximizing Use of a Resource
- Giving things Greater Attention

KEY IDEAS

-To know what organization is not is to know what it truly is. To imagine an existence without structure and order is to appreciate how organization has shaped every aspect of our lives.

-Organization is the ordering mechanism that coordinates and integrates all aspects of life, providing a foundation for stable existence.

-Organization is a power that turns unruly, unordered, disparate existence into manageable, utilitarian reality so life can thrive.

-Taking to higher levels of organization not only creates practical results, but powerful life response results as well.

-Life has a particular tendency to respond to higher levels of cleanliness. It is perhaps the quickest way to evoke a positive response from life.

-Cleanliness reaches its apex and perfection when accompanied by higher levels of orderliness.

-Whereas cleanliness makes objects more presentable and appealing to the eye, orderliness puts them in recognizable patterns for easy access.

- To systematize a thing is to organize that object or matter into orderly and logical patterns that maintain themselves and repeat. When taken to in greater degree, it tends to evoke good fortune.

-When we take facts and turn them into organized knowledge, life responds to that effort; often attracting more or greater knowledge in that domain.

-When you make the maximum use of a resource, you attract more of it, as well as other positive developments.

-Giving an object or individual more attention energizes it, brings out its full potential, and attracts powerful life response results.

ONE STEP FURTHER:

STRATEGIES FOR ATTRACTING MONEY

Though it is worthy of a chapter of its own, money also has a powerful relationship to life response. Here are several strategies to attract it into your life.

Attention

It is a basic law of life that everything, whether a physical object or a human being, responds to attention. Money is no exception. The best way to give attention to money is to account for it accurately and in a timely manner. For example, keeping precise and up-to-date accounts of money is a powerful way to evoke more of it. One small business owner decided to give greater attention to his neglected accounting system by balancing eight months of data over a weekend, and suddenly attracted \$5000 out of nowhere.

Circulation

Like any force, money works at its best and produces greatest results when it circulates. Holding back on paying what's due, or otherwise hoarding money prevents its free flow. E.g., when you give up your hesitation to spend on things that are necessary or deserved, a sudden, unexpected inflow of cash follows. One individual overcame his hesitation to spend a good sum of money on a deserving friend, and immediately attracted the *exact* amount -- down to the *penny* -- from an unexpected source. In another episode, when that same individual shifted from reluctance to committing to pay a large medical bill, within *ten seconds* he received word of a large sale that came at a critical juncture for his company. When you allow money to circulate, it comes back to you in buckets!

Long-term Debt

Very often those who suffer from money problems have borrowed in the past, and have forgotten to repay -- even when they had the opportunity to do so. One individual I know of owed a friend a considerable amount of money for over twenty years. An *instant* after he committed to paying off that old debt, he received news about a new, improved living situation that changed his lifestyle forever. That is the power of paying off long-neglected moneys due.

Sums Owed to You

In addition to paying off old debts, it is also important to collect all moneys owed to you -- even the smallest of sums. When you make the effort to collect those funds, money immediately moves in your direction. One proprietor's funds were nearly exhausted, and he did not know where the next penny was coming from. He then remembered that if you collect *every cent* owed, money will quickly arrive. With that in mind, he contacted the *sole* debt he had on his books, which turned out to be a six year old past due account. The next morning after contacting that individual, his company received a most unexpected sale, instantly resolving his financial quandary. That is the power of collecting all sums due to you.

Cleanliness, Orderliness

Perhaps the simplest and most dramatic way to attract money is to raise the level of cleanliness and orderliness of your surroundings. Many individuals and businesses -- including many of our clients -- have followed this principle, and seen money quickly rush in from all sides. E.g., there was the case of the client company of ours who organized their messy stockyard of tools, and quickly attracted an avalanche of cash-generating orders, as well as other improvements in their financial position. And of course there was the cleaning of the filthy refrigerator that attracted months of work, resolving a serious financial crisis for an individual without work.

Avoid Wasting Money

Any serious effort to avoid wasting money tends to attract more of it. E.g., one woman consciously decided not to spend lavishly on gift items at a resort as she had done in the past. The next day when she returned to work, she learned that she had received a 5% raise -- the *only* non-annual raise she received in her 7-year tenure at the firm!

Overcoming Wanting Attitudes

Any effort to overcome a wanting attitude, such as hostility towards another or some form of reluctance, or any other negative feeling towards others, life, work, or self will surely attract positive conditions that will directly impact one's financial well being. Even an intense desire to rid one's self of all negative attitudes in life can attract powerful results. One consultant tried the latter approach and suddenly received a call from a client who owed him more money than anyone in his entire life, after months of ignoring his pleas.

Energy Wasting Activities

Anything that increases energy attracts money; while anything reducing it repels it. Interestingly, when we take to certain energy depleting activities, such as excessive speech or intense sexual activity, money tends to move away from us. It often takes such forms as stolen goods, reduced amount on a payment to you, unexpected new expenses, cancellation of an order, etc. It is simple enough to explain. These activities deplete our vital energies, which attract negative vital conditions from the field of life.

Other Factors that Attract, Repel Money

Attract -- Goodwill, Hard Work, Enterprise and risk-taking, Honesty, Harmony, Perfect timing, Trust, Discipline. *Repel* -- Ill-Will, Idleness, Refusal to take risk, Dishonesty, Disharmony, Imperfect timing, Distrust, Indiscipline

True Nature of Money

Perhaps the main obstacle we have when it comes to money is that we don't know what it is. We ordinarily view money as a means of exchange; a way of gaining purchasing power. But money is more than that. It is a universal force capable of flowing in any direction, making itself available to anyone who perceives that power. Thus, if we want to experience continuous prosperity, we need to break out of our limited view of money, and perceive its infinite-like nature. When we do, money will constantly be our friend.

8. Making the Connection with Others

Though we have discovered a pool of four essential factors that every life response event draws from -- aspiration, attitude, decision, and action -- we have also started targeting other constellations of behavior that attract these marvelous results. One group relates to our ability to accept the current conditions of life. We have seen that if we embrace in full what life puts before us, sudden good fortune will come our way.

The same is true for the constellation of behaviors relating to organization. When we raise our level of cleanliness, orderliness, and systemization; maximize use of our resources, and give things greater attention, life immediately responds in our favor.

Now I would like to introduce a third group of behaviors that evoke life response. When we focus on the *interests and concerns of others*, not only do we develop more cordial and harmonious relationships, but life quickly moves on our behalf -- often with astonishing results.

Ten-Year Drought

Perhaps the best way to approach this power is to examine the *negative* side first -- i.e. the troubling relationships we have with others. My reasoning here is simple: before we can even begin to consider the best ways to connect with people, we first have to shed our harmful feelings and emotions towards others. And yet even efforts to scrape away the negative will evoke the miraculous.

Do you remember my friend who had been jumping from one firm to another on temporary short-term assignments? In that case, when she overcame her reluctance to take on a single, small assignment, she attracted a series of long-term jobs that changed her career. Well it turns out that one of those lengthy assignments involved working at a major medical facility where it was her task to transcribe patient information. Though my friend enjoyed the steady, challenging work, she still felt insecure because she did not know when the job would end. Living under a cloud of uncertainty, she now longed for the security of a full-time position.

One day several months later, my friend attended a seminar on the subject of how to take control of your life. The focus of the discussion was how to develop and implement a 30-day plan for improvement. Although my friend enjoyed the gathering immensely, she wondered how she could use what she had learned in a practical way. Then it dawned on her that she could use the 30-day approach to obtain what she really wanted -- a permanent, full-time job.

And so in the days that followed she began to develop her plan. When she first informed me of her progress, it seemed she was headed in the right direction. However, several days later when we discussed the matter further, I felt something was wrong. What I found troubling was the way she described her relationship with the people around her.

After gently raising the issue again, my friend admitted that she felt a certain amount of animosity towards several of her co-workers. I then advised her to give up all negative feelings toward them if she were to have any chance of attracting a full-time position. Though I did not express it in so many words, I understood that there was a direct relationship between her virulent attitudes, and her ability to secure the full-time work. I also sensed that if she reversed her feelings, she would quickly attract what she so desperately longed for.

We then had a heart-to-heart talk on how difficult it was for her to give up her hard feelings -- especially when she worked in such close proximity to these individuals. I also sympathized with her feelings of powerlessness and insecurity as a temporary employee, which only exacerbated tensions in her job. Though my friend was obviously in a tough psychological spot, I still insisted that she make the effort to overcome her antipathy, no matter what the cause. Finally, I came straight out and said that even the best-laid plans to secure a permanent position would fail if her venomous feelings and emotions persisted.

After grappling with these harsh truths, my friend finally saw the light. Though it was not an easy road to hoe, over the next several weeks she made a sincere effort to change her negative attitudes toward her co-workers. In fact, at one point, she not only established cordial relationship with several of them, but actually began to be *friendly* with one or two!

As it turned out, just as my friend's psychological effort reached its peak, she received a most unexpected call from her manager. She

informed my friend that due to her exemplary work on the job, she had now been promoted from a temporary to a full-time employee!

You can imagine how thrilled my friend was by this dramatic turn of events. After all, it was her first full-time job in nearly ten years!

After absorbing the initial shock, she began to ask herself how this could have happened. She soon realized that this sudden and most unexpected change in fortune came about because she made that sincere psychological effort to overcome her virulent attitudes and feelings. When that effort reached its peak, she released a concentration of positive energy that attracted the magnificent response that ended years of frustration and failure.⁸

Precious Moments

As we see, when we make the effort to bridge the psychological gap between us, life responds in our favor -- often in overwhelming fashion. And yet I have begun my analysis from the *negative* side -- i.e. the need to rid ourselves of our harsh feelings and attitudes towards others. I started out this way because having cordial relations is so fundamental to human relations. Unless we shed our virulent feelings, how can we even begin to consider more positive approaches? With that said, let's move on to one of them, and see how applying it leads to better relations, *and* to powerful life response results.

Perhaps the most fundamental way to establish solid relationships is to shift our focus away from our own selves, and towards the interests and concerns of others. By taking that approach, we not only develop warmer and more satisfying relations, but we evoke powerful response in the process. Let me give you an example.

Several years ago, I was having a pleasant conversation with a friend of mine. Though we were engaged in a lively discussion in which we each expressed our thoughts and feelings on a variety of subjects, it was clear that I was dominating the conversation.

At one point as we discussed a particularly interesting topic, I felt compelled to express a new idea. And yet I also sensed that my friend

⁸ I am also happy to report that nearly a decade after this incident, my friend is still working for that same organization. In fact, several years after this episode, my friend won an award as *employee of the year* at the large medical facility!

was eager to communicate something that was on her mind. Realizing that I had already said my piece and more, I decided to hold back the thought. I then went a step further and encouraged my friend to tell me what she was thinking.

Well to my surprise, she expressed an idea that I found utterly astonishing. In fact, what she said was so poignant that I felt a tingling sensation up and down my spine. As she articulated the thought, I was not only taken in by the quality of the insight, but I was moved by the sparkling direction the conversation had now taken.

As this enjoyable moment lingered, it suddenly dawned on me that because I had earlier shifted away from my own interests and concerns, and encouraged my friend to speak what was on her mind, the conversation took this dramatic turn.

In the end, my friend and I would go on to have a truly wonderful discussion. Not only was it a breathtaking experience in which our ideas converged in moments of true insight, but we were able to share a sweet emotional bond along the way. What could possibly be more satisfying between friends?

From this episode, we see that when we shift our focus away from our own selves, and toward the interests and concerns of others, not only do we develop warmer and more harmonious relationships, but we quickly attract positive circumstances -- whether a profound insight, a dramatic turn in the conversation, or some other fresh and unexpected development.

If this is the case, then why not try implementing this self-giving approach in your own life. E.g., the next time you converse with a friend, family member, or other individual, take a moment to focus yourself on their interest and concerns. Then when the conversation begins, allow that person to speak first, encouraging them to express what is on their mind. Also, show a deep and abiding interest in what they have to say. I.e. as they speak, hold your attention on their remarks, reinforcing it if necessary. Also, avoid turning the conversation back on yourself.

Though this approach may be a little difficult to master at first -- for who can easily control one's own thoughts and feeling in a social situation -- it can eventually become an ongoing habit and routine. By taking this tact, your conversations will flow more smoothly, your level of knowledge will increase, and your relationships with others will be more

harmonious and enjoyable. Also, when that effort reaches a certain pitch, life will take over and the real (life response) magic will begin!

Magic Carpet Ride

Opportunities to focus on the interest and concerns of others do not only happen in intimate 1-on-1 conversations, but in all types of social situations -- from a business meeting to shopping at the supermarket. Sometimes the response can be so overwhelming that you question the nature of reality! Let me explain.

Several years ago, I went on a little shopping trip with a friend to purchase several household goods. When we arrived at the huge discount store, I quickly realized that she was just as eager to find items on her list, as I was mine. Since we were shopping together, I suddenly felt conflicted about where to begin. What to do?

Fortunately, my better angels took over and I felt compelled to do what was right: which in this case meant deferring to the needs of my friend. And so a moment later, I turned to her and said that we should shop for the items on her list first, and then take care of my agenda thereafter. She quietly agreed, and we began our dual-mission together.

The first thing that happened was that a sense of calm and well-being came over me. It had a most pleasing affect, and was in marked contrast to my earlier feeling of eagerness and conflict.

Then as we proceeded down the aisles, I noticed something else unusual taking place: that my friend was able to find everything on her agenda in an extraordinarily short period of time. It was if we were riding a conveyer belt that was taking us directly to the correct aisle and location for each item on her list!

I also noticed when we arrived at each area, not only was every item in stock, but in just the right size and shape. This was also highly unusual.

In addition to these startling events, something else caught my attention. As we picked up each item on her shopping list, I was able to find everything on *my* list as well. I found this utterly astonishing because normally many of my items would be in different aisles from hers. And yet on this shopping excursion, everything I was after was either right where my friend's items were or were right along that path!

And it did not end there! E.g. in the course of accompanying my friend to her stuff, I continually came across *other* useful items that were

not on my original shopping list. In fact, they turned out to be *more important* than the items on my original list!

For nearly a half hour, life unfolded in this remarkable, even unfathomable way. It was as if I had entered another reality -- where laws of logic were cast aside, and where the impossible became possible. In those few minutes, an unbelievable *efficiency* had taken shape that allowed my friend and I to accomplish the most with the least effort in the shortest period of time. On that startling shopping spree, I experienced a kind of ultimate perfection that not only overcame limits of space and time; of proximity and duration, but elicited a profound sense of wonder, bordering on the profound. In essence, a mundane shopping excursion had taken on a life of its own, turning routine existence into a fresh, energizing, miraculous-like experience.

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As we prepared to leave the giant superstore, I began to wonder how all of this could have happened. I asked myself how something so routine could have become an occasion for something so marvelous, so energizing, and so pleasure giving? It then occurred to me that because I had made the right decision in that earlier crossroads moment, and embraced the needs of my friend, life cooperated in every imaginable way. When I shifted from my own sense of separateness and bridged the chasm between us, I was catapulted into another existence -- one that unfolded in ways I never would have imagined.

Giving, and Getting in Return

Like engaging in personal conversations and shopping together, there are endless social occasions where we can focus on the interests and concerns of others. Perhaps the most common place is in our *work and professional lives*. There we have ample opportunity to focus on the needs and desires of others, and therefore evoke powerful life response results. Let me give you an example.

Several years ago, my training and consulting company, GuruSoftware, set up a web site to sell a new online business application. At one point in our sales efforts, a potential customer called to tell me that though he was eager to buy the product, he was having trouble paying for it through our online purchasing system. After considering the matter, I decided that rather than have him wait until the technical glitch

was solved, we would give him full access to the product now, and then have him pay when the system was up and running again.

Though I took the action in part because the problem was our responsibility, I it also did because he seemed so eager to use the product. And so when I informed him of my decision -- which was an unprecedented break from normal operating procedures -- he expressed his deep appreciation.

Well it turns out that just as our conversation was coming to an end, he raised an issue of crucial importance. He told me that the phone number listed on the main page of our web site was incorrect! Though initially alarmed that we had lost a number of customers, I controlled myself and did not panic. A little later on, when my emotions settled down, I felt sincere gratitude towards him for having pointed out our egregious error. Naturally, we went ahead and corrected the mistake; preventing any potential loss in the future.

In this incident, we see once more the power of focusing on the interest and concerns of another. Rather than fixating on standard procedures, I opened myself to the needs of the customer. Because he was so eager to use the program, I made it available to him immediately - - without having to wait for our online payment system to come back up. For that, we were rewarded with a powerful response that enabled us avoid huge potential loss. By focusing more on giving than taking, on another person's concerns and needs rather than our own, life returned the favor a dozen times over!

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The Missing Manual

If focusing on the needs and concerns of others is one way to evoke luck, then embracing another person's *point of view* is another.

Normally we believe that what we know is right; that it is the essential truth of things. However, on closer examination, we will see that we do not have all of the answers; that in fact much of what we believe is error-filled, and that what others are expressing may not only be right, but extremely beneficial to us. Moreover, when we embrace the other person's point of view, we tend to quickly evoke a positive response from the environment. For example, in the following episode narrated by a friend, a thorny little issue is resolved just that way.

“Last night I had a computer problem. On my new laptop, I suddenly got a strange blue screen to appear on my monitor. In essence, the computer had frozen. I could not turn it off – not from the on-off button, or using the control-alt-delete reset keys, or even by unplugging it. I was new to laptops, and I hadn’t seen this type of situation before. What could I do? Not calm enough to consecrate the situation (i.e. offer the event to the spirit for its resolution), I couldn’t come up with anything to do. So, I accepted my total ignorance at this point.

A friend of mine then suggested that I pull out the battery. She is normally very good with mechanical things, but for some reason we couldn’t extract it. She then said, “look in the manual.” (She is so clever!). I then thought back to the fact that at least twice before I had seen no manual accompanying the notebook I had just purchased. So I told her that the instruction booklet was not available.

Then I paused for a moment and thought that since I did not have the answer to the problem, and since she had come forward with a suggestion, it would be more conscious of me to trust in her instincts. Lo and behold, I then found a kind of sheet, wrapped around a CD that contained the manual. I then found the picture on the sheet on how to remove the battery. So, I yanked the battery out as it was described, the blue screen disappeared, the computer started, and the problem was solved!”

In this instance, my friend had a difficult problem that appeared unsolvable. In fact, at the time, life seemed to be conspiring against all efforts to resolve it. His computer would not work, the battery would not open, and he could not find the manual. However, he had the subtle knowledge that if another person comes forward and makes a suggestion in such situations, it is best to accept their advice, rather than insist on one’s own point of view. When he then hunted for the manual once more based on the woman’s suggestion, he *instantly* discovered the solution to the problem. The discovery of the manual sheet was, in essence, life responding to the transition of consciousness my friend made when he shifted from his own perception of the situation to embracing the other person’s point of view.

When we accept and embrace another’s perspective, we are subtly acknowledging that we are not the center and be all of things; that there

is a wider field of knowledge beyond our purview. When we catch ourselves insisting on our own position, and then reverse ourselves, we shift away from the *exclusive* nature of mind, which believes that what it knows is the whole of the truth, when it is actually but a small part. It is at that point that life starts working on our behalf.

Do you remember the skeptical manager who was opposed to the consultant's suggestion that he give attention to the idle machine not being used to generate revenues? Well, when he changed his point of view and embraced the consultant's advice, not only did his cousin suddenly appear out of nowhere and take interest in the long-neglected machine, but he would go on to turn it into a money-making venture for both parties.

Also, recall the incident where I was reluctant to come into work that second consecutive weekend at the computer store. Rather than accede to my boss's request, I remained recalcitrant, insisting that I was already doing enough to justify my employment. However, when I changed that perspective and embraced his point of view, I quickly attracted the sale of my life.

As we see, when we take the other person's point of view, we embrace the universe of possibilities. We shift from our limited perspective to a wider field of existence where a more complete truth and knowledge reside. Moreover, when we adopt this broader view, the infinite potentials of life quickly open before us.

So why not consider how you can apply this powerful behavior in your own life. The next time you discuss an issue or are otherwise engaged in a matter with someone, detach yourself from your own opinion, and embrace the other person's viewpoint -- even if it is at odds with your own. Seek out the truth -- even the smallest truth -- in their words, and latch onto it. If you do, life will open up in ways you never would have imagined!

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A Class to Remember

Focusing on their interests and concerns, and embracing their point of view are two powerful ways to connect with other people. Such harmonic acts also tend to evoke magnificent response from life. A third approach is one we have already touched on: *giving others greater personal*

attention. And it too attracts marvellous response from the world around us.

Recall again the incident involving the consultant who asked his client to give more attention to an idle machine. After taking up my friend's advice to repair, repaint, and otherwise keep it in perfect working order, the proprietor's cousin suddenly appeared on the scene out of nowhere, took an interest in the machine, and turned it into a money-maker for both parties. In that example, life quickly responded to the owner's efforts at giving greater attention to a *physical object*.

Well it turns out that just as life responds to giving inanimate objects like machines more attention, it does the same with animate entities like plants, animals, and, of course, *people*. Whenever we give a deserved individual more consideration -- whether a friend, a family member, or a subordinate -- not only does that person come alive and blossom before our eyes, but we ourselves experience powerful life response results in return. Here is a case in point.

One day early on in my training career, I decided that I wanted to improve the quality of my instruction. I therefore not only committed to being more passionate and energetic in the classroom, but to giving my students more individual attention.

Several days later, when my next class rolled around, I did my usual pre-class run-through to make sure I was prepared. I also remembered that this was the day I would begin to fulfil my earlier promise.

And so after the students arrived and settled in, I stood up to start the class. However, just as I was about to begin, I was interrupted by a small disturbance over to the side. I then looked around and noticed that a small group of students were engaged in a lively conversation. Wondering what they were discussing, I soon realized that they were debating one of the topics I had planned to cover that day.

When I then stepped forward to get a handle on the situation, another discussion broke out amongst a second group! Then I noticed that the more people expressed themselves in their group, the more others jumped into the fray. Suddenly, it seemed like everyone was talking at once!

Now as I stood there, open-mouthed before a very animated collection of students, I wondered what to do next. Then when the ruckus intensified, I decided that I had better take control. But when I stepped forward and tried to garner the group's attention, they

completely ignored me. In fact, the intensity of their discussion only increased!

At that point, I thought to myself, “Well, if that is the way things are; if they are so interested in debating these issues on their own, then perhaps I better not interfere.” And so I took a deep breath, retreated a few steps back, and simply watched the students go at it!

As it turned out, the remainder of the day unfolded in a somewhat similar fashion. I.e. throughout the morning and afternoon discussion, I would introduce a topic, and then the students would break out into highly animated debate without any direct involvement on my part. In my entire training career, spanning two decades, I had never experienced anything like it!

And yet the irony of it all was that my day could not have been any easier. Because the students required little input from me, aside from basic explanations of the concepts, the class was exceedingly simple to conduct. Perhaps most dumfounding of all was the fact at that the end of the day the students gave me glowing reviews in their personal assessments!

Well, the story did not end there. Right after the class, I dialed into my voice mail and listened to a message from a client I had not heard from in years. I wondered why in the world he would be calling me after all of this time. It turned out that his company needed consulting work in an area that my firm was expert in, which was certainly good news. But what was astonishing was the fact that the services he required was precisely in the area I addressed during that day’s training session. Since I taught *many* different courses on a variety of subjects, the fact that he contacted me on this particular one struck me as nothing less than astonishing.

Later on, of course, I saw that all of these extraordinary events were the result of the earlier commitment I made to improve the training -- including my pledge to put more of myself into each class and to give each student more individual attention.

In fact, in the incident I actually received a life response *before* I even had a chance to implement my plan! Because the students engaged in their heated discussions before I began my opening remarks, they were already giving one another the increased individual attention I pledged to give them on my own!

Miracle Machine

Giving others personal attention has a remarkable power to evoke the miraculous. However, if you are not fully convinced, I have another startling episode to tell you about! This one involves a manager friend of ours in Asia who was in charge of a group of workers. I will let him narrate his own remarkable story.

“I was overseeing a small unit engaged in the manufacturing of general purpose welding electrodes. The unit employed 10 workers. Most of them were from a nearby village and had a minimum level of education. That is, they could sign their name, but they could barely read and write.

The packing operation in the unit involved sealing cartons and boxes with adhesive tapes, and then strapping them with nylon tape. These operations were done manually by the workers.

I noticed at one point that there was no uniformity in their application of the tapes. So I talked to the staff, and taught them how to strap in a uniform manner. I also made the effort to show them how beautiful their work was when they did it correctly.

To help them in their efforts, I made a template that they could emulate -- marking the position and level of tape/strap on the boxes. After some time, the workers developed the skill and experience to do proper packing without the aid of the template. Soon after, they were very happy when they received compliments about their packing from our distributors.

This has had the effect of energizing the company so much that not only are the workers constantly beaming, but now the *machinery* has suddenly started yielding results double its rated capacity!

In addition, the market has responded in a similar manner. Without any publicity or advertising effort on our part, our sales have unexpectedly *doubled* from their previous level!

And in one final surprise, a bank came forward out of nowhere and extended additional funds to support our growth!”

When you give others attention, not only are practical results generated -- such as the development of a new skill, or an uptick in energy and enthusiasm -- but extraordinary life response ones as well; such as machinery unfathomably outputting at double their rated

capacity, or a sudden explosion in sales, or financial supporting arising out of nowhere.

This being the case, why not consider who in your life deserves more of your attention. Once you make that determination, shower that person or group of individuals with all you can give. When you do, not only will they come alive; not only will they deeply appreciate your efforts; but a burst of good fortune will move in your direction!



Sisterly Act of Love

Scraping away our negative feelings towards others, focusing on their interests and concerns, taking their point of view, and giving them more personal attention each have a power to evoke the miraculous. That is because they are movements away from our limited, separate selves to a wider, universal field. It is in essence a shift away from ego and self-absorption to a higher state of *selfless and self-giving behavior*.

Let's define these two terms. To be *selfless* is to avoid focusing on one's self in relation to others. It is essentially an expression of humility and modesty. To be *self-giving*, on the other hand, is to go a step further and *extend* ourselves for the benefit of others -- without expecting anything in return. Though they are slightly different, the one thing they have in common is that when we take to either in greater measure, life quickly responds.

To show you what I mean, let's turn once more to my favorite novel *Pride and Prejudice*. This time I will be focusing on an early episode involving the two elder Bennet sisters, Eliza and Jane.

As you may recall, at the outset of the story, word arrives that two wealthy and handsome young bachelors -- Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley -- have arrived, exciting all of the townspeople. The hope, of course, is that two lucky daughters of Meryton will get a chance to meet and marry them. As a result, a ball is arranged for the young people to meet one another. It is there that Eliza Bennet and Mr. Darcy first encounter each other, and it is also where eldest sister Jane meets Mr. Bingley.

Shortly after the ball, Jane decides to visit her new friend Mr. Bingley, with whom she now shares a deep affection. Unfortunately, the weather turns cold and wet, and by the time she arrives at his estate, she is taken ill and forced to remain in bed.

Meanwhile, back at the Bennet home, Eliza is concerned about the condition of her sister. As a deeply affectionate and loving sibling, Eliza decides not to wait around any longer, and trudges across the countryside on foot through the mud to find out how Jane is doing. When she arrives at Bingley's estate, she discovers that Jane is indeed quite sick -- laid up in bed with cold, chill, and fever. Though this is an unfortunate development, it is more than offset by the fact that Mr. Darcy is also there -- perhaps the last person she expected to see. As a result, Eliza and Darcy begin to establish an emotional bond that will kindle their romance and culminate in their marriage.

Would it not then be fair to say that because of Eliza's selfless and self-giving act of trudging through the wet fields to find out the condition of her sister that she attracted the man -- Mr. Darcy -- who would change her life forever? The fact is that when we engage in a caring and loving act, we not only bring benefit to the other person, but we generate an irresistible force that attracts powerful response back to our person.

\$5 Raise; £5 Gift

In studying literature and cinema over the years, I have often seen this dynamic at work: i.e. act in a self-giving manner, and good fortune quickly follows. In fact, I have noticed that a generous, kind, forgiving, or munificent act will often attract a *life-changing* response.

For example, there is a wonderful moment in the popular AMC TV series *Mad Men*, which is about an advertising agency in fast changing 1960s America. In this scene, the main character, Don Draper, a top executive in the firm, is having a meeting with Peggy Olson, who is a first year junior copywriter. It turns out that she has unexpectedly played a vital role in the marketing campaign of one of Sterling Cooper's important accounts, something highly unusual for someone in her position, and especially in that pre women's liberation era.

At this point, Peggy comes into Draper's office and modestly suggests that she deserves a small raise. Draper smiles in agreement, but then tells her that she should ask for it "like a man;" meaning she should quantify what she wants. In other words, Draper cares about her and wants to give Peggy what she deserves, but she should ask for the *specific amount*. Peggy then says she wants a \$5 raise -- a very modest amount considering what she had accomplished for the firm. Draper smiles and is about to agree, when the senior partner of the firm, Bertram Cooper,

suddenly rushes into the room, interrupts their conversation, and drags Draper into his office. He then shocks Draper by offering him the position of senior partner in the firm, the highest position in the organization!

And why did this sudden good fortune come to Draper? Because earlier on, he showed deep concern for Peggy by asking her to spell out exactly what she wanted. That single gesture of generosity and goodwill thus attracted his boss in mid sentence and propelled Draper to senior partner in the large company! It is a precise demonstration of how self-giving behavior can instantly evoke life-changing results.

Interestingly, just the week before I was watching another TV show, the BBC series *Cranford*, which is set in 1840 rural England, where a very similar outcome takes place. In the very first episode, elder sister Matty Jenkeyns, played by famed actor Judy Dench, engages in a single act of generosity by lending 5 pounds to a hard working individual that attracts a tidal wave of positive circumstances for Matty and her friends, including the appearance of her beloved brother whom she has not seen in 30 years. It is but another demonstration of the overwhelming, life-changing power of a selfless and self-giving act.

Milk of Human Kindness

If such behavior not only forge deep, harmonic relationships, but also attract powerful life response results, it would be worth discovering how to acquire these capacities. Here are several approaches:

Shifting Our Orientation Inward

One way to become more selfless and self-giving is to change our orientation towards life. Rather than living on the surface of things, we can begin move to a deeper poise within. From that inner status, we become more sensitive to our surroundings, including the needs and concerns of people around us. I have personally found that when I make the effort to quiet my mind and focus myself inward, I become much more aware of outer circumstance, including the interests and concerns of others. As a result, I am more likely to engage in selfless and self-giving acts that attract luck.

Emulating Selfless & Self-Giving Individuals

Another approach to inducing selfless and self-giving behavior is to emulate those individuals who exhibit these qualities. If we look around, we will see that there are certain people who consistently demonstrate a certain level of *goodness* in the way they live their lives. These are individuals who go out of their way to be helpful; who are unwaveringly kind, generous, understanding, compassionate, appreciative, and loving. Perhaps the best-known example of this sort of person is the character of Melanie in *Gone with the Wind*. Her kindness, goodness, and self-sacrificing nature has an almost saintly quality, as she constantly nurtures and gives strength to those around her.

A second quality of such selfless and self-giving individuals is that they tend to act that way toward *anyone*. Their acts of kindness and goodness are not restricted to those they are intimate with -- such as friends, family, or loved ones -- but to whomever they meet along the way.

A third quality of such individuals is that they give of themselves *without expectation or reward*. They simply give for its own sake; demanding nothing in return.

Finally, selfless and self-giving individuals take great pleasure in the *good fortunes of others*. They derive great emotional satisfaction from other people's happiness and success. Or to put it another way, they internalize the positive experiences of others as if they were their own.

With a little effort, we too can develop the capacity of giving. By shifting our orientation inward; by emulating those who demonstrate it; by giving freely to deserved individuals; and by taking deep pleasure in the happiness of others, we too can forge deeply harmonious relationships, and thereby attract never-ending positive response in return.

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Referral of a Lifetime

Before concluding this chapter, I would like to describe two other ways to evoke the miraculous through our relationships. The first involves an inner movement that is so profound that it brings into question the very nature of human relations. It involves our capacity to express or otherwise broadcast our *goodwill* to others.

The most obvious way to demonstrate our goodwill is to express it directly to another person. If we do that sincerely and on a regular basis, we will attract powerful positive conditions. Here is a case in point:

A while back, I had the good fortune to attend a meeting of managers and consultants at Microsoft's downtown regional headquarters in San Francisco, where the focus was on their project management software. I had been to this gathering numerous times before and enjoyed every meeting. On this particular occasion, I knew that a representative of a company I had been referring business to would attend in order to discuss a variety of issues. While I expected solid results from past efforts, the report he handed me indicated that I had not only generated staggering revenues for the firm, but that I had earned a huge referral fee in return. In fact, it would turn out to be largest one-day financial windfall of my life!

In one fell swoop, I earned well over \$20,000, when in the past my biggest referral fee payday had been ~\$3500. Though I expected a similar amount this time, instead I garnered a 700% increase.

What happened?

For over a month, I was unable to figure out what I had done to attract this startling amount. I knew it wasn't mere chance or dumb luck, because I don't believe in such things. Nor did I believe it happened because of something obvious or outward I had done recently. Though I am normally able to make an association between an outer result -- especially as startling one -- and the inner cause that precipitated it, in this case, I could find no obvious clues. That is, until a friend of mine helped me see the light.

It turns out that over the past several years, I have had a number of conversations with the owner of the firm -- dating back to before we had a business relationship. On those occasions, I expressed my admiration for his exceptional technical skills and knowledge, as well as his winning demeanor. In response, he offered his genuine thanks and appreciation.

But what my other friend helped me realize was that my persistent goodwill towards the owner came back in the form of that huge referral fee! Not only was the amount large (and is still expanding to this day), but the quality of the companies who signed on was remarkable. In fact, through a series of unfathomable events, the firm was able to secure a huge contract from the biggest telecommunication firm in the United States.

As we see, when we express our heartfelt goodwill towards others, life responds with marvelous conditions. And if our concern, good intentions, and benevolence are unwavering and constant, then we can attract *unprecedented* results, as we saw in this episode.

One other interesting aspect of this dynamic is that the response often comes in the form of money. When we relate positively to people, encourage them, and show genuine happiness for their successes -- devoid of personal or mercenary motives -- money floods into our life.

This occurs because our goodwill puts us in touch with universal powers, including the social force that money represents. When we give of ourselves freely in this way, that power begins to flow in our direction. And when we sustain that effort over time, it comes in torrents.

That truth was never more poignantly revealed than that day when I received a referral fee of a lifetime.

Goodwill Broadcasting

In addition to expressing our goodwill *directly* to someone, we can also offer it *indirectly* through a startling, spiritual-like approach. If we can well up genuine positive feelings towards an individual, and then “broadcast” it through the air, it can generate extraordinary results for the recipient. Here is a powerful real-world example told by the same friend who helped me recognize the life response power of goodwill above.

“One recent morning I sat down and concentrated in order to generate an attitude of goodwill to specific people I knew, and to aspects of work or life that I was directly related to. As it turned out, during that day I received back a series of reports of good news that related to the very things I had been concentrating on -- as well other aspects of work I had put aside because of lack of time. Here are the details:

I had been concentrating on the health of a friend who had developed diabetes, and whose ailment I felt responsibility for because of my attitude, and the pressure I had placed upon him in work. Later in the day, I received word that his blood sugar levels had declined almost back to normal following treatment.

I had also been sending goodwill to a client company I was working with, and praying that their revenues should increase. As it turned out,

during the day, they closed a good-sized order that had earlier been in doubt.

But there was still more. The previous day I had asked a marketing manager at the company about the progress on a proposed collaboration with another company that could generate big dividends for my client. The manager had said he had not made any progress on the proposal for the last six weeks. During the day of my concentration, however, he reported that the other company had suddenly contacted him and proposed flying into our city for the first meeting within five days time.

There was also the senior manager of the company's Bangalore branch office, who had been badly demotivated by the harsh words and treatment he received from the company's Chief Financial Officer, which had in effect caused local morale to suffer. I concentrated on sending him goodwill as well, so that he could recover his usually cheerful, enthusiastic disposition. During the day, his assistant reported that the senior manager's mood was back to normal for the first time in a month!

I had also been praying that rain should come to drought-stricken Madras (India), where drinking water is in short supply. That day it rained heavily.

Beyond these responses, there were two encouraging responses to my efforts of concentration concerning projects I had not been thinking about, but were high on my list of work to be accomplished. In the first case, I found myself seated on the plane exactly across the aisle from the head of a non-profit organization I had met nine years before. During the flight, he introduced himself and expressed serious interest in a development project that we wanted to promote but had not found the right agency for. It turned out that his agency would be the ideal candidate.

In the other case, a newspaper headline carried information that another project we had worked on to promote for the past year may now have been received by the concerned parties."

As we see, consciously sending goodwill has a staggering ability to evoke positive response for the targeted party. Though on the surface it does not seem possible, we really do have this infinite-like capacity to gather our best emotions, feelings, attitudes, and aspirations, and

broadcast them across space-time, eliciting good or even great fortune for the recipient.

If you are so inclined, why not experiment with this spiritual-like technique in your own life. Begin by thinking of those individuals or parties you would like to send positive feelings. Then concentrate and try to evoke an attitude of genuine goodwill. Finally, imagine that force going out to that person(s), generating the very best of conditions for them. In the days that follow, watch closely for new, positive developments on their end. If sudden good fortune comes to the targeted parties, then you know you have practiced this profound, spiritual-like broadcasting technique with genuine sincerity and affection.



The Consummation

There is one final way to connect with others and thereby evoke the miraculous. It is to express our deepest thanks and appreciation towards others – i.e. our *gratitude*.

Gratitude is to communicate our heartfelt emotions for the role others have played in bringing about positive conditions in our lives. The object of our gratitude may be one person -- such as a friend, relative, teacher, boss, or business associate -- or a group of people, such as members of our project team, or the organization we are part of, or the state or nation we reside in. Gratitude can even go out to life itself.

Because gratitude is a higher emotion -- a *spiritual* attitude of the soul, -- it has a great power to attract powerful positive conditions. In fact, if that expression of thanks and appreciation is sincere and heartfelt, then there is no limit to what can come in return. To show you what I mean, let's return to *Pride and Prejudice* and examine the dramatic, climactic scene of the story.

At this particular juncture in the tale, the elopement episode that threatened to ruin the Bennet family has passed, and, fortunately, has done no serious harm. However, in the wake of that near-disaster, Mr. Darcy unexpectedly visits Eliza to discuss matters. Let's see what happens next.

When Darcy arrives, he and Eliza take a stroll along a path outside the Bennet home. It is on this walk that the two finally have a chance to express their thoughts and feelings about recent events. It is clear from Darcy's demeanor that he is still very much in love with Eliza. Just below

the surface, he yearns to express the deep affection he still feels. Likewise, Eliza also has strong feelings welling up inside her. Though they are both eager to share their thoughts, it is Eliza who speaks first.

She begins by expressing her heartfelt gratitude to Darcy for having saved her family from scandal and financial ruin by playing the critical role in resolving the elopement episode. He was the one who found the scoundrel Wickham and forced him to marry Eliza's impetuous younger sister Lydia, ending the potentially devastating scandal.

In fact, through that difficult ordeal, Eliza has come to understand several other painful truths about herself and her family. First, she realizes the deception that was perpetrated by the handsome, yet duplicitous rogue Mr. Wickham. Not only was she duped into believing he cared for her, but he also ran off with her wild younger sister, instigating the scandal. She was also now aware that Wickham had engaged in several other deceitful and harmful acts in the past, including his earlier attempt to elope with Darcy's younger sister, taking advantage of her considerable family wealth.

Secondly, Eliza also has come to understand the vulgar behavior of her own family members -- particularly the brazen actions of her youngest sister Lydia, as well as the boorish conduct of her mother, Mrs. Bennet. Eliza confesses to Darcy that he had expressed these sentiments all along, but that she had only come to appreciate their truth lately.

Then it is Darcy's turn to speak. He begins by acknowledging Eliza's candidness, as well as her heartfelt gratitude. A minute later, he reiterates the deep longing he has felt all along, and then asks for her hand in marriage. However, unlike his first proposal, this time Eliza gladly and joyfully accepts his offer -- bringing her ultimate fulfillment, and catapulting her family to the next strata of wealth and social status.

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If we examine this incident from Lisa's perspective, we clearly see that her heartfelt thanks and appreciation of Darcy's noble effort instantly attracted his proposal of marriage. When she expressed her sincere gratitude, she moved into alignment with Darcy's own desires for marriage, precipitating the greatest boon of her life.

It should be pointed out that Darcy's proposal was a most *unexpected and shocking* turn for Eliza because she had given up all hope that he was still interested in her. In Eliza's mind, her family's crude behavior and the

recent scandal-plagued events had destroyed any interest he might have had for her, and therefore his current visit was a mere formality. And yet when she went ahead and expressed her gratitude for all he had done, he instantly returned the favor through his startling and most unexpected proposal of marriage.

Opportunities Everywhere

If we think about it, we will see that there are endless opportunities to express our gratitude. Perhaps a salesperson has gone out of his way and found a product we were eagerly searching for. Or perhaps someone has gone out on a limb and loaned us money that was instrumental in our business's success. Or perhaps our spouse has presented us with a most unexpected and wonderful gift. Or perhaps our boss has worked hard behind the scenes on our behalf. In each case, and in endless others, we are afforded an opportunity to express our deepest thanks and appreciation for something someone has done -- rather than forget the matter or take it for granted. And when we do, we attract infinite-like positive results that arrive out of nowhere.



Because gratitude is such a powerful way to evoke life response, it would be helpful to consider various parties we can target. For example, we have already seen that gratitude can go out to another *individual*, such as a parent, friend, or benefactor. It can also go out to a *collective or institution* -- such as the company we work for, or the education system we are passing through, or the country that is supporting our development and success. Whether the target of our gratitude is an individual or a collective, life will quickly responds to that effort. Here's a good example:

One day after completing a training class for a client, I handed a staff member an invoice so she could find out when I would be paid. As I patiently waited for an answer, I figured it would likely take 30 days to process the bill, which is common in business. In the mean time, I had stuck up a conversation with one of the people who attended my class. At one point in the conversation, I expressed my admiration for the work Microsoft had done in the past: in particular, how the company consistently went the extra mile to insure that each new iteration of its software was backwardly compatible. That in turn has helped customers

bring their older, “legacy” data forward into the newer, more dynamic environment. I then went on to express my sincere gratitude to Microsoft for having performed this great service for society.

Well, at the very *instant* I finished that sentence, the individual appeared on the scene with word about my invoice. However, instead of being given a future date for remuneration, I was paid by check on the spot! In addition, it was for an amount that exceeded my expectations. To put it simply, it was life responding to my expression of gratitude to a company that has brought so much benefit to myself and the world.

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In addition to individuals and collectives of people, gratitude can also go out to *developments in society* we have benefited from -- such as a breakthrough in medicine that has helped us, or a new technology like the Internet that has made our life easier, or a new economic or peace alliance amongst nations that has made our lives more secure.

Our gratitude can even go out to *life itself*, as we thank our lucky stars for the happiness and good fortune that has come our way.

Finally, our most profound gratitude can go out to the *spiritual dimension of life* -- for providing sustenance and guidance; for continually bestowing Its grace, and for saving us in our darkest hours.

This being the case, why not try the following experiment: Think back on your life, and try to recall positive situations, conditions, and benefits that have come your way. Then try to identify an individual, collective, or aspect of life that was instrumental in that good fortune. Then summon up heartfelt emotions of gratitude, and either communicate it directly to that party, or broadcast it silently from within. Then watch in the hours and days ahead as powerful positive conditions move in your direction!

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Grow by Giving

In the final analysis, we see that there is a direct link between the quality of our relationships and our ability to evoke life response. When we reach across over the chasm that divides us and connect with others, we not only build goodwill and strong bonds, but good or even great fortune will follow.

In addition, each time we move out of our small, limited selves and embrace the needs and concerns of others, we elevate our consciousness, taking a step further on the road of personal progress.

Ultimately, however, when we make the connection with others, we are given the opportunity to experience the greatest of all gifts -- that of human Love.

Strategies to Connect with Others that Attract
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overcome your negative attitudes towards others• Focus intently on the interests & concerns of others• Take to acts of selflessness and self-givingness• Embrace the other person's position and point of view• Give deserved individuals more personal attention• Feel sincere goodwill to another party over time• Consciously send others vibrations of goodwill• Express sincere & heartfelt emotions of gratitude

9. Exercising Our Psychological Strength

One observation I have had along the way is that the happiest people are usually those who are selfless and self-giving, while those who are unhappy or miserable are often selfish, self-absorbed, and oblivious to the interests and concerns of others.

And yet from another perspective, this conclusion seems counter-intuitive -- for how can we be truly happy unless we pursue our own wants and needs? How can we be satisfied unless we seek out those very things we desire in life -- whether greater success, more prosperity, the right mate, a happy home life, etc.?

However, the selfless and self-giving practitioner might respond that these are not the things that make us happy, but are rather the very *trappings* of life. That their single-minded pursuit leads not to inner joy and happiness, but to transient satisfaction that can quickly turn into its opposite.

Which leads me to another observation: that there seem to be a certain type of individual who cannot help but give of themselves. When we meet them, we are quickly taken in by their warmth, their goodness, and their sincere goodwill. In the East, such individuals are described as “ripe souls” -- i.e. having evolved through several births to reach their current compassionate and benevolent state. When we interact with them, we are not only reminded of the power of goodness, but how their self-giving nature is a source of great joy and pleasure.

And yet despite these observations, one might pose a psychologically and spiritually taboo question. Are there not situations where taking to such kindly, selfless, and self-giving behavior can actually be deleterious to our person? While one might say that such goodness is *always* welcome, and, is indeed practiced all too infrequently in the world, there are certain situations where it would be best withheld.

The reality is that there are individuals who are ready to abuse you, and take advantage of your good nature. For example, it would be particularly foolish to be self-giving towards those who harbor ill will towards you, or secretly hope to tear you down. If you extend yourself to such undeserved people, you will surely be inviting trouble. When we

neglect the dark side of life, and observe only the light, we can become easy prey.

It therefore seems that we need to develop a certain level of discrimination; a right balance between goodness and self-givingness on the one hand, and a degree of toughness and psychological strength on the other.

Human Frailty

The truth of the matter is that many of us are not very strong. We are often timid, fearful, and apprehensive -- quivering in the shadow of life's pressures, or cowering before those who abuse us. Because of our psychological weakness, we are unable to cope with life's circumstance, which prevents us from moving forward and reaching our full potential. As a result, we become world-weary and fatalistic, believing we are the helpless victims of an existence that is determined to crush us.

And then there are those who *are* aware of their psychological frailty, and yet are still unable to shake free of it. That in turn can lead to the worst of consequences -- even tragedy. For example, in Shakespeare's most famous play, we see how Prince Hamlet was unable to marshal the psychological strength to act against those whom he knew had murdered his father. As a result, he and those around him -- including several people he dearly loved -- paid the ultimate price.

We also see the harmful, even tragic effects of weakness in the wider collectives of society. For example, the nations of Europe cowered before the Nazi machine in the run up to World War II -- as they were unable to muster the strength to stand up to the fascists bullies. That weakness directly contributed to the tragic death of over sixty million people. A little cooperation and a lot more *backbone* in the days leading up to the war might have avoided that greatest tragedy in human history.

Similarly, we can observe psychological weakness amongst the collectives *we* are part of -- whether a family that is unable to stand up to an abusive member; a company that cannot cope with a brewing scandal; or a nation that fails to confront a neighboring bully.

In fact, we do not have to look beyond our own individual selves to know what human frailty and powerlessness is all about. If we examine our own history, we will recall the price we paid because we lacked the necessary strength, fortitude, and courage to stand up to the vicissitudes of life. Perhaps we were unable to confront an abusive parent, and were

left scarred for life. Or, perhaps we did not assert ourselves in a work situation, which led to the failure of a project. Or, perhaps we lacked the gumption to confront a sworn enemy who was complicit in destroying all we had worked for.

Hopefully, we have learned from such experiences, and now demonstrate greater toughness, fortitude, and resiliency. If not, then we will be forced to repeat them in another form. For example, if in the past you were unable to stand up to an abusive boss, then today you may be under the thumb of someone else. Though circumstance may change, the underlying problem remains the same, until we overcome the corresponding psychological deficiency.

Example Expressions of Psychological Weakness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks strength • Lacks fortitude • Lacks toughness • Lacks courage • Lacks resiliency • Lacks conviction • Lacks will & determination • Feels helpless, powerless • Is in a weak position • Has no sense of control • Is overly deferential • Is easily swayed • Is dependent on others • Doesn't know what to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is incapable of acting • Is indecisive • Is shrinking, cowering • Is fearful • Is timid, shy • Lacks self-esteem • Lacks focus, direction • Cannot deal with problems • Has no power • Is uninformed, gullible, naïve • Accepts abuse • Has no energy • Shirks responsibility • Procrastinates

Fortunately, we are not bound to such fate, for each of us can replace weakness with strength. If we understand the ways we express our helplessness, powerlessness, vulnerability, and other forms of human frailty, and then take steps to reverse them, not only will we develop a new level of confidence and feel more emboldened to act in life, but through that change, we are likely to elicit powerful response from life. Let me illustrate with an example.

Strength that Brought Relief

One day many years ago, my company GuruSoftware was contacted to look into the feasibility of developing a software application for one of America's leading technology companies. The individual who called me was not a representative of that large firm, but rather an agent from a smaller company who served as an intermediary for the project. The idea was that GuruSoftware would build the program for the agent company, who would then resell it to that multi-national corporation, as well as any other organization who might be interested.

When I first met with the agent to discuss the project, I let her know that though we were eager to proceed, the database language that GuruSoftware ordinarily developed its applications in might not be suitable. Because of this uncertainty, we decided that the best way to proceed was to first build a prototype to determine if our tool was the right one. Once we developed the model, we would test it at the client's site to determine if we were on the right track. If so, we would then create the actual full-blown application. With little else said on the matter, we began to carry out the plan.

Though it took considerable time and effort on our part, over the next several months GuruSoftware began developing the prototype. At one point, however, I decided that before going any further, we should test what we had created to see if we were moving in the right direction. And so several weeks later, I made the one-hour drive to the company's corporate headquarters in Silicon Valley to make my presentation. When I arrived, I was met by one of the representatives of the firm who escorted me to the location in the building where I would perform the test.

Though I was able to explain the benefits and features of the program to her, I was unfortunately unable to demonstrate it in a live environment. The problem was that they failed to provide me with a proper work area to demonstrate and test the application. Though the contact later indicated that she appreciated the work and effort GuruSoftware had put in, I had the not so subtle feeling that things were just not right.

Though we continued to work on the model application for several more months, it gradually dawned on me that the project had gotten out of control. After all, we had spent so much time and effort building something that might not even work -- *and* we were not being

compensated for our efforts. After considerable hand wringing, I finally decided to take a stand. My feeling was that we should at least receive some remuneration for the great amount of time and effort we put in. And so I called the agent who was the intermediary on the project and arranged for a meeting at her office.

Unfortunately, when I presented my proposal several days later, she immediately launched into an emotional tirade, claiming that we had never agreed on *any* compensation for the development work. She insisted that she had simply agreed that GuruSoftware would build a prototype to determine if a real product was feasible -- and that was all there was to it! When I then questioned her on this point, she stormed around the room, shouting that I had some nerve to come in now and demand compensation! I had obviously touched a nerve.

After a very pregnant pause, I again reiterated that we had put in *months'* worth of good faith effort, yet had nothing to show for it. I then explained that things could go on indefinitely this way, but that we did not have unlimited resources. With her emotions now searing, she emphatically restated her position.

It was obvious that we had reached an impasse. In fact, the room was so charged with electricity that I could feel myself shaking. A moment later, when we resumed our "discussion," we simply restated our entrenched positions. Unfortunately, the conversation degenerated further when accusations were made on both sides about one another's integrity and ethical behavior. At that point, we had clearly reached bottom.

Though we found ourselves at a nasty little impasse, I was still determined to arrive at a conclusion about the project, since the well-being of my company was at stake. Though I made a foolish verbal agreement -- or rather, *non*-agreement -- months earlier, I also knew that I needed to resolve the current stalemate if GuruSoftware was going to continue working on the job.

So I gathered up my strength, took a deep breath, and told her straight away that if we were to continue, we needed to be compensated in some way. Not unexpectedly, she refused to back down from her position. And so a moment later, I took another deep breath, stood up, and left her office without an agreement -- which meant, in essence, that not only would we receive no payment for our past efforts, but we would no longer be working on the project in the future.

As I walked out onto the street still shaken from the passion and emotions of that meeting, I was now resigned to the fact that the project we had worked on so assiduously for all these months had now come to an end.

Then it happened. As I sat in my car and began to focus on other matters, I noticed something unusual. I realized that the extreme neck pain I had been suffering from for the past six months had suddenly disappeared! I sat there stunned that the ceaseless throbbing that had hounded me for so long -- even before this project began -- had now completely vanished. As a result, I felt a wonderful physical ease -- an almost blissful feeling in my neck and body now that I was relieved of the persistent pain.

It then dawned on me that this sudden and most marvelous turn of events had come as a response to my effort to resolve the compensation issue. Rather than allow that intolerable situation to continue, I summoned up the strength and courage to confront it head on. Because I stood up to the other party and demanded payment, not only did I clarify the future direction of the project, but I elicited a response that *instantaneously* relieved a six-month neck pain. That is the life response power of shifting from psychological weakness to strength.

Standing up to a Partner

Over the years, I have been privy to a number of situations where a shift to inner strength precipitated a powerful response. These incidents crossed a wide spectrum of life -- from the sports world to the world of politics and business. For example, in *sports* I have seen instances where a weak coach was forced to take a tough stand that not only resolved an immediate problem, but quickly attracted other positive results -- such as the sudden availability of a talented player or the unexpected decline of a competitor. Likewise, I have seen situations where *public leaders* were forced to marshal new levels of psychological strength that not resolved a current dilemma, but attracted positive outcomes, such as the freeing up of moribund legislation, unexpected revenues flowing into state coffers, and the sudden allegiance of a bitter rival. I have also seen the same phenomenon in *business*, where executives changed their ways and made tough decisions that attracted a sudden burst in sales, or an unexpected financial windfall, or the sudden loyalty of previously indifferent staff.

For example, several years ago, I learned of a life response incident involving a business friend of mine who ran a \$17 million chain of audio-video stores in Canada. It turns out that he once had a partner who was difficult, outspoken, and crude. Though my friend -- the “good” partner -- was conscientious, well mannered, and intelligent, he lacked a certain toughness and strength that his partner had. In fact, my friend often cowered before his difficult and tough-minded colleague.

One day, our friend realized that what he himself lacked, the partner had in spades: an innate ability to stand up to adversity, and when necessary, take control. As a result, my friend decided that he too would like to have these qualities. And so in the days that followed, he began to examine his own character to determine how he could change. Eventually, he identified several strength-related personal attributes that were wanting, and then made a personal commitment to overcome them. In fact, the very first decision he made was to stand up to his partner! As a result of that courageous act, not only did his colleague stop his abusive behavior, but he began to cower before our once-weak friend! In addition, a *burst* of positive news followed, including a sudden increase in the enthusiasm of the staff, as well as an unexpected *surge* in company sales.

As we see, when we shift from weakness to psychological strength, not only do we create practical positive results, but we attract powerful life response ones as well. When I shed my weakness and stood up to my agent in the compensation debacle, not only was the uncertainty surrounding the project resolved, but a six-month neck pain suddenly disappeared. Likewise, when our business friend stood up to his difficult partner, not only did it put a break on his cohort’s abusive behavior, but it energized the staff and attracted a sudden and most unexpected spike in revenues. That is exactly what happens when you take to greater psychological strength. Positive conditions immediately rush in!

Heroes & Villains

If psychological strength is crucial for successful living and also generates powerful life response results, then it would be helpful to observe it from as many angles as possible. For example, one of the best ways to perceive it is to study the behavior of ruthless people!

If you examine the lives of some of the most notorious brutes, criminals, and scoundrels in history, you will see that they had an innate

ability to overcome life's challenges. For example, take a villain in a film or work of fiction, and observe how he demonstrates a certain resiliency and toughness: a capacity to persevere through the most difficult of circumstance. Even as we reject his ruthless behavior, his brutality and mercenary ways, we can still appreciate his strength and drive -- his ability to navigate through the vicissitudes of life and pursue his goals no matter what the cost.

Another way to observe psychological strength is to examine the lives of people in the public eye. For example, most of us have probably read about a famous movie star or pop idol who came upon hard times or fallen from grace, only to summon up an unknown level of strength that enabled them to get back on top. The same is true for sports figures who were able to tap into an unknown reservoir of strength that enabled them to weather a storm -- such as an unexpected demotion by management or a serious injury. In these instances, we observe public figures who fell on difficult times, and yet were still able to scratch their way back to the top. What we might not have seen however is how their effort to tap into an inner fount of psychological strength attracted sudden good fortune along the way.

History Lessons

We can also see how psychological strength has served some of the most famous figures in history. For example, there is no greater example of "intestinal fortitude" than that exhibited by Winston Churchill in the years leading up to World War II. While the nations of Europe cowered before the fascist juggernaut, Churchill doggedly pursued his agenda to confront the threat. His unique combination of intellect and toughness not only brought the people of England and Europe to his side, but it served him exceedingly well during the execution of the war. His bulldog determination during those times had its most shining hour when Britain bravely stood up to the German bombardment that threatened to bring Europe completely under Nazi control. In fact, because of his extreme grit and superhuman resolve, Churchill earned the nickname "old blood and guts." Surely, if we were to study Churchill's life in detail, we would uncover powerful instances of sudden good fortune directly attributable to his exercising psychological strength.

There are of course countless episodes in history where individuals demonstrated fortitude and bravery in the face of life's challenges. One

example is the experience of 16th century German theologian Martin Luther, who summoned up fierce courage by insisting on the right of individuals to worship as they pleased -- instead of being bound by the dictates of the Church. Though continually threatened, he exhibited dogged determination and unflinching bravery not to give into the political and financial pressure of the Papacy. As a result, not only did he pave the way for future generations so they could worship as they pleased, but his efforts also sowed the seeds of democracy in the Western world. I am sure if we were to study Luther's life in detail, we would also discover instances where his tough-minded and courageous actions attracted quick and powerful response from life.

Unintimidated

One other place to observe the relationship between psychological strength and life response is in the great works of literature. In fact, there is one very powerful example of this dynamic in the one book I have focused on so far, *Pride and Prejudice*. It occurs at a critical juncture near the end of the story -- after the elopement incident has been diffused, but before Darcy has made his second and successful proposal of marriage to Eliza.

It turns out that Darcy had a fabulously wealthy, aristocratic aunt named Lady Catherine. She was not only a strong, willful person, but had an authoritarian, even bullying nature that she used to get whatever she wanted. Jane Austin saw her as an anachronistic character, clearly out of step with the progressive forces emerging at the time.

As this point in the story, Lady Catherine is very troubled by the fact that her nephew Mr. Darcy -- also very wealthy and a member of the aristocratic class -- has shown interest in Elizabeth Bennet, the daughter of a middle class, gentleman farmer. On hearing these troubling rumors, the forceful, brutish Lady Catherine charges out across the countryside with entourage in tow, and seeks out young Elizabeth.

After bursting into the Bennet home, she locates Eliza and then berates her for being involved with her nephew, Mr. Darcy. How dare she be interested in someone of a higher class; and how dare she allow her family, the Bennets -- recently the object of scandal -- be entwined with a sophisticated and wealthy clan such as hers.

Though Lady Catherine hammers away at her with a frontal barrage, Eliza remains calm and collected, refusing to give in. Seeing that Eliza is

unmoved, Lady Catherine then *demand*s to know if she has any interest in marrying her nephew Mr. Darcy. Once again, Eliza refuses to give a direct answer. Now completely flustered, Lady Catherine vociferously insists that Eliza give her satisfaction and respond to her inquiry. However, rather than cower before the wrath of this woman of great power and influence, Eliza holds her ground and once more denies her request. After several more threats against Eliza *and* her family, Lady Catherine is left frustrated, and barrels out of the house in a huff.

However, the situation does not end there, because Darcy later finds out about the meeting that took place between Eliza and his aunt. In fact, when he learns of the details of the conversation from Lady Catherine, he realizes that Eliza might still be interested in him! After all, he reasons, Eliza never actually *refused* to say that she would not marry him when pressed by Lady Catherine. That in his mind opens the door to the possibility that Eliza might accept another proposal of marriage. As a result, Darcy sets off for the Bennet home, where he then proposes to Eliza, who then accepts!

Looking at it from Eliza's perspective, we see that she has just experienced an overwhelming positive response to her exercise of psychological strength. Because she held her ground in the face of Lady Catherine's onslaught; because she showed toughness before this woman's meddlesome, bullying tactics, Darcy suddenly and most unexpectedly appears at Eliza's doorstep and proposes marriage, changing her life forever. That is the life response power of exercising our psychological strength.

The Weak Shall be Strong

Though episodes like these may inspire us to act with greater inner strength, you may be wondering if you are capable of mustering up similar levels of fortitude and courage in your own life. It is one thing for a relatively strong, independent-minded person like Elizabeth Bennet to stand up to a bully like Lady Catherine, but it is another for the average person to do so. Even in the incident where I confronted my agent and addressed the issue of compensation head-on, or the episode where the owner of the audio-video stores stood up to his partner, we were not weak individuals per se, but rather relatively strong people who simply found themselves in a vulnerable position vis-à-vis another person. As a result, we were able to examine our predicament, dig a little deeper, and

tap into a level of strength that was already there just below the surface. Life then immediately responded on our behalf.

But what of the person who is not particularly strong; who does not have that innate capacity to stand up to others; who finds it difficult to be tough-minded in the face of life's challenges? Can they too rise above their weakness, assert themselves, and thereby evoke powerful response from life?

My experience is that *any* person, no matter what their character or station in life can rise above their current level of strength. Doing so will not only produce practical results -- such as the elimination of a problem or the garnering of other's respect -- but powerful reversals of fortune as well. Let me give you a real-life example.

For a number of years, a friend of mine had been working at a medical research and treatment facility in Berkeley, California. Though it was a solid job, she was unfortunately under the thumb of an unsympathetic and callous boss. While he had several good traits, they were more than offset by several wanting ones, not the least of which was his tendency to favor certain of his subordinates over others -- even pitting them against one another. This behavior not only troubled my friend, but distressed several others who served under him.

One day when things were getting particularly bad, my friend and I sat down and discussed the matter. After listening to her plight, I suggested that she simply *ignore* the problem. My reasoning was that by withdrawing her emotions from the situation, the problem would ease on its own. Though my friend took up my suggestion and succeeded to a certain degree, long-term it did not produce the desired results. In fact, the situation deteriorated.

After considering the situation from several angles, I suddenly realized what the source of the problem was. At the heart of the matter was the fact that my friend was not acting from a position of strength, but rather from one of helplessness and fear. Moreover, I felt that if she could shift her attitude from being a passive victim to taking charge of the situation, conditions around her would quickly change. After careful consideration, I suggested that she speak to one of the higher ups in the company about the problem she was having with her boss.

As I suspected, my friend reacted to my suggestion with mixed emotions. Though she wanted to do something that would change her manager's behavior, she was not the type of person who ordinarily took

such bold steps. Besides, she feared that if she went around her boss, she could lose her job.

In response, I tried to persuade her not to be afraid: that something good would come out of taking this fresh approach. After mulling it over, my friend saw the value of the strategy and decided to take it up in earnest.

The next morning when she returned to work, something remarkable took place. My friend's abusive boss called her over to his desk, asked her to have a seat, and, most unexpectedly began to engage her in pleasant conversation! Moreover, as he spoke, my friend noticed how much his demeanor had changed; how his look was so different from anything she had witnessed before.

As the meeting progressed, my friend sat there in stunned silence -- startled by this unexpected turn of events. She wondered what in the world could have compelled her normally indifferent and spiteful boss to act in such a pleasant manner. After all, she had not yet contacted a higher up who might have influenced his behavior; nor had she had any pleasant contact with him recently that might have precipitated his sympathetic conduct. And yet, there he was, engaging her in a most uncommon, friendly, even charming manner!

As it turned out, my friend later discovered that one of her friends *had* contacted someone in a high position in human resources about her manager. And that this high-level person *had* spoken to him about his questionable behavior, precipitating his change in demeanor toward my friend.

But what was truly astonishing was the fact that my friend never discussed the issue of her recent problems with her boss with anyone; nor had she asked any person to take an action on her behalf! And yet on their own, someone stepped forth and contacted a high level staffer who then spoke with the boss, precipitating his sudden and most dramatic change in behavior!

What actually happened was that a powerful life response event had taken place. Because my friend decided to act from a position of *strength* rather than weakness, *another* individual stepped forward and acted on her behalf, contacting the higher up who altered the manager's behavior. Even though my friend merely *committed* to that course -- without ever *acting* on it -- she still attracted the astonishing results. That is the life

response-attracting power of shifting from a position of weakness to one of psychological strength.

As a follow-up to this story, the callous boss -- who had been at the medical facility for a number of years -- stepped down from his position as manager soon after; relieving those under him of his destructive behavior.

Conclusion

As we see, any person in a weak position, or who otherwise feels incapable of standing up to life's pressure is capable of acting from a position of psychological strength. When we make the *hard decisions* instead of avoiding them, when we stand up for *what is right* instead of cowering before others, and when we otherwise express an inner *toughness, fortitude, and grit*, life immediately starts working on our behalf.

By taking to greater strength, we are in essence moving beyond our current limited existence and opening to a wider field. As a result, our energies become concentrated, and we align with and attract the most favorable of conditions. In that way, exercising our psychological strength is not only a means of bringing about greater success and happiness in life, but a way to continually evoke the miraculous.

Expressions of Psychological Strength that Attract

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Takes action instead of avoiding it• Deals with problems head on• Takes up the challenge• Does what is necessary• Makes the hard, tough decisions• Is forceful when necessary• Is determined and persevering• Expresses an intensity of will• Show toughness and resiliency• Is fearless, courageous, and brave• Maintains emotional equality | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is unflinching in face of adversity• Doesn't back down• Has a never-say-die attitude• Sticks to one's beliefs• Stands up for what's right• Avoids being at the mercy of others• Is not bullied by others• Avoids procrastination and delay• Is able to think for one's self• Is self-confident, self-assured• Is able to lead; direct others |
|---|--|

ONE STEP FURTHER:

TRACE BACKWARD

One of the most powerful life response techniques worth practicing is something I call “Trace Backward.” It is actually quite simple. Every time you come across an instance of good fortune, -- such as a client calling after years of being out of touch, or the sudden, unexpected arrival of money, or an opportunity arising out of nowhere -- trace it back to a recent shift in your behavior, such as a change in attitude, or a decision made, or an action taken. That way you will consistently connect the life response outcome with the change in consciousness that precipitated it. (You can also do the same when you watch a film or read a novel or review news events in the media.)

Taking this approach will enable you to see life response more often and more clearly. As a result, you will tend to take to these corresponding right behaviors more often, which means you will experience life response more frequently, leading to greater success and fulfillment in life.

By the way, the same approach can be used with *negative* life response. If a negative event occurs in your life and you trace it back to a wanting inner or outer behavior -- such as a lack of inner strength -- you will be more motivated to avoid it in the future (and thus avoid *additional* negative response).

TRACE FORWARD

An even more advanced technique is something I call “Trace Forward.” This is in essence the ability to *predict* when a life response will occur in the future! Though this method usually requires several years of life response knowledge and experience, there is no reason you cannot acquire in early on. In essence, in any given moment, you sense how life is unfolding, and therefore where it is leading, which enables you to determine where, when, and why a life response will occur. You can even predict the *precise moment* that it will happen! Here is an example:

One day rather than take my afternoon walk, I decided to wait at my office for a FedEx package to arrive with my new HP laser printer. For several days, I tracked the package and therefore knew that it would arrive soon. But I still couldn't say if it would be today or tomorrow.

Then it struck me that rather than wait around, I should instead (at 2pm) vacuum the floor. And so I took out my new, month-old vacuum cleaner and began the task. Unfortunately, the dirt was not being sucked up into the machine! Then I recalled that the previous three or four times I used it, the

same thing happened -- i.e. it spit out dust balls even as I seemed to be picking things up.

When I then opened the machine to see what was wrong, I discovered that the bag inside was not collecting the dirt. It turns out that I had not installed the hose properly when I assembled it, causing a lack of suction. When I then went ahead and fixed it, the vacuum worked perfectly.

Now comes the best part. I vacuumed for ten or fifteen minutes, but I was concerned that I would miss the delivery of the printer because the vacuum would be too loud. Then it occurred to me that as soon as I finished the cleaning, the delivery would arrive.

As I finished the vacuuming, I was now all but certain that the delivery would arrive at the moment I completed the task. It just seemed right considering the flow of events. A minute after finishing, I walked over to the window, had that thought again, and instantly saw the delivery person with the FedEx package containing the printer walking up the pathway! He arrived right on cue!

In essence, I had predicted the exact moment, down to the *second*, the delivery would take place based on the flow of events and my life response knowledge and experience.

Though it is indeed very powerful, there is one caveat to this approach: you should not let the effort stroke your ego. You must remain perfectly humble when using it. If not, you will be inviting trouble. On the other hand, if you use the technique properly, it will not only be a fantastic and fun experience, but further proof that you can determine the future from within.

10. Discovering the Silence Within

Though science has not proved it, and skeptics will deny it, individuals throughout time have had experiences that can only be described as “spiritual” in nature.

One person experiences light and profound insight; another, a deep presence within; a third, a feeling of peace; and a fourth, an overwhelming sense of oneness with all and everything around them. Such epiphanies come in many forms, depending on the individual’s nature, the society they come from, and other factors.

Take the spiritual attribute of “Oneness.” Through the ages, individuals have shared their experiences of an overpowering association and connection with life. In some instances, it was a feeling of harmony with nature; in others, a deep bond with an infinite universe; and in others still, a transcendent connection to a divine Reality. In each case, the individual experienced an epiphany -- a sense of harmony, oneness, and unity with something far greater than his own individual self.

Yet another way we experience Oneness is through the deep, abiding relationships we have with others. When we focus on the interests and concerns of another person, when we take to selfless and self-giving behavior, and when we express our heartfelt thanks, appreciation, and gratitude, we are also experiencing that sense of Oneness. And yet if we examine this connection more closely, we will see that it is more than a harmonic bond between people, but an *emotional* one as well. It is an indicator of another attribute at play -- that of spiritual Love.

Then what is spiritual Love? It is certainly more than the physical attraction or attachment we have for another person. It is also more than the ordinary vital feelings, emotions, and attitudes we have toward others. It is instead something primary -- truer, deeper, and longer lasting. Spiritual Love occurs when the lover, partner, parent, friend, associate, etc. seeks to give of himself without expectation or reward. It is where we offer love and affection for its own sake, seeking only the happiness and fulfillment of the other person.

In fact, Love rises to its highest status when we commune with the Divine Reality itself. When we experience the overpowering, never-ending Love of the Supreme, and then turn around and express it through our relationships, we create the most powerful and profound of all emotional bonds.

In addition to Oneness and Love, we can also know spirit through Joy and Delight of being. This is not, however, the ordinary happiness that depends on favorable conditions -- such as having the right mate or securing a high-paying job; things that can change in an instant. Rather, Joy and Delight of being is a spiritual-like emotion that wells up from within; that springs forth at any time and for any reason, independent of the vicissitudes of life.

One way we generate this inner-oriented, unflagging Joy is by being selfless and self-giving in our interaction with others. When we shift our focus away from ourselves and act for the sake of another person, a deep pleasure takes hold. We experience an inner freshness, a sublime sweetness that matures over time into a deep Joy and Delight in being alive.

We also have this deep, abiding, pleasure-giving experience -- also known as "Bliss" (Ananda) in the East -- when we discover our higher nature. Each time we uncover something we have never known before, whether about ourselves or about life, this deep pleasure and joy takes hold.

Finally, we experience *ultimate* Delight when we come in touch with the spiritual dimension of life: when we feel the divine Presence within, or when we commune with the transcendent Reality beyond this world. At that point, we experience an ecstatic pleasure and bliss that is beyond anything in this life.

Discovering the Witness Within

Oneness, Love, and Delight are then three major expressions of spirit in life. Each allows us to approach the Divine Reality from a different angle. But these are not the only ways we express spirit, as we see from the following table:

Spiritual Expressions in Life

- Silence/Being
- Oneness
- Creativity
- Knowledge
- Truth
- Power
- Goodness
- Beauty
- Love
- Delight
- Eternity
- Infinity

In this chapter, I will be focusing on the first attribute listed above: perhaps the most fundamental way we experience spirit -- through the poise of Silence and Being.

Behind the material substance, movements, and sensations of our physical bodies; behind the desires, wants, emotions, and feelings of our vital being; and behind the thoughts, ideas, beliefs, and reasoning power of our minds, there is an essential silent and unmoving Self. From this profound poise, this “*Being-ness*,” we make no judgments; offer no opinions; express no wants or desires; experience no feelings; and do not move or take action. In this state of being, we just *are* -- silently observing the unfoldings of life.

Interestingly, by taking to this unmoving, silent poise, we harness a *formidable power*. By silently observing the world, we become more keenly aware of the truths unfolding before us. That in turn gives us greater insight into life’s conditions -- including its possibilities and choices --, which helps us make decisions that lead to perfect outcomes. By looking out onto the world through this “witness consciousness,” we are not only less impacted by life’s intensities, but because we have a profound awareness of its conditions, we harness a formidable power to affect it. And when we do act, or even when we withhold action on those occasions, we tend to elicit marvelous positive results from the world.

In the pages that follow, I will reveal several methods that draw on this inner power. I will also show you how not only how these approaches elicit calm, stability, and insight, but evoke powerful response from life. With that in mind, I would like to introduce you to the first power of Beingness: that of “Silent Will.”

A Magical Meeting

One day several years ago, I attended a bi-monthly meeting at Microsoft's regional headquarters in San Francisco. The purpose of these get-togethers was to learn about and discuss the use of Microsoft's project management software. Consisting of consultants, trainers, and high-level decision makers from major corporations in the area, we normally found the meetings educational and stimulating. In many ways, the seminars were as much a social event as an opportunity to learn about new developments in the project-management software field.

As it turned out, this particular get-together was, like others in the past, an interesting and lively affair. First, we watched a fine presentation, and then we broke out into smaller groups where we discussed the exciting new features or shared our "war stories" about deployment of the software. Often time we chatted about personal matters, such as the state of our finances or families.

On this particular evening, I found myself scampering among several groups, looking for an individual I was eager to speak to. When I finally tracked him down, I was a little disappointed because he was engaged in an animated conversation with several other members of his group. As a result, I was now confronted by a choice: either I could join his cadre and gradually engage him, or I could wait for a more opportune moment to speak with him. When I weighed the choices, I realized that waiting was not without risk, since he might leave before I had a chance to speak with him.

Though I felt it was important to have the conversation, in the end I decided not to join his group and force the issue. Instead, I kept my distance, letting things take their own course. Though I ran the risk of not making the connection, I intuitively felt that the decision to let things unfold as they may was the right one.

Several minutes later, the meeting began to break up and everyone was headed for the exits. Following the herd, I made my way into one of the elevators, which deposited us in the lobby of the venerable old building. After we pushed our way through the front doors and made our way onto Market Street (the main thoroughfare in the downtown area), we each headed toward the mode of transportation that would take us home.

I myself made my way to the nearby BART station to board a train that would whisk me across the bay to my residence 20 miles to the east.

As I briskly walked towards the Embarcadero Street station, I suddenly felt the presence of someone next to me. When I turned around to see who it was, I realized it was the person I had earlier hoped to speak to!

Cloaking my astonishment, I greeted him in a relaxed manner, even as I harbored a mischievous smile. We then continued our way down the street, and engaged in some lively conversation. A moment later, I realized that not only were we headed in the same direction, but we were going to the same subway station.

We then scurried down the steps and took the steep escalator down to the platform, where we waited for our respective trains. At several points, I reminded myself of the wonderful serendipity that was taking place.

As we waited for our respective trains, it suddenly dawned on me what had just happened. Because I did not intrude on my friend while he was engaged in conversation with his group earlier on, life responded and brought him right to me at the appropriate moment thereafter.

As we stood there on the platform watching one train go by after another, I realized that we were now actually waiting for the *same* train -- a fact that only added to an already remarkable set of events. With time to kill before its arrival, I now finally breached the subject I had hoped to discuss earlier. In fact, after the train arrived, we continued our very stimulating conversation on board for another twenty minutes. Then with a very satisfying chat under our belts, we went our separate ways.

Inner Powers of Persuasion

As we see from this dramatic little incident, when you control yourself and refrain from forcing yourself on others, the other party tends to move toward you on their own. It is but one form of the phenomenon of “Silent Will.”

There is another variation of this dynamic that runs something like this. If you withhold verbal expression of a thought during a conversation, the other person will soon speak it out for you. E.g., let’s say that you are in a heated conversation with someone, and a powerful idea takes shape in your mind. Rather than vocalize it, you decide to control its expression. As a result, the other person expresses it verbatim 30 seconds later.

The reason this occurs is that when you control speaking out an idea, the urge for its expression still remains. This is the case because the mental and vital energies behind continue to circulate in the atmosphere. Invariably soon after, the other person picks up on those signals and feels compelled to verbalize it as if it were their own. This is then yet another form of the phenomenon of Silent Will.

Perhaps the best example of Silent Will I know of involved a good friend of ours, Fred Harmon, former president of the American Management Association (AMA), and a highly regarded business consultant and author. In fact, this particular episode has become legend among friends and colleagues. I will let Fred tell his own remarkable story.

“When Garry Jacobs and I set out to write our business book *The Vital Difference*, we knew that we needed the cooperation of some of the most important companies in the US. While we had sound theories, we knew we had to illustrate them with real world examples from significant organizations. We also knew that if we could secure the cooperation of a few major companies, we could more easily enlist others in our project.

Through an apparent coincidence, I managed to get an appointment to discuss our request with a senior executive at one of the best-known companies in America.⁹ The coincidence was that we shared the same last name. In fact, we spent the first five minutes unsuccessfully trying to find a link between our two families.

Unfortunately, however, when that conversation ended, the executive politely but firmly described the many reasons why he could not grant our request, which was to interview executives at his company. Each reason he gave was more telling than the last: e.g., “We get many such requests. Our executives have limited time. Publicity in newspapers is more important to us than books, etc. etc. etc.”

Shortly before the meeting, Garry and I discussed the technique of “silent will and persuasion.” In this discipline, you attempt to listen attentively to another’s arguments without external comment or internal resistance. As the executive continued to speak, I realized that I had nothing to lose since he had already decided not to grant our

⁹ Sears

request. He was ready with an articulate argument to counter any point I could possibly raise. Mentally, I listened attentively, kept my mind open and said nothing. It required a considerable inner effort of control. Spiritually, as required by the discipline, I asked for grace -- not to win the argument, but to have the issue resolved in a way that benefited everyone.

After exhausting every possibly argument against our request, the executive paused, and then perhaps out of politeness added, “on the other hand ...” He then began to state every argument I could possibly think of why he *should* grant our request!

However, this was now the moment of maximum temptation for me because I wanted to speak, if only to agree with him. And so, with almost painful-like restraint, I continued to listen. At the next pause, the executive told me “so on balance between these positives and the negatives, I think we will grant you your request.”

At that moment, I remembered an old sales maxim: “Stop selling immediately when the sale is made.”

I then stood up, thanked him profusely and headed for the door. As he walked me out, he said with a slightly puzzled tone, “You know, Fred, you are quite a persuasive person.”

There is no better example of the power of Silent Will than this wonderful experience of Fred Harmon. By not giving voice to his idea, by withholding expression of his intent, he generated a power that enabled him to communicate and convince without having to speak.

When we restrain ourselves from expressing our ideas or intention, thought waves move out, charging the atmosphere with concentrations of mental and vital energy, which then penetrates another person’s mind, compelling them to speak it out if it were their own. It seems like magic, but it is just how life works when we “act” from a poise of silence within.

An Everyday Habit

Though Silent Will is an extraordinary method for attracting the miraculous, it is not always the easiest technique to master. As we saw in Fred’s case, he had to marshal all of his strength and will to avoid verbalizing what was on his mind. It was especially difficult because the meeting was so important to him -- i.e. it was critical to the development

of the book he was writing. In fact, the situation was so challenging that Fred had to resort to prayer to garner the inner strength to see it through. In the end, however -- through extreme inner discipline in a pressure-filled situation -- Fred got exactly what he was after.

I should point out that while the typical effort at Silent Will is usually not quite so daunting, one does need a certain amount of discipline and focused concentration to make it work. For example, consider a phone conversation I had recently with a good friend of mine. Like our discussions in the past, the exchange of ideas this time was intense. At one particular juncture, an interesting, new idea came to mind. However, rather than vocalize it, I had the presence of mind to withhold its expressions. Well, wouldn't you know it, two minutes later, my friend expressed the very idea I had *word-for-word!*

Unfortunately, when our dialogue resumed, I was unable to maintain that discipline. As a result, when I thought of several new ideas over the course of the conversation, I just blurted them out. In these instances, I did not have the concentration and mindfulness to block the urge to speak. Had I been more vigilant, I could have practiced Silent Will, and saved time and effort in getting my points across!

It is important to note that though Silent Will can be challenging to master at first, it can eventually develop into a regular, everyday habit. In fact, I know of several individuals who have reached that status. Like strengthening a muscle, the more you practice, the more it tends to rise spontaneously on its own. As Silent Will becomes an integral part of your communications arsenal, every interaction can become an occasion for a minor or major miracle!

Inner Project Planning

Though Silent Will compels others to verbalize our thoughts and wishes, there are other dimensions to this powerful technique. To show you what I mean, consider the following hypothetical situation:

Imagine that you are a project manager who is responsible for overhauling your company's production facility. Your assignment is to develop a new wing for the manufacturing plant, which will enable the company to produce its state-of-the-art hardware technology in large quantities. Your broad goal then is to deliver the highest quality result with the least expense in the shortest period.

You begin by polling your engineers to get their input. Their consensus is that the project will take six months to complete. You then use your project management skills to develop a schedule of how long the constituent parts will take. Interestingly, when you organize the project plan this way, a number of new ideas suddenly spring to mind, allowing you to shave off a month from the project. (It is life responding to your mental effort to organize things in the most efficient manner, down to the particulars, as we learned in the chapter on organization.)

As you make these strides in your project plan, you become very energized. As a result, you feel an intense urge to communicate your progress to others. However, rather than give into your eagerness, you decide to *hold back*. Several minutes later, a cascade of insights about the nature of the project suddenly come to mind. That knowledge allows you to drive down the project's duration by nearly half -- from 6 months to 2.5!

Stimulated by these startling developments, you are motivated to take your non-verbalizing, self-restraining approach a step further. Rather than obsess about what you will say to motivate your team, you decide *not to think about the matter at all*. In fact, you choose to wait for life to take *its own* initiative, which will be a signal to you when to take further action.

As a result, a cascade of remarkable events unfold. First, you receive a series of communiqués from team members who express their eagerness to get started on the project. This is a stunning development because they never took the initiative to contact you about projects they were part of in the past. You always had to contact them first. In addition, that afternoon you receive a call from your boss, the VP of operation, who expresses *her* eagerness to begin work on the project. This is from a person who hardly ever contacts you about *anything!*

In fact, over the next 24 hours, you learn of several other stunning developments in the firm. First, you discover that a dozen new people have been hired on in your department, giving you a larger pool of resources to choose from. You then learn that the company has unexpectedly purchased several new pieces of software that if implemented would drive down your project by another 50%!

Because of these conspiring events, the once 6-month project is now projected to finish in a mere *four weeks!* Several days later when your manager gets wind of this information, she drops by your office -- something she rarely does unless there is trouble -- and praises you to the

heavens for this remarkable effort. She follows that up with a not too subtle hint that if the project goes as scheduled, you will be in line for a big promotion and raise.

From this imaginary episode (which matches several experiences I have had in the past), we see the power of restraining our thoughts, feelings, and actions. By holding back at key moment, we create the greatest results with the least effort in the shortest period of time, demonstrating Silent Will power in all its glory.

If Silent Will has this overwhelming power to overcome space, time, causality, and reality, replacing the finite with the infinite, you might consider how to apply this extraordinary phenomenon in your own life. Make a short list of activities where you believe you can hold back verbal and other forms of communication, or otherwise refrain from initiating action. Then put your plan into practice. You will be astonished by the results!

“Do Not Speak Unless You Can Improve the Silence” (a proverb)

As we have seen, when we withhold speech, thought, emotion, and intention, we quickly attract startling conditions from the world around us. Yet another way to evoke this infinite-like capacity is to simply reduce the amount of speaking we do in the course of a day. When we do, positive life response quickly reveals itself. Conversely, when we indulge ourselves and vocalize our thoughts and feelings too freely -- whether through idle conversation or uncontrolled expression of whatever is on our mind -- life can suddenly turn against us, as we will see in the following incident.

One day, in 2001, I was watching a baseball game on television between the local team, the San Francisco Giants, and an opponent. The reason I tuned into this particular contest was that Barry Bonds, the famous superstar of the Giants, was on his way to setting the all-time record for home runs in a season. As it turned out, on this particular night, Bonds hit another round-tripper in his pursuit of the record books. And yet before the viewer could savor that moment, his teammate, the next batter up, matched his feat with a home run of his own.

When the player returned to the dugout after circling the bases, he sat next to Bonds on the bench. Though the TV broadcast does not pick up

the audio, you could see them sitting together on the bench. In this instance, the gestures of the two players indicated that they were engaged in friendly banter about the events that had just transpired. On closer examination, however, it was clear that they were actually engaged in a game of one-upmanship – each trying to convince the other of the superior flight of their ball!

As it turned out, because the Giants were having a particularly good inning, the teammates had ample time to continue their good-natured, though childish sparring. In fact, their verbal jousting would go on for a good ten minutes.

At that particular point, it was late in the game and the Giants were ahead 3-0. However, shortly after, things took a bad turn when their opponents scored three runs to tie. Because the match was now even at the end of regulation play, the game headed into extra innings. Though I watched the contest a while longer, I turned it off when it dragged on and the score remained tied. Because it was getting past my bedtime, I decided to forgo the remainder of the game and retire for the night.

Curious about the outcome of the game, the next morning I read the headlines in the local paper: “Bonds ties the record for hitting the most home runs (37) before the All-Star game. But a 15th inning error by one of the Giant players caused the team to lose, ending their six-game winning streak.” It was a devastating loss for the hometown fans.

And yet I was not at all surprised by the outcome. In fact, I suspected something like that would occur because of the braggadocio I witnessed the night before. When we indulge ourselves in this way, -- especially when the outcome of something is still in doubt -- life will move counter to our interests. In this instance, the negative result was a direct response to their excessive speech. Rather than *retain* the energy they generated through their impressive athletic feats -- i.e. hitting their home runs and putting their team in the lead -- they *squandered* it away in idle, even boastful conversation. As a result, life responded and filled that void with negative conditions in the form of a heartbreaking loss.

Incidents like this indicate the life response power inherent in speech. Because it originates in our energy/life center, it carries a special life-power. Thus, if we speak too much, we squander our energies, which attract negative conditions back to us. On the other hand, if we *conserve* our energy through *reduced* speech -- or better yet by completely

remaining silent in such situations – our energies are reinforced, which attracts *additional* positive circumstance.

If we pay close attention to what goes on in the course of a day, we will see how often people squander their energies through excessive speech. One of the most striking examples is in *Pride and Prejudice*. There Mrs. Bennet incessantly chatters about every matter -- including her likes and dislikes, her nervous condition, and other obsessions and trivial matters -- which constantly attract negative conditions back to her! It is startling to see how often this occurs, and yet that is precisely how life operates.

Developing a Speech-Threshold

If life responds negatively to excessive speech, and positively to controlling it, it would be helpful to come up with ways to reduce the amount of speaking we do in the course of our day. One approach is to discover our “speech threshold” -- i.e. identify one or more activities or areas of our life where we can cut back on or even eliminate speaking. If we then make a serious effort to implement it, not only will we avoid the types of negative response that the athletes and Mrs. Bennet experienced, but we are likely to attract positive conditions as well.

For example, over the years I have noticed that whenever I engage in aggressive or provocative conversation with a student before a class -- such as debating a hot political or social issue -- invariably things start going wrong somewhere during the day. E.g., someone will raise an impossibly difficult question, or there will be some issue or disturbance that throws me off balance. In addition, more often than not it involves the very person I had the pre-class debate with!

From the perspective of life response, we can say that because I squandered my energies at the outset, I attracted a mirror image drain on my energies soon after. (Not unlike the situation of the two athletes, I described earlier.) As a result of these sorts of experiences, I now try to avoid all provocative pre-class conversations, focusing instead on matters that pertain directly to that class’s subject matter!

To avoid these sorts of negative outcomes, and attract the positive instead, I would advise that you come up with a short list of activities where you can cut back on the amount of speaking you do. For one person, it might mean curtailing idle conversation; for another, remaining quiet during company meetings; and for a third, reducing speech when

interacting with family members. The point is that each time you identify and keep within the bounds of your speech threshold, negative outcomes will be avoided and good fortune will follow.

The truth of the matter is that we love the sound of our own voice. That is especially true when we engage others in conversation in social situations. When you consider that as much as 80% of speaking takes place on these occasions – i.e. where our emotions and feeling are given full play -- you can see why we talk so much. The intensity created when two or more people get together can be irresistible, compelling them to express whatever is on their minds. That in turn tends to attract negative conditions, as well as cancel positive ones (see the baseball story above). On the other hand, if we are vigilant, and make the inner effort to minimize the amount of speaking we do, unexpected positive outcomes move our way.

E.g., recall the incident earlier on in the ‘Making the Connection with Others’ chapter, when a friend and I were engaged in a lively conversation. At one point in the discussion, I controlled my desire to verbalize a thought, and instead urged her to speak what was on her mind. As a result, she instantly expressed a marvelous idea that energized and thrilled me to no end. Because I overcame the compulsion to speak in that social situation, I elicited a response that turned a mundane conversation into an energizing, even thrilling exchange.

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In addition to controlling our urge to speak, we can also reduce the *quantity of words* we express. For example, normally in a 10-minute conversation, we speak about 800 to 1000 words. And yet if we were to examine what we have said, we would see that it could have been expressed in 40 or 50. By following this “verbal efficiency,” we not only get our point across more succinctly, but we can attract powerful, positive conditions. This is especially true for someone who transitions from being highly verbose to its opposite. For example, in *Pride and Prejudice*, Bingley one day arrives to meet with the eldest Bennet daughter, Jane. Sensing that something is up, Mrs. Bennet uncharacteristically speaks only the bare minimum, instantly attracting Bingley’s proposal to Jane (and her glad acceptance), fulfilling her deepest aspirations for her family.

Finally, we can reduce the *volume level* of our speech. When we speak loudly and boisterously, life around us gets disturbed, and we attract negative circumstance -- as was often the case for the loud-mouthed, churlish Mrs. Bennet. However, if we practice “soft speech,” by speaking in a low, soft voice, the atmosphere becomes suffused with calm, which tends to attract the very best of conditions. For example, one 39-year-old wealthy American businessperson I knew of lost all 60 of his employees and was preparing to file for bankruptcy. However, through the suggestion of a relative, he and others in the organization took to speaking in a softer, quiet voice. As a result, within two years, the owner was in a financial position to retire for life.

Back Seat Passenger

Before I leave the subject of speech and life response, I would like to add one final point. In addition to reduced and soft speech, we should also avoid expressing *harsh feelings* towards others. Such behavior not only spoils relationships, but quickly attracts negative conditions. Here is a case in point.

About a year ago, I was about to board a plane headed to the Los Angeles area. As it turns out, there were two individual standing next to me, and one – let’s call him ‘A’ -- was bothered by the fact that his friend (‘B’) could not find his boarding pass. Because they now could not get in line, A expressed his frustration with B in no uncertain terms.

A moment later, however, B searched his pockets and found his ticket, enabling the two friends to get in line in front of me to board the flight. But just as the receptionist was about to take A’s ticket, his friend B, who had fumbled for his pass a minute earlier, misplaced it again! Now A was *really* agitated. He began muttering under his breath, “How can you be so stupid to misplace your ticket twice in two minute just before boarding the plane. And now you are holding up the line!”

As it turned out, B did find his pass a moment later -- again! -- and the two traveling companions boarded the plane together. As I followed behind, I could see that A was still grumbling to B about his ineptness.

When I then made my way into the plane, I noticed that there was a holdup in the middle of the aisle. Something up ahead was apparently preventing us from moving forward and taking our seats. It turns out that the flight attendant was engaged in a serious discussion with someone. When I peered ahead, I saw that she was talking to A --, the

same individual who just anguished over the ineptness of his companion. It turns out that they were discussing the fact that another passenger was sitting in A's seat. Then the flight attendant gestured toward the back of the plane, ordering A to take a seat back there. As a result, not only was A now banished to the rear, but he was also now separated from his traveling companion!

As I took my own seat, I began to think about this startling little episode. However, it didn't take long to realize that A's earlier verbal abuse of B for misplacing his ticket had attracted negative circumstance to him two minutes later. By expressing his harsh emotions at the check-in gate, he attracted conditions that banished him to the back of the plane and separated him from the very person he berated. As I settled in for the flight, I felt that I had experienced a marvelous slice of life that showed the relationship between harsh speech and sudden ill fortune.

A Magical Commute

From these incidents, we see the enormous life response power inherent in our speech. When we speak too much, or too loudly, or too harshly of others, negative conditions quickly present themselves. However, when we control the need to speak; when we reduce the number of words we express; when we talk in a low soft voice; and speak kindly of others, we create a vortex of energy that can attract the very best of conditions.

And yet we have concentrated on only *one* aspect of silence so far: the elimination, reduction, and softening of *speech*. Another power of silence is our ability to control the inner "noise" of our own *thoughts*. When we reduce the amount of thinking we do, we not only establish conditions for a steady, serene, and productive life, but we attract powerful life response results.

Recall the hypothetical story earlier where the project manager at one point gave up all thinking about his plan, which suddenly attracted the uncharacteristic interest of his team members, as well as a slew of other startling developments, radically reducing the length of the project. Well this doesn't just happen in the theoretical world, but in the real world as well! For example, over the years I have had a number of experiences where stopping all thought attracted startling positive results. Here is one:

One evening several years ago, I was in my way home from a 2-day presentation I had given in San Francisco. Because it was rush hour, the

train was stuffed with people, making it uncomfortable for everyone, including myself -- especially since my legs now ached from several days of standing in front of an audience. In addition, I sensed a particularly negative vibration in the train that seemed to add to the strain.

A minute later, my “inner guide” suggested a different approach. Rather than bother with the turbulence on the outside, why not empty my mind of all thoughts. And so I relaxed, closed my eyes, and let the world disappear. In a few moments, all thinking stopped and I found myself staring into a block of white emptiness. It was a most relaxing and soothing meditative experience that lasted five or ten minutes.

When we arrived at the next station, there was an announcement that a less crowded train was two minutes behind. When I heard the message, I quickly got up, exited the train, and waited on the platform for it to arrive. Interestingly, I noticed that when my own crowded train pulled away, few of the other passengers had taken up the conductor’s offer -- meaning that I was practically all alone in the station. It was an eerie yet wonderful feeling, as there was now so much quiet and empty space around me.

Several minutes later, the next train arrived as advertised. I then hopped on board, looked around, and noticed that it was almost empty -- an extremely rare occurrence during the rush hour. I then found a comfortable seat and enjoyed a wonderfully relaxing commute home.

In this episode, life on the outside quickly responded to my inner effort of mental silence. When I decided to stop thinking about the congestion and negative atmosphere -- wiping all thoughts from my mind through a meditative effort -- life quickly responded when an announcement was made of a far less crowded train behind. You could say that the emptiness of thoughts in my mind attracted a train that was itself empty. In any case, it turned out to be the perfect antidote to a very tense and difficult situation!

Stilling our Mind

If reducing unnecessary thought overcomes negative conditions while attracting the positive, then we should consider ways to cut back on thinking. Just as we developed a *speech* threshold to reduce the amount of speaking we do, we can do the same for *thinking*. With that in mind, here are several approaches:

(a) *Scan for Wasteful Thinking* -- One way to reduce thinking is to periodically scan our minds to see if we are engaged in unnecessary thought. E.g., when I go for a walk, I scrutinize my mind and realize that I am thinking too much. As a result, I make an immediate effort to stop it. Or when I am riding the bus or train, I realize that my mind is going in all directions, and so I control my thoughts there as well. Scanning our mind and controlling thinking not only helps us relax and refresh our energies, but also helps us establish a more permanent level of mental silence. In addition, as we saw in the train episode above, that effort can evoke marvelous response from life.

(b) *Eliminate Thought During Activities* -- Another approach to mental silence is to identify those particular *activities* in our lives where we engage in unnecessary thought. For example, when I consider the central activities of my day, I come to the following conclusions:

- When I go on my exercise walk, I will spend less time thinking and daydreaming, and more time in a state of mental quiet.
- When I go on work breaks, instead of reading the gossip magazine in the coffee room, I will rest my eyes or gaze out the window in perfect silence, avoiding all thought.
- When I am tired at work, I will go to the company library, close my eyes, and eliminate all thinking -- creating a meditative-like effect.
- When I sit in the lobby before an important meeting, instead of mulling over every detail or reading journals on the table, I will empty my mind of all thought and be absolutely still.
- When I drive home at night, instead of reviewing the day's development or turning on the radio, I will still my mind, while remaining cognizant of the driving conditions.
- Before I go to sleep, instead of reviewing every issue of the day, I will close my eyes and empty my mind of all thoughts, enabling me to fall into a restful, dreamless sleep.

(c) *Take to Meditation* -- A third approach to mental silence is to take up an inner discipline, like meditation or prayer, or other forms of rest and relaxation. For example, if you close your eyes and still your thoughts, after a few minutes you will experience a profound quiet and stillness within. You can practice that technique anywhere -- whether on a subway train, in a quiet room, on a park bench, at the beach, or wherever you feel comfortable. In addition, that quiet, stillness, and

serenity will tend to carry over into other activities in your life, providing you with clarity, insight, and energy as you go about the day's business.

Calm that Overcame Time

Though I have been using the term “silence” throughout this chapter, it can be taken in several different ways. For example, when there is absence of sound, there is *physical* silence. When there is absence of thought, there is *mental* silence. And when we experience stillness in our nerves, feelings, and emotions, there is *vital* silence. It is this last form that I would like to review with you now.¹⁰

One interesting aspect of vital silence is that when we take to it to a higher degree, not only do we become more relaxed, still, and inwardly grounded, but life tends to work in our favor. This is particularly true when difficult situations arise.

The normal way we react to negative circumstance is to get flushed, flustered, and over-react. However, if we remain calm and equal in these situations -- detaching ourselves from the intensity of the problem -- not only are we better able to deal with the issue, but we attract conditions that completely reverse it. Here is an incident that illustrates this point:

Several years ago, my training and consulting company GuruSoftware secured an important contract from a renowned global technology company. Unfortunately, their “fame” was due to in part to the questionable activities of several former executives. However, because these individuals were no longer with the firm, and because we were dealing directly with a well-regarded Silicon Valley *subsidiary* of the company, we were more than happy to take on the contract. In fact, when I first arrived at their headquarters to begin our initial discussions, I was quite impressed by the intelligence and openness of the individual who served as my liaison.

Several weeks later, I completed the work and billed the customer as usual. The basic agreement was that they would pay upon completion of the job, which normally meant we would receive payment immediately or latest within several weeks. Several days later, however, I had a change of

¹⁰ By “vital,” I mean the center of our emotions and feelings; our wants and desires -- as opposed to our mental and physical parts.

heart and decided to be a bit more aggressive in dealing with the client. Because I was concerned about the alleged past impropriety of the parent company, I thought it prudent to contact their accounting department to clarify the payment terms and procedures.

Interestingly, when I brought up the due date, I was told by the representative that it would take *60 days* to pay! Given that our normal policy are much quicker terms for this sort of work, I was somewhat shocked. In fact, their payment terms struck me as rather excessive, considering that we not only completed the work in good faith, but we put together a solution for the company on short notice. In addition, in the back of my mind, I was still thinking about the alleged impropriety of the parent company, which raised suspicions -- valid or not -- in my mind.

After several moments of hand wringing, I gathered my wits and started thinking rationally about the situation. Reminding myself of the “consciousness approach” to business that I have been practicing for 25 years, I began to shift my perspective from one of anxiety, trepidation, and suspicion to one of equanimity and calm. “If this large invoice takes 60 days to be paid, then, so be it,” I told myself. “If this is what is meant to be, I should accept things as they are, and that’s all there is to it.” In essence, I was determined not to let this unexpected, challenging development get the best of me.

And so a few moments later, my emotions settled down and I slowly began to feel like my old self again. In fact, at one point I not only felt calm and relaxed, but a feeling of serenity washed over me.

When the next morning rolled around, I received a surprise call from the same representative. Surprisingly, she asked me if there was another way her company could pay other than by check. Taken aback, I feebly replied that check was the only way we accept payment. There was no response on the other end.

Finding myself in a quandary, I began to grasp for other solutions. Then a moment later, it occurred to me that one of our other products -- our Internet-based online project management tool -- is purchased by customers via credit card over the web; so why not allow her to do the same in this situation. I then told her that though this was not our normal procedure, I could make an exception and allow her to pay this way. She then said that she would look into the matter and get back to me.

Though this was an very important situation, I decided to put the entire matter out of my mind. For one, I thought that it was unlikely that a large company with well-defined bill payment procedures would take up my offer; and two, as a consciousness-aspiring individual, I just didn't want to o be disturbed by the matter.

Well, the next day when I looked in my email inbox, low and behold, I discovered that the company had gone ahead and paid the bill in full! I was equally stunned that they had taken up my suggestion and used our online billing system to pay. As I sat there dazed, it occurred to me that a critical invoice that was supposed to take sixty-plus days for payment was settled in *two!*

On reflection, I clearly understood that my shift from agitation to calm in the face of a difficult situation not only attracted the representative's initial inquiry about alternate ways to pay, but also evoked the payment of the invoice by credit card the very next day. By remaining relaxed and equal in the face of troubling circumstance, conditions were reversed, and a magnificent response came in its place.

Over the years, I have had many opportunities to practice "equality of being" when difficulties and challenging situations presented themselves. And each time life responded with startling positive conditions, I would feel an intense joy and elation in the experience. [ep]

Shifting to Neutral

Because equality of being is such a powerful way to deal with the pressures and vicissitudes of life, I thought that you might be interested in its shadings. Here then are two little stories that demonstrate several variations of this great inner power.

In May of 2001, I embarked on a road trip across the southwestern United States; an adventure that I refer to as my "Journey of a Lifetime." I gave it that moniker because I had so many wonderful inner *and* outer experiences along the way -- including a plethora of life response episodes. On that trip, my friend and I journeyed 2000 miles in pursuit of our ultimate goal -- visiting the ancient Mesa Verde Native American ruins near Cortez, Colorado.

The incident I would like to tell you about took place during the first leg of our trip, after we crossed the High Sierra mountain range between California and Nevada. At that point in our journey, we entered Highway 50 -- a 1000-mile long, obscure western road known as "the world's

loneliest highway.” It is considered lonely because very few vehicles traverse it -- perhaps one car every ten minutes, -- yet it crosses some of the most spectacular and least visited landscapes in the western US. What was so special for my companion and I was the fact that for two days it almost seemed like we had the entire vast landscape to ourselves -- creating not only a sense of freedom and endless possibility, but also one of calm and serenity.

As we crossed Nevada on these clear-blue, warm spring day, adorned with towering snowy peaks overlooking vast expanse of flowering flatlands, we crossed over a number of spine-like mountain ranges. Every half hour or so we would see one grouping ahead, wind our way through their 5000-7000 foot midsection, and then descend into the next great valley below, where would we then make out the next crisscrossing of mountains up ahead. We would then traverse it, descend into the next valley, and catch sight of the next range -- continuing this pattern for perhaps a dozen iterations over the course of a day.

Once when we descended the steep slope of one of the ranges, we looked into our rear-view mirrors and noticed a big-rig truck bearing down on us less than half a mile away. The appearance of the vehicle was particularly unsettling because it was barreling down on us at a rapid speed on a rather steep incline.

As we continued that five-mile straightaway descent from the mountains to the plain below, the truck picked up speed and started gaining on us. My friend, who was driving at the time, was understandably agitated; not only because she was new to long-distance driving, but because she was intimidated by the speed and size of the vehicle coming at us. Though my normal inclination would be to give a novice driver advice in this situation, I decided to remain silent. I did so in order to avoid agitating my friend further, and to give her a chance to deal with the situation on her own.

And so a moment later, I turned away from her and focused my attention on the passing scenery through my passenger-side window. Then a few minutes later, I happened to glance into my rearview mirror to see if the situation with the truck had improved. What I saw, however, was not at all what I expected. Instead of narrowing the gap further, the truck seemed to have suddenly changed course and veered off the highway. When I looked closer, I saw an enormous cloud of dust about a half mile behind us, and within it was the shadowy figure of a vehicle that

seemed to have swerved off the road, and was heading down a non-existent dirt road that appeared to go nowhere!

I found this development quite astonishing. I then wondered why in the world would a big-rig, apparently filled with goods headed to market, suddenly turn off and head out at a 90-degree angle on a barely existing dirt road towards what seemed like empty desert. It almost seemed as if a magic force had suddenly ordered it to change course, which, in effect, relieved us of all our anxiety.

As I watched the truck head off into the white expanse behind us, I just knew that we had experienced an instance of life response. But what had precipitated it? Or, more specifically, what had influenced the driver of the truck to suddenly change course and veer off just as it was about to descend on us? To answer that question, I decided to do a little “inner investigating.” First, I calmed myself after these somewhat disturbing events. Then I focused my concentration on the incident that had just taken place and tried to come up with a plausible explanation. After reflecting on the issue, it suddenly dawned on me that I should ask my friend about her psychological state between the time we first saw the truck speeding down the hill and its sudden and most dramatic change of course.

When I raised the issue, my companion told me that at one point she simply decided to stop thinking and worrying about the threat posed by the truck. It then occurred to me that because she shifted her attitude from anxiety to one of detachment and unconcern, the truck veered off the road, relieving us of our problem. Or, to put it more succinctly, because she let go of her fear, and settled into a state of inner calm and equality of being, the problem simply disappeared. By “shifting to neutral” -- pun intended -- she attracted a powerful response from life that relieved her of all trepidation, bringing us both back to the state of serenity and relaxed adventure we had enjoyed until that point.

Saving a Precious Life

Remaining calm and equal in the face of life’s difficulties -- whether financial pressure, the defection of a client, or serious illness in the family -- is a powerful way of reversing these situations. Because this is such a striking technique, I would like to share with you one final story: one that is so touching and heartfelt that you can hardly believe it took place. An Indian associate of ours narrates his startling tale.

“We have our business unit in a space that we rent out from another party. One day the owner of our rented space picked an argument with our own manager -- apparently without good reason. As a result of the dispute, the owner threatened to terminate our lease for the space we were renting. As it turned out, I was away during the time these events were transpiring.

Naturally, all of the workers, including my manager, were agitated -- so much so, that they wanted me to take appropriate legal action against the owner of the space. However, I decided not to react to the intensity of the situation, and, instead, decided to remain calm and composed. In fact, I told the workers, as well as the manager to stay calm as well, and to concentrate instead on their work. I myself continued to function in a normal fashion as if nothing had happened.

Several days later, the owner of the rented space unexpectedly came up to me in tears. He said that his two-year-old grandson had a heart problem, and he wanted me to suggest a hospital where the child could be treated. Through my doctor friends, I was able to suggest a hospital in Madras [i.e. Chennai, India]. The child was then taken there.

After examination, the doctors revealed that the child had a hole in his heart, and that he had to be operated on immediately. The operation was going to cost around two lacs of rupees [~5000 US dollars]. Unfortunately, the owner did not have two-pennies to pay for this very expensive operation. However, I then talked to a bank manager and arranged financing from the bank. The loan was secured based solely on my personal guarantee. The bank also took an agreement from the owner that he would not evict my company on any grounds for the next five years. The child was saved.”

The key to this extraordinary episode occurred when our friend decided not to get agitated when the owner threatened to evict his people. It was further advanced when he asked his staff not to react as well. As a result of that calm and equal response, life gave him the opportunity to save the child of the very person who threatened to do him and his company harm. It is a true-life story of untold beauty, emotional intensity, and spiritual-like irony that shows the unimaginable ways life responds to inner silence in the face of difficulty.

Non-Reaction

Before I leave this topic, I wanted to mention one final method of dealing with the daily stresses and strains of life. There are so many instances in the course of our day in which our sensitivities are challenged. These are small moments when something or someone outside us is compelling us to respond in some manner -- often negatively. For example, someone says something that disturbs us; or someone cuts in line in front of us; or someone calls to sell you something you are not interested in. While remaining calm and equal in these situations is the right overall approach, there is an even more fundamental way of dealing with it. It is to simply not react.

One interesting phenomenon I have observed along the way is that every time you react to something in a negative way, a negative response will follow. For example, in *Pride and Prejudice* when Eliza reacts to the fact that Wickham, whom she has a crush on, doesn't arrive at a dance, a number of things start going wrong around her. One is that her sister starts playing the piano in a way that is irritating to many gathered there. Several other negative events present themselves soon after Eliza expresses her irritation. This being the case, then the best approach to life is to not react to things that rub us the wrong way. Simply cut off your feelings and not let the vibrations of that moment disturb you.

If you find yourself on a long line, don't react to it. Catch yourself and use it as an occasion to think about something else, or better still, nothing at all. If your boss comes into your office in anger, listen, but do not react. If your order in a restaurant is taking too long, calm your emotions, moving from reaction to non-reaction. At each point you do so, positive circumstance will take hold; and perhaps more importantly, negative ones will be avoided.

In the course of the day, you will probably experience a dozen or more occasions where you can practice this technique of non-reaction. Doing so will turn every day into a wonder of positive circumstance and joy-filled experience.

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Discovering the Silence Within

In the final analysis, we see how moving to a poise of inner silence -- whether through silent will, soft speech, stilled thoughts, non-reaction, or equality of being -- has the power to attract magnificent life response results. When we practice these inner techniques, we align ourselves with the very best of conditions -- making the impossible possible and the extraordinary real.

In addition, as we take to these Silence-oriented approaches and thereby elicit these marvelous results, we begin to develop an inward orientation. As we look out on the world through this “witness consciousness,” we see life for what it really is, and how it truly functions. As a result, we develop a formidable power to affect it.

Finally, as we reorient our lives this way, we will notice an even greater change taking place. We will see that we have made contact with our deepest parts, our Essence and True Selves. Then we will have embarked on the greatest adventure of all: the journey to the Soul within.

Silence Strategies that Attract the Positive and/or Avoid the Negative.

- Withhold expressing ideas, desires when conversing.
- Avoid forcing yourself on others; be patient & wait.
- Avoid initiating action, letting life come to you.
- Avoid engaging in wasteful conversation.
- Avoid talking loudly; speak in a low, soft voice.
- When a positive occurs, avoid wasting that energy..
- Quiet the mind when over-stimulated or disturbed.
- Avoid vocalizing negative thoughts and feelings.
- Remain calm & equal when serious difficulties arise.
- Practice non-reaction toward others & life’s intensities

ONE STEP FURTHER:

Time's Arrow

One of the interesting discoveries I made in analyzing hundreds of cases of Life Response -- i.e. instances of sudden good fortune -- is that Time works quite differently than our normal conception. For example, let's say that I change my attitude towards someone from hostility to goodwill. When I then open my mailbox, I discover a check for thousands of dollars from a customer who owed me that sum for years. It is simply life responding to my change in consciousness, which put me in alignment with that individual's remittance. It turns out that long ago, I had a similar experience, and when I asked my spiritual teacher Sri Karmayogi if the check would have been mailed days before in the past had I not changed my attitude here in the present, he replied that it would *not* have. This indicated that the present is indeed affecting the past!

Our normal view is that there are three divisions of Time -- past, present, and future. But from the spiritual position, there is only one Time that is undivided. If this is so, then events today may be affecting circumstance in the past, just as events in the future are determining the present. For example, if someone decides *not* to shift his attitude to the positive in the future, it might cause me, who was about to pay, to suddenly *not* pay in the present. Again, it is the future effecting the present, just as the present can affect the past. In fact, any period can affect any other.

Interestingly, it is only when we rise in consciousness beyond Mind proper, to intuition, and higher still to a "Truth Consciousness" that we can discern these true movements of Time. From these planes beyond the ordinary functionings and logic of mind, we can begin to see the arrow of time moving in any and all directions. If this is true, if time has these astonishing qualities, then the very foundation of our belief system must come into question, including views of history and science, not to mention Reality itself.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this vastly expanded view of time is that we have the power to become its Master. Not by travelling in a Time Machine or using other forms of technology as presented in science fiction, but through *shifts in consciousness within*. In fact, science itself has begun to understand the extraordinary ancient Indian principle that Time depends on the consciousness of the observer. For example, most of us have noticed how fast time seems to pass when we have a stimulating conversation. Similarly, science tells us that if one approaches the speed of light, time will slow down or speed up depending on the relative position of the observer. And yet the ancient Indian insight is far more profound, as it suggests that if we elevate our consciousness in a given

moment or circumstance, *any and all limitations of time can be overcome*. If e.g. I change a wanting attitude to the positive, and, as a result, attract an opportunity of a lifetime, then I have drawn a future possibility and made it real in the present. What would have taken years to accomplish has instead occurred in an instant. Or to put it another way, the burden of time has been completely eliminated.

It turns out that this inner power to attract something to us thereby cancelling time has also been verified by recent discoveries of science. Its theory of Non-local Connections indicates that if one particle of an atom moves, it can affect another particle of the *same* atom, even if it is on the other side of the universe. Non-local connection not only overcomes the normally perceived limitations of cause and effect, but allows for instantaneousness between objects no matter the distance. Yet another discovery of science -- proven by the latest mathematical calculations measuring and defining the cosmos -- is that the outcome of any event is dependent on the person observing it! Thus, my observation of an event can affect a different outcome for it than if another person observes it, indicating that consciousness determines reality. This is a startling scientific discovery that confounds every individual who contemplates its meaning.

Sri Aurobindo takes this several steps further and says that we can discover an inner dimension within our being, a soul space, from which we are able to overcome every aspect of time in the outer world. At the point that we touch our evolving soul within, we move into a realm where past, present, and future become one single, undifferentiated point. Thus, when we act from that space, life immediately reacts to our intentions. Moving to this Psychic Being within is a step beyond a change in consciousness, such as a shift in attitude. Rather it is a movement into the *center* of consciousness. There we come in touch with universal and transcendent powers, where gives us access to the greatest time controlling and affecting power in the outer world. From these deepest depths, I am able to change the conditions of life -- past, present and future -- in an instant.

Time's Arrow thus moves in every and all dimensions to the degree we express our consciousness. It reaches its apex and greatest capacity when we discover our evolving Soul within. From there we become masters of the outer life, as any intention originating there is instantly fulfilled.

11. The Ultimate Power of “The Force”

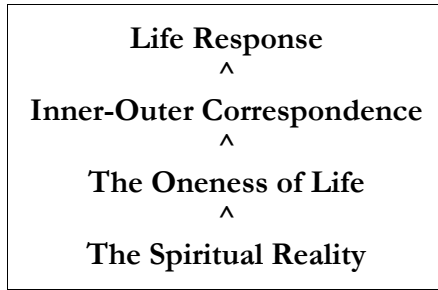
Along the way, I have explained life response from two perspectives: from that of life itself, and from that of the behavior of the individual.

From the standpoint of life, I have offered several principles that explain the phenomenon. The first is that life response occurs because of the fundamental relationship between our consciousness and the world around us. This is captured by the principle of “inner-outer correspondence.” It indicates that what is happening on the outside is a reflection of our inner condition. Therefore, if we change the inner, the outer instantly responds in kind.

Secondly, I have indicated that this powerful relationship between the inner and the outer exists because of a fundamental Oneness underlying all existence. Thus, they are two separate entities as we have come to believe, but in fact share the same continuous stream of existence. In other words, the inner and outer are One.

Finally, I pointed out that the underlying Oneness that binds all objects, elements, and beings in the universe is itself an expression of a fundamental spiritual Reality, which is the basis and source of all things. It is because of the Intelligence and Intention of that Reality that everything seen and unseen in the cosmos is bound up in an essential, integral Oneness.

Thus, the nature of Life Response can be understood in terms of three fundamental principles -- Inner-Outer Correspondence, the Oneness of life, and the spiritual Reality behind. It is through their association and interplay that the phenomenon takes shape. The spiritual Reality is the underlying cause -- being the transcendent source and determining power of all forces and energies in the cosmos. The Oneness of life is in turn an expression of that spiritual Reality, providing the interconnectedness of all things in the seen and unseen universe. And Inner-Outer Correspondence is a reflection of that fundamental Oneness -- indicating the profound relationship between the inner life of the individual and the outer reality. All three in tandem create the dramatic life response events we experience.



In addition to the underlying *metaphysics* of Life Response, I have also presented a number of inner and outer *human behaviors* that evoke these miraculous-like results. I have indicated that in any moment, situation, or circumstance, when we choose the right arrow from our quiver of human behaviors -- whether reversing a negative attitude; accepting the givens of life; taking to higher levels of cleanliness and orderliness; changing from selfishness to self-givingness; and shifting from weakness to psychological strength -- we instantly attract powerful life response results.

You may have also noticed that in the last chapter I began to shift my focus to the *spiritual* dimension of life, and the specific behaviors that reflect this quality. We saw that from a poise of inner silence and being we can hold back thought (Silent Will), restrain ourselves from initiating, reduce the quantity and volume of our speech, and practice equality in the face of difficulty. We have also seen that when we take to any of these in good measure, we quickly evoke powerful response from the world around us.

We can think of these particular spiritual behaviors as “passive” ones. That through a poise of “silent witness,” we look out on the world steadily, calmly, and dispassionately. That through passive behaviors of absence of thought, speech, emotion, and action, we activate the world around us in our favor. By being still within, the world outside us moves in our favor.

And yet we also know that individuals have had a more dynamic and *active* relationship to the spirit. We know that we are capable of enjoining the spiritual dimension through our feelings and emotions: through inner experiences of *presence, force, and power*. Moreover, this tangible, active, and

dynamic spiritual experience not only enriches us, lifts our hearts, and thrills us to no end, but holds an enormous power to affect the world.

But what is that presence and power, and how do we access it? And if we are able to bring it into our lives, how can it be used to alter instantly affect the outer conditions of life? To answer these questions, I would like to share with you one of my favorite personal adventures.

Journey of a Lifetime

Almost a decade ago, my spiritual teacher presented me with a formidable challenge: to grasp the phenomenon of Life Response in all its dimensions. He suggested that I begin that project by documenting 100 examples, drawn from my own experiences, as well as those of friends and colleagues.

At the time, it seemed like a difficult undertaking, but in retrospect, it was actually much easier than I thought -- for soon, I saw that life response was *everywhere!* In addition, I was lucky enough to garner the cooperation of many people who were more than willing to share their own extraordinary experiences.

As it turned out, at that time I was also preparing to take a special trip across the western United States to visit the Mesa Verde native American ruins in southwestern Colorado -- around 1000 miles east of my home in California. It was a particularly special trip because my friend Sue had been there years earlier, where she had a powerful experience; and now, after all of this time, felt compelled to revisit the site.¹¹

As it turned out, I decided to combine these two undertakings -- the gathering of the 100+ life response incidents with the trip across the western US -- into one adventure. With that in mind, we set off on our own "journey of discovery."¹²

We began by heading east from the San Francisco Bay Area, crossed the fertile agricultural heartland of the Central Valley, traversed the mighty 10,000-foot snow-capped Sierra Nevada Mountains, and

¹¹ The "Shifting to Neutral" truck episode of the last chapter occurred on this same trip.

¹² The famous explorations of the western United States by Lewis and Clark 200 years earlier was known as the "Journey of Discovery." Ours was to be both an inner and outer journey.

continued on to the desert-like plains of western Nevada. This was, in essence, the first leg of what would become a ten-day journey.

At one point on the first day, we descended the exceedingly steep down-slope of the eastern Sierras, just beyond the boundaries of California, and stopped for lunch at a fast food restaurant in Carson City, Nevada, the state capital. While Sue was in the restaurant, I sat in the car, which was parked right in front of the entrance. It was at that point that I felt compelled to “consecrate” the remainder of our trip.

And so I focused myself, concentrated inward, and then called out to the “spiritual Force.” I then intensely aspired for a joyful and successful journey, especially for Sue. Then with great intensity I offered the entire matter to the Higher Power. I then released myself of that impassioned effort, relaxed myself, and turned my attention elsewhere. A few minutes later when Sue came out of restaurant, I smiled but did not tell her of the powerful inner experience I just had.

I then started up the car, pulled out of the lot, and continued on our journey eastward. However, rather than take one of the great superhighways that cut across the United States from west to east, I decided to take a different route. It turns out that I had earlier learned of a very special road, once known as “The Lincoln Highway,” but today called Highway 50. A rarely used road nowadays, it is often referred to by its moniker of “The World’s Loneliest Highway.” This particular road intrigued me not only because it was off the beaten path and therefore promised more peace and solitude on our journey, but also because it extended nearly the entire 1000-mile distance to our final destination. As it turned out, the fast food restaurant where we had just stopped was only a quarter mile from the start of this vast, mysterious highway.

Heading east from Carson City, the greenery of California and the soaring Sierra Nevada Mountains faded behind us, giving way to the dry, dusty hills and plains of western Nevada. As we drove through the dreamy, chalk-like landscape, I noticed that the light around us now appeared different. Contrasted with the deep blue skies above, the white light reflecting off the land created an unusual and dramatic effect. As a result, I now felt that I had come to an unfamiliar and mysterious place.

After another hour or so of driving, we noticed an interesting small rise in the hills just outside of the US airbase near the city of Fallon, Nevada. We then pulled off the highway to get a closer look, and realized that it was the site of a small state park that featured the dramatic rock

painting of the ancient native peoples; more familiarly known as “petroglyphs.” We then climbed up the hill and wandered about the dozens of 4 to 10 foot-high boulders on which were carved the mysterious ancient symbols.

At one point as I paused to bask in the perfect weather and gazed at the lovely wide expanse surrounding the park, I felt a deep happiness and joy well up inside me. The experience had somehow stirred something deep within, which culminated in the feeling that I was now living in a kind of a material heaven. Never in my life had I felt such clarity and peace in a natural setting. It was not the stillness that comes from meditation, but the deep, rich feeling that everything -- the landscape, the setting, my state of being -- was *utterly perfect*. It was as if a divine serenity and perfection had settled on this land.

I would later come to understand that the profound ecstatic experience I felt that day originated in the intense act of consecration I engaged in several hours earlier. That deep calling to the Spirit for a joy-filled and successful trip not only paid immediate dividends at the petroglyphs, but would continue to vibrate in the days that followed. Here is a sampling:

- Throughout the 1000-mile journey on the solitary and beautiful Lincoln Highway, I felt enveloped in an atmosphere of utter silence, serenity, and peace.
- The weather was perfect every day of the trip -- with ideal temperatures, and deep blue skies that intoxicated. In this and other ways, life could not have been more cooperative.
- Mountains usually dry and dead were capped with beautiful white snow because of the heaviest rainfall in decades in that region. Their towering beauty was for me the very *symbol* of our journey.
- I had an overwhelming experience at Arches National Park, where at the great stone formation of the “Windows on the World” site, I felt as if I were looking out through the eyes of God.
- I enjoyed an eminently sweet moment of serenity and perfection while pausing to have a picnic in a quiet area of Arches. Again, there was that utter feeling of stillness and material well-being.
- We were practically the only visitors when we arrived at our ultimate destination, Mesa Verde National Park: as if the whole park had been offered to us as a personal gift.

- Our systematic 2-day excursion through Mesa Verde proceeded flawlessly -- as if we were given a private tour of the surroundings.
- My friend miraculously found an ancient symbol etched into a red-rock stone wall: the same one she had discovered years earlier; and which compelled us to make this trip in the first place. It was the culminating moment and fulfillment of her journey -- *precisely* what I had hoped for when I originally called out to the Force.

Perfect weather, utter serenity in the atmosphere, experiences that were mystical and spiritual, unexpected wonders and delights, life cooperating at every turn, and psychological fulfillment are but several ways that life responded to my consecrated effort. By making one small spiritual gesture of great intensity, I was able to turn a long-anticipated trip across the western US into a true Journey of a Lifetime.



A Meeting of the Minds

The traditional definition of *consecrate* is “to make sacred.” For example, in 1863 US President Abraham Lincoln used that term in his famous Gettysburg address, where he spoke of consecrating the hallowed ground where the fallen soldiers of the Civil War lay.

When I mean by consecration is the act of calling to the Higher Power to elevate and uplift the conditions of life. Rather than depending on our own *limited* capacities, consecrating an activity, event, or circumstance brings to bear the *infinite* powers of the spiritual Force that lifts conditions to its highest possibility and potential.

Perhaps the most compelling aspect of consecration is that we can evoke it at *any time* and for *any purpose*. This is in marked contrast to the ways we have related to life response so far, where we were required to take to the right behavior in a given moment to generate the result. As such, consecration can serve as a *single, universal approach* for evoking the miraculous.

The Process

If this is true, if we can elicit life response 24/7 through the power of consecration, then how do we go about engaging in the act? What process or procedure do we follow to evoke these miraculous like

results? Though there are no set rules, I would say there are several recognizable steps.

First, we have to acknowledge that this vast Power exists in the first place. I.e., we need to feel that the Force is real and has this infinite-like capacity to instantly control and improve the conditions of life. We can call this “faith” in the Force, or trust in its Power, or simply a deep conviction that when invoked It will always work on our behalf. Interestingly, if you experience It’s life response power even once, you are likely to be convinced forever.

The second step in the consecration process is to consider what aspect of our lives we want to consecrate -- whether a daily *routine*, such as starting up our computer; an *important activity*, like meeting with a new client; or a *difficult problem*, like the sudden disaffection of a critical customer.

Third, once we identify the activity, issue, or concern, we then go ahead and engage in the act of consecration itself. We do that by “offering up” that matter to the Higher Power; putting it fully in the hands of that spiritual Force. In addition, we should engage in the act with as much intensity as we can muster, which will produce the optimal effect.

Finally, we should have faith that what will come will be for the best; that the Higher Power will work in our very best interest.

If we take this approach, life will surely respond -- often in *overwhelming* fashion.

Let’s take a practical example. Say that you are about to meet with an important new client at that company’s headquarters. As you wait in the lobby for your contact to arrive, you mull over issues likely to be raised. Rather than go over every point in your mind, you decide to use the time to consecrate the upcoming event.

And so first you relax yourself, and then you clear your mind of all thoughts. Then you consider the fact of the meeting itself -- perhaps envisioning the physical environment where you will be, or the person you will interact with, or one or two of the main issues likely to be addressed. It can even be any or all of these. You then open yourself to the Higher Power, and offer the entire matter to the spiritual Force.

You might even put it in the form of a silent prayer, such as “I am about to meet with XYZ for the first time. I would really like to secure the proposed contract. I would also like A, B, and C to happen. I

therefore now offer the entire [or all of these] matter[s] to You.” You can then add, “I have faith in Your power, and I recognize that anything You bring forth will be for the best.” After making that intense offering, you relax yourself and then wait silently for your contact’s arrival.

Later on when you leave the client’s office, you realize that your meeting had gone exceedingly well. One thing that jumps out at you was how well the conversation went; particularly how it moved in several unanticipated and productive directions. For example, one matter that came up was the likelihood that their North American division would purchase your new online software line. It was service you had hoped to offer in the future, but suddenly you had the opportunity to sell it now. This was a most surprising and fortuitous development.

Another surprising aspect was how different the atmosphere and tone of the meeting was. Where communication in the past had been tense and formal, this time it was friendly and relaxed. In fact, each side seemed to understand the other so much better than in previous meetings, engendering a level of trust and camaraderie that was missing before. As a result, a relationship that seemed tepid at best had now turned into one of real camaraderie and mutual respect.

As you walk out into the bright sunshine and sit down to relax at the edge of a small park, you realize that your effort of deep consecration attracted these marvelous results. Now it hits you that you can use this technique for *any* important matter in your life; and if you did, you would be lifted to the pinnacles of success, while experiencing an existence of never-ending wonder and delight.

As these powerful and profound thoughts wash over you, you feel a shiver and tingling inside. As you look out on the greenery of the park before you, you realize that a vast, infinite-like power is at your disposal - - one that you can employ at any time and for any purpose to evoke the miraculous.

Ultimate, Miraculous-Like Results

From the above examples, we see that when we consecrate an important activity or event, we evoke magnificent life response results. And yet there seems to be something different about the action of the Force compared to other life response powers such as shifting away from a wanting attitude or embracing the current conditions of life. Though the human and spiritual powers both evoke miraculous-like results, there

is something special about the workings of the spiritual Force. But what is it? What makes the action of the Higher Power unique? From my experience, several qualities that stand out:

- *Life's conditions are brought under control*

Normally, we utilize our energy, talents, skills, knowledge, and other qualities to make our way through life. Though we have a certain degree of influence, ultimately we cannot control the unpredictable elements -- i.e. the exigencies and vicissitudes of life. For example, let's say that when I arrive at the client's office for a crucial meeting, the fire alarm goes off, forcing us to abandon the building. That has the effect of suddenly and most disappointingly bringing the meeting to a close. In this case, I did not have the power to prevent this troublesome situation from arising in the first place. It was simply beyond my control. And yet if I had opened to the spiritual Force before the appointment, I could have avoided this distraction and thereby kept the meeting going. In other words, through the action of the higher Power *life's conditions are brought under control*.

Here is another example.

One day several years ago, I was conducting a training class -- one that was typical of dozens, if not hundreds I had done in the past. However, unlike my other courses, the morning session of this class had gone just horribly. Just about every imaginable problem cropped up: People were late; I consistently stumbled in my presentation; the students were argumentative; I became defensive; and so forth. It was, to put it mildly, the worst possible scenario for an instructor.

Because the class had gone so poorly that morning, I was not exactly looking forward to the afternoon session. Fortunately, however, I was able to catch myself and control my anxiety. I then made the inner, psychological effort to reverse the situation. And so I relaxed myself, focused my concentration inward, and then "offered" the remainder of the class to the spiritual Force. I said something like this: "I don't know what to do at this point, but I know that if I put the situation in your hands, things will go right. It *has* to!" I then returned to the class for the afternoon session, and carried out my instructional duties as usual.

Within a half hour or so, I discerned a considerable change in the tone of the class. One thing I noticed was that *all* of the students arrived on time after their lunch break -- an unusual occurrence based on previous experience. Second, I noticed how smoothly and effortlessly

each of the lessons unfolded for me, as each section of my presentation dovetailed perfectly with the next, creating a lovely, harmonious rhythm. Third, I noticed that not only were the students now quiet and subdued, but they were entirely focused on learning -- a complete turnaround from the morning session. In fact, when I attempted to engage them in conversation, they were not only responsive, but friendly and warm. That in turn compelled me to express my own appreciation for their participation and contributions, which added to the positive dynamic. Finally, I noticed how free the session was from outside disturbance; allowing the class to run smoothly and without interruption.

In all my years of instruction, I had never seen such a turnaround. It was almost as if I had stepped out of training purgatory and entered instructional heaven. And I was able to bring about this stunning transition by opening to the spiritual Force. Through an act of intense consecration, I turned an exceedingly disturbed and troubling situation into one of serenity, harmony, and focused energy. By opening to the Higher Power, I was able to bring life completely under control.

- *The response is utterly fresh, dynamic, and creative*

Another hallmark of consecration is that what comes to us in response is *utterly fresh and new*. For example, several years ago, a friend of mine went to a medical facility to have an x-ray taken. When the results came back, it indicated a possible growth in her chest. The doctor then asked her to come in for a follow-up session. My friend -- who had faith in the power of the Force -- decided to "offer up" the return visit to the Higher Power before the meeting. When the doctor examined her again, he realized that the previous diagnosis was faulty since the x-ray had been taken in the wrong area, which meant that the spot detected posed no threat at all!

As we see, when we consecrate an activity, we not only experience good or great fortune, but the thing that comes has a creative, dynamic, and wholly unexpected quality. This unique and unprecedented nature of the response is a hallmark of the Higher Power. For example, recall the time I consecrated my "Journey of a Lifetime" trip across the western United States. As a result of that gesture, we were greeted by miles of snow-capped mountains and lovely fields of flowers, when we expected parched land and desert-like conditions. It was as if a cosmic artist had suddenly repainted this scene for our benefit. It was not merely the

fulfillment of our aspirations, but the unfolding of *new* dreams and possibilities never imagined. It would continue to be that way throughout the entire course of our trip.

To give you the full scope of the fresh, dynamic, and creative power of the spiritual Force, here is an array of outcomes that friends, associates and I myself have experienced over the years.

Life Response Outcomes Generated by Opening to the Force	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the seriously ill return to health -those at the bottom rise to the top -items lost are suddenly found -families near ruin experience a windfall -groups coming to blows, suddenly relent -decades long feud are diffused -those who are poor come into wealth -tornadoes destroy all homes but theirs -pilots shot down float safely to earth -nations about to attack are mollified -the many-years sick become well -the unattractive become good-looking -a court case hopelessly lost is reversed -oppressive bosses become compassionate - emergencies turn out to be nothing -those ready to die find reason to live -babies with defective hearts are healed -criminals on the loose are apprehended -families in discord find harmony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -years-long enemies become friends -the forlorn find reason to live -the unloved find love -heavy rain replaces drought -solutions arise for intractable problems -resources appear in times of scarcity -individuals are saved from embarrassment -electrical power suddenly comes on -an entire life's work presents itself -lost individuals find their destination -small sales turn into huge ones -lost wallets and purses show up -long empty stocks of inventory are filled -difficult medical operation go smoothly -people near death come back to full health -difficult to sell properties are purchased -bitter rejections turn into acceptances -disagreements turn into agreements -obstacles of every manner & type disappear

- *There are spiritual results too*

In addition to *practical* life response results -- such as improved health, lost or stolen items suddenly found, weather suddenly clearing on a wedding date, negative work conditions abruptly turning positive -- opening to the Force can generate *spiritual* outcomes as well. For example, after I consecrated the remainder of the training session in the incident above, a palpable peace and silence could be felt in that room throughout the remainder of the day. Likewise, after I consecrated the 'Journey of a Lifetime' road trip, I felt a sense of utter physical perfection and well-being at the petroglyphs site, and experienced a general state of serenity and joy throughout the remainder of the journey.

These and other incidents suggest that opening to the Force can evoke powerful spiritual results, including-

- a feeling of serenity and calm
- a feeling of richness and fullness
- a sense of utter well-being
- a buoyant, uplifting energy permeating the atmosphere
- a sense of harmony and oneness with the environment
- a feeling of deep connection and bond with others
- a perception that all and everything is utterly perfect
- a deep and abiding joy and delight of being
- a deep faith that all will work out well
- a sense that any and all things are possible

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A Visit Sublime

If opening to the spiritual Force can bring about these magnificent results, one wonders what aspects of our lives we can consecrate. The simple answer is that we can consecrate *any* act we engage in -- no matter what its size or significance. We can call in the Force before engaging in a relatively insignificant activity, such as brushing our teeth or answering the phone; or for the most important occasions, such as a critical meeting with a client, or the key interview for college admittance.

In one sense, the easiest acts to consecrate are those that are most important. Since we obviously want these situations to turn out well, our natural inclination would be to ask for help from the Higher Power on these occasions. On the other hand, it can actually take *more* energy, discipline, and focus to consecrate less important activities, such as a weekly sales meeting, or a routine discussion with an employee. It is most difficult of all to consecrate the very smallest of acts -- such as getting dressed in the morning, or starting up our car, or heating up food in the microwave -- since we are too distracted and caught up in life to make that effort.

I would therefore suggest that you start by consecrating one or two relatively important matters, such as a significant upcoming event, and see what happens. If you evoke a response on those occasions, not only will you be thrilled and energized to no end, not only will you gain the benefit and windfall of the response, but you will be far more inclined to practice consecration again in the future.

Over the years, I have had any number of consecration successes at this “macro” level of the major event -- though in recent years I have begun to see significant results at the “micro” level of the small act as well. In one sense, the macro and the micro are no different from one another because you can evoke the miraculous from either. Just as enormous energy can come from a tiny atom, so too vast response can arise out of consecrating the smallest routine in our lives. This is the case because universe does not distinguish between the large and the small -- as it can elicit the infinite from either.

One major event area where I have had some of my most memorable life response experiences have been on social occasions. For example, here is a striking incident involving a get together with several members of my family:

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Every so often, my uncle, who resided on the East Coast of the US, would come to visit me on the West Coast in California where I live. He would usually contact me several days before his arrival, and when he did, I would invariably react with mixed feelings. On the one hand, I was eager to see him, and yet on the other, I was less than keen in having our inevitable contentious discussions on politics and world affairs. However, when my uncle travels with his *wife*, as was the case in this instance, there were fewer opportunities to indulge ourselves!

And so when my uncle announced his arrival this time, I decided to shake things up a bit and try a fresh approach. Rather than plan out the scenic places we would visit, or the provocative topics we would discuss, I chose instead to consecrate the entire get-together. Therefore, just before the two of them appeared, I offered the entire matter to the Higher Power, with the aspiration for a harmonious and enjoyable meeting.

Shortly after my uncle arrived with his wife, I noticed something unusual taking place: that everything was going right; that all was flowing perfectly. For example, though I made a reservation at a local Japanese restaurant I had never been to before, to my utter delight, I found the place quite lovely. Then when we were escorted to the sushi bar, we were the *only* party seated, which meant that in essence we had our own private chef. Not only did he turn out to be a master of his trade -- in the way he chopped, prepared, and placed the food, bordering on the poetic -- but

we were able to engage him in pleasant conversation, adding to the exotic feel of our sumptuous meal. Even my aunt and uncle -- who were world travellers and gourmets, sampling the finest cuisines of Asia -- were impressed by the service and the quality of the food.

The entire experience -- including the restaurant's lovely setting, the beauty of the facilities, the command performance of our own personal chef, and the delicious food -- could not have been more pleasing. Just like the experience at the petroglyphs on my 'Journey of a Lifetime' trip, I had that same sense of material perfection, and that same ineffable feeling of serenity and well-being.

Well, when we finally departed the restaurant and came out into the bright sunshine, we commented on how perfect the weather was: clear blue skies with temperatures in the 70s and a wonderful freshness in the air. Then, as we gazed at the lovely wooded hillside across the way, we expressed our admiration for the beautiful setting. Again, there was that sense of stillness, harmony and well-being.

In this happiest and most content of moods, we then got into our car, and drove a half mile to a beautiful lake nestled in the steep hills at the far end of town. There we took a short walk along the water's edge, and engaged in lively conversation, some of which bordered on the profound. This liting and yet powerful dialogue was a most unexpected development -- something I had never experienced with either of them in the past.

As we sauntered along the shoreline, not only did I continue to feel that inner richness, but things on the outside started taking on a magical quality as well. In other words, a series of life response events began to unfold. Not only were these incidents delightful to me, but they also garnered the attention of my aunt and uncle! I found that utterly amazing because these two distinguished scientists were not normally inclined toward such matters. In fact, in one instance, the life response that came was the result of having a short conversation on the topic of "life response" itself! Let me explain.

After we departed from the lake, the dialogue turned to the subject of 'luck.' My uncle said that luck was a *random* phenomenon -- which is, of course, our normal way of looking at things. However, I said that we can actually *create* luck -- which, on the surface, seems like a contradiction, for how can you create that which appears fortuitous and random?

A moment later, my aunt cut short our Socratic debate and expressed her desire to get some ice cream. And so we piled into our car, and headed down from the lake into town. Unfortunately, I wasn't aware of any ice cream shops in the vicinity, which led me to think that we would have to drive several miles to the next town to satisfy my aunt's craving. To be honest, the thought of shifting from our current leisurely pace and driving off somewhere did not exactly thrill me. However, when I became conscious of what I was thinking, I caught my recalcitrance, and shifted to a position of doing whatever was necessary to please my aunt. And wouldn't you know it, at the very *instant* I had that thought, an ice cream shop appeared in front of us!

Well this sudden appearance of the parlour startled my aunt as well -- when you consider that it occurred at *precisely* the moment my uncle and I concluded our conversation on the subject of luck! Then something equally astonishing took place. When we looked for a place to park, all of the spaces in the area were taken except for one: the one directly in front of the ice cream store!

At that point, I could not help myself from exclaiming, "See, we *can* create luck!" To that, my aunt heartily laughed aloud, and I believe I also detected a hint of a smile on my uncle's face. It was a culminating moment in a series of remarkable incidents that originated hours earlier when I consecrated the entire affair.

Response from Consecrating Life Activities

- The conditions of life are brought under control
- Everything works out just right (and then some)
- Life is free of interruptions and disturbances
- Life unfolds smoothly and effortlessly
- Perfections shows itself everywhere
- New, creative possibilities reveal themselves
- The seeming impossible is made possible.
- Magical-like events take place
- There is a feeling of serenity and well-being
- There is a joy-filled and delightful atmosphere

The Wild West

So far, we have seen that we can consecrate any of the *activities* of our lives -- whether critical, routine, or somewhere in between. It turns out that we can also use the spiritual Power to overcome the *problems* we are having in life -- whether *current*, such as a shortage of funds or a problem with a superior; or *long-term*, such as a long-overdue bill or a long-standing feud with a friend. When we intensely offer these troubling issues to the Higher Power, they tend to quickly dissipate. For example, recall the incident where I consecrated the remainder of my training class after that horrid morning session. After making that intense inner effort, everything went perfectly, even sublimely during the afternoon session.

Let me give you another example of the problem-cancelling power of the spiritual Force, this one involving a business situation.

A number of years ago, my company GuruSoftware was contracted to do some consulting work for a client in Fresno, California -- a fast-growing city in the heart of the agricultural region of the state. This particular firm was in the construction business; focused on developing government-sponsored housing for low-income families. My assignment was to conduct a 2-day seminar with the firm's supervisors on the best way to implement a new project planning system for the organization.

When I began my first day presentation, I was stunned when the discussion immediately turned contentious. While several members saw great benefit in the idea of implementing a project management system, others doubted it would do any good. Those in the latter group were skeptical for several reasons. First, they felt that the staff was already overburdened with work, and were therefore reluctant to take on additional tasks. Second, it was clear from their reactions that they felt threatened by the change.

And yet as a proponent of the system, it was my duty to explain to everyone -- including the naysayers -- that implementing the system would not only *reduce* their workload, but would make everyone more productive, which would translate as a happier, more stimulated, and higher paid staff. However, just as I was about to express that position, the conversation took *another* turn for the worse. In fact, at one point the debate became so heated that I thought several members were going to come to blows! In that environment, I was certainly not eager to express an opinion that favored one side over the other. With a rancorous

dispute accelerating, I decided to withdraw my presentation for the time being, and simply watch from the sidelines.

Several minutes later when the conversation reached its acrimonious peak, a high-level manager in attendance interrupted the proceedings and demanded a cooling off period. In fact, I later discovered that it was his task to be the designated “sheriff” whenever this particular group gets together! Now I felt as if I were in an old American cowboy movie, where the rancorous farmers and ranchers were not only airing grievances and pointing fingers, but were on the verge of fisticuffs and worse! Considering that the ancestry of a number of the participants was from that very same western rural stock, I might not have been far off the mark!

As I looked around at the half-crazed gathering, it became abundantly clear that though I came to present a fresh approach to systematize the company’s operations, there were still too many fissures needed filling. And so for the remainder of the session I decided to remain quiet, keep my distance, and let events take their own course.

I must say that when I left at the end of that raucous session, I felt pretty disappointed; not only because I was unable to present the materials I had worked hard to prepare, but because it now seemed likely that the remainder of the presentation would be cancelled.

Though I lay there in the dark that evening in my hotel room racking my brains for a solution, nothing came to mind. However, after an intense hour of tossing and turning, I suddenly came up with an idea. I then rolled over, turned on the light, and felt compelled to take action. Not an *outer* action, mind you, but an *inner* one, for at this point I decided to *consecrate* the entire affair.

I then centered myself and focused my concentration inward. I then narrated the details of my dilemma to the Higher Power, and ardently offered it up -- hoping above hope that the conundrum would be resolved. I also quietly reminded myself that I should accept in full whatever the Spirit brought my way.

After the inner drama of that moment, I had a moment of clarity that there would be a positive resolution to the situation. And so with a hopeful attitude and a lighter view of things, I drifted off into what seemed like a dreamless sleep.

When I arrived the next morning for the second day of my assignment, I noticed that many of the same people were in the room.

Still feeling a bit shaky from the previous day, and not knowing what to expect today, I nervously fumbled about in preparation for my opening statement. Fortunately, I reminded myself to stay calm, as well as to keep an open mind. In fact, just to make sure that the day turned out well, I again focused myself and then consecrated the remainder of the day's proceedings. I then slowly turned to face my audience, and began the next section of my prepared remarks.

After an hour or so, I sensed that things were now very different in that room: that the atmosphere was now calm and subdued, and that my presentation was moving along quite nicely. As I gazed around the conference table, I saw no hint of tension or strain, no indications of rancor or strife. Rather, the place seemed suffused with calm. I even felt a palpable peace that bordered on serenity. It was an astonishing reversal from the previous day's situation: a mirror image of the earlier conflict, reflecting now as harmony and peace. And it all came about because the previous evening and earlier that morning I offered the entire matter to the spiritual Force.



Though this was a precious moment for me, I know many individuals who have had the same or similar experiences: who when confronted by a looming crisis or imminent disaster, offered the matter to the Higher Power, causing it to be resolved completely. For example, one person I know of lost his wallet on the roadway, only to see it miraculously reappear immediately thereafter. Another person lost his entire life savings when he was falsely accused in a legal case, only to have it all come back to him and more. A third person was about to be embarrassed throughout the community by a television report, only to have it cancelled at the last minute. A fourth individual was rushed to the hospital for what seemed like a seizure, only to find out it was nothing. Similarly, others have overcome dire financial situations, imminent business collapse, extreme labor disputes, and countless other difficulties. In each case, that individual opened to the Higher Power and thereby extricated themselves from a serious or grave problem, suggesting that spiritual Grace was at work.

Getting Down to Work

In addition to consecrating *current* problems, we can also consecrate difficulties that have their roots *in the past*, and are still influencing our lives today. When we clearly identify the source of the problem and offer it to the Spirit, that long-pressing negative impact will dissipate and powerful positive conditions will take their place. Here is an example:

Several years ago, my company submitted a bid to provide software consulting services to a US Fortune 500 industrial firm, which was in the business of building air-pollution control devices for large road vehicles such as trucks and tractors. Unfortunately, at the time, we were unable to secure this lucrative contract. That was due to the fact that the company (a) had not budgeted the necessary funding for the project; and (b) seemed confused about whether they wanted to commit to it in the first place. As a result, not only was our ability to garner the deal in question, but the forces affecting the decision were completely out of our hands.

However, much to my surprise, several months later the client contacted us again and asked us to resubmit a bid for the very same work. Because the opportunity was substantial, I personally drove several hundred miles to the California Central Valley town of Modesto to meet with my contact at their West Coast division headquarters.

Remembering the troubled history of the bid, I decided to consecrate the upcoming meeting while sitting in my car in the company's parking lot. In fact, this time, rather than perform my usual consecration before a major event, I decided instead to intensely consecrate the *past problems* associated with the project; including the specifics that prevented us from securing the contract the first time around. When I then got out of my car, entered the building, and met with the contact, he *immediately* offered me the contract sight unseen without further discussion! Though I was somewhat shocked by the development, I was somehow not surprised, as I had seen the power of the Force at work too many times in the past.

However, the story did not end there. To begin with, because the client was so eager to get the project under way, he asked me to start working on it immediately, at his office! I didn't remember that ever happening before. And so a few minutes later, I was led into another area, given a computer, and began developing a first draft of the application right on the spot. As I got the project underway in this most unexpected venue, I had to smile as I was reminded once again of the *creative and dynamic* power of the spiritual Force.

There was one other significant development. As I began to do the work, I was struck by how smoothly and effortlessly it all unfolded; as if there were a guiding hand directing me each step of the way. As a result, what normally would have taken *days* to complete, I accomplished in mere *hours*. In addition, I once again felt that inner richness, that palpable peace and well-being suffusing the atmosphere.

The episode suggests that if you consecrate a past problem still impacting your life today, that long-term influence will quickly dissipate. This is the case because the causal power of the Force knows no limitations of time, -- past, present, or future -- as it simultaneously abridges all three. Thus, it can overcome the limitations of the past on the present, even as it attracts the infinite abundance of the future into the here and now.

If consecration has this limitless, infinite-like power, then you might consider how to use it to overcome a long-term problem in your own life. Doing so will not only cancel that past negative influence, but will also attract startling, dynamic, and creative positive conditions as well. For example, I know of one individual who realized that he had made a mistake in not paying back an old debt. He sensed that somehow that transgression was still influencing his level of success and well-being today. After coming to terms with his past neglect, he consecrated the matter and then called the creditor to pay off the long-standing arrear. Soon after, he was informed of an opportunity that could dramatically improve his living condition. He quickly took up that offer, which brought about a vast improvement in his lifestyle that has lasted until this day. That is the power of consecrating a past negative influence, while simultaneously doing everything one can to rectify the situation.

An Unexpected Opportunity

In addition to freeing ourselves of short and long-term problems, consecration can also help us quickly fulfill our *deepest aspirations* in life. For example, if you want to elevate your career, you can begin by focusing on the thing you want to achieve, and then intensely offering it to the Higher Power. In the days and weeks ahead, you are likely to

experience powerful response that will quickly move your aspiration towards fulfillment.

You can take this spiritual approach for any goal you want to achieve -- whether it is to rise in your profession, improve your child's education, bring greater harmony and goodwill amongst family members, or to find the love of your life. If you have a deep and abiding aspiration for it to come about, and ardently offer it to the Spirit, life will quickly move on your behalf. Here is a charming incident involving a student friend of ours from India that illustrates this method.

“Over the years, I have seen the Divine Grace working wonders in my life, but never as explicitly and unexpectedly as happened recently to me.

I am in my final year as a student of Architecture. The other day I was communing with the Divine Spirit about my future plans -- in particular, how uncertainty seems to be clouding the outlook for my immediate professional career. I was feeling confused about what life had in store for me. And so I prayed and asked the Higher Power to show me some sign; a glimmer that would lighten my heart and give me a clearer perspective of my future direction.

The next day, as I was doing my work -- which in my case was printing certain drawings for a project I had recently undertaken -- something surprising and delightful happened. A French architect, who had come to the same place to print his drawings, chanced to see my work. He then inquired about my studies, the college I was attending, and my future plans for my professional practice. He then began to describe the kind of work he was doing, the nature of his current projects, and his general views about the profession.

Then, he spoke about his latest plan, which was to start his own branch office. Then, lo and behold, he asked me if I would be interested in joining him after I finished college! He even gave me his card and promised he would call to set up an appointment in order to discuss the matter further. Even more unbelievable was the choice of location he had established for this work -- *Bangalore*. I had always wanted to work there, which I had not even thought of mentioning to the Divine! This really shook me. And so I immediately thanked the Supreme for its invincible power, and noted how it had strengthened my faith.”

In this wonderful little episode, we see a number of consecration-related issues at play. First, we see that the student intensely *aspired* to improve her condition -- as she deeply longed for clarity and direction in her professional career. That sort of focused intention is an excellent adjunct to any effort at consecration, as it establishes the solid build-up of positive energy through which the Force can act. Second, our friend had great *faith* in the power of the Force, since she had been its beneficiary in the past. Again, her own spiritual confidence generated additional energy for successful consecration and prayer. Third, we see that after her consecration effort, life brought forth *practical* life response results -- in the form of another individual who suddenly appeared on the scene and offered her a striking career opportunity. Fourth, we see the response was wonderfully *creative*, in that it gave her the opportunity to work in the very city she dreamed of. (She even recognized that the Higher Power, in its infinite, creative Wisdom, drew out her own secret, subconscious aspiration.) Finally, we see *spiritual* results, as she expressed sincere and heartfelt *gratitude* for the sudden, unexpected opportunity that came her way. That in turn reinforced her deep, abiding faith in the Divine Spirit.

In the end, this incident reminds us that not only are activities and problems excellent candidates for consecration, but so are our deepest aspirations in life. In fact, when we combine a focused intention to accomplish something with the power of the spiritual Force, we create an irresistible power that cannot help but attract the infinite potentials of life.

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The New Boss

Though consecration attracts sudden good fortune for individuals who take to it, there are instances where opening to the Force will *not* produce any noticeable results. Though this might be disquieting after all that I have said about consecration's vast, infinite-like power, there are practical reasons why this is the case.

One reason consecrated efforts fail to produce results is that a certain level of focus and intensity was missing when the act was performed. For example, you may find that when you opened yourself to the Force, you did so matter-of-factly, without any life in the act. On the other hand, if

we bring clarity, focus, and intensity to that effort, then the Higher Power is far more likely to spring into action on your behalf.

Another reason consecrated efforts fail to evoke response is that our own negative qualities get in the way, thereby blocking the action of the Force. If we offer a matter to the Higher Power, but we bring to it certain negative attitudes or wanting beliefs, then the Force will remain in stasis. However, if we identify that limiting quality and then make a sincere effort to overcome it, the Force immediately bursts into action, and produces its magical-like effect. To illustrate this point, consider this experience of an American friend of ours.

“About a year ago, my situation at work was so intolerable that I started looking for another position within the company. The first thing I did was apply for a medical secretary job that had opened up in the organization. When I returned to work from a short leave of absence, I went ahead and interviewed for that position. I then waited for several days to hear from our Human Resources manager; but after about a week or so, I found out that the job had already been filled. In fact, I found out that they had already hired someone by the time they got to my interview!

During this period, I found myself in a stressful situation with my boss -- which was actually the main reason for wanting to switch jobs. At that point, I was feeling quite desperate. Soon another position opened up, and I applied for that one as well. I then had a long interview with the two people to whom I would be reporting. I felt that it was a good meeting, and perhaps something would come of it. I waited a couple of weeks, contacted Human Resources again, but found out that they still had not finished the interviewing process.

Meanwhile, my situation at work hadn't gotten any better -- i.e. my boss was still riding me and giving me a hard time. As a result of these pressures, that day I decided to “consecrate” the entire situation. Before starting work in the morning, I sat at my desk, closed my eyes, and opened to the Higher Power. I then took a deep breath, and started the day's work. I then decided to do this *every day* until I heard something about the position I applied for.

Now, it was the middle of December, and I still hadn't heard anything. Since there was no response, I realized that it was no longer worth fretting about the position. In addition, I made the decision that I would no longer let my boss bother me. That seemed important.

With this new attitude and perspective, I simply went on with my day-to-day work.

A week or so later, my boss called a meeting of our department -- an almost unheard of event. He then proceeded to tell us that he had given notice, and would be leaving the company by the first of the New Year! Everyone in the department was shocked by this development: that is, everyone but me. I realized what had happened. I knew then that my daily consecration, my willingness to accept my current position, and especially my decision to stop letting my boss's abusive behavior bother me, brought about this result.

Now I have a new boss, who respects everyone in the department, and gives credit where credit is due. She has taken on a department that was falling apart and not respected within the company, and changed it to the point where everything now runs smoothly; and where the rest of the company acknowledges the important work we do."

As we see, as soon as we discover and then overcome a corresponding wanting quality in our being, a previously consecrated effort that produced no results suddenly springs into action and bears fruit. In this case, our friend initially consecrated the difficulty and pressure of her work situation, but received no obvious response. However, as soon as she decided not to fret over the situation and let her boss's behavior bother her, she quickly learned of his imminent departure. That in effect relieved her of the overall pressure she felt in work -- including the need to find a new job -- which is precisely what she consecrated earlier on. When we give up our corresponding wanting attitudes related to a consecrated effort, the Force immediately leaps into action and fulfills that which we hoped for in the first place.

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Is it Possible?

Throughout this journey, we have reviewed dozens of life response incidents where sudden good fortune descended on an individual. And yet if we examine these situations more closely, we will see that several of the responses actually affected a wider *collective* of people as well. For example, when Erin Brockovich made that exhaustive physical effort that attracted the person with the critical evidence that won the \$300 million

settlement, it not only brought Erin a financial windfall, but it brought vast results for her entire constituency as well.

Likewise, when Dee Hock rummaged through cans of garbage in pursuit of a deposit slip, he not only attracted a challenging job that enabled him to develop a radical new credit card system (VISA) that brought him personal wealth and notoriety, but it also created huge benefit for *hundreds of millions of people* around the world.

And of course when Eliza Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* fully acknowledged the vulgar behavior of her family to Mr. Darcy and expressed her heartfelt gratitude for his action in ending the elopement, she not only attracted great personal happiness through their marriage, but it also brought great wealth and social prestige for her family. It even affected the wider community because now the interests and resources of the upper class aristocracy had merged with that of the gentleman farmer middle class.

Erin Brockovich, Dee Hock, and Eliza Bennet were each able to make a singular adjustment in consciousness that not only attracted sudden good fortune for themselves, but for the wider collectives they were part of. This suggests that we too are capable of attracting enormous benefit for others when we take to the right inner and outer life response-inducing behaviors.

Well, if we can evoke response for the collective through shifts in human behavior, we should be able to do the same by utilizing the spiritual Force. In other words, we ought to be able to look out on the world, examine the current condition of any collective of individuals -- whether our family, the company we work for, our community, or nation -- open ourselves to the Higher Power, and quickly elicit good fortune for them as well.

But is this really possible? Can we really have this mass impact on people through acts of consecration? My own experience indicates that we *can*; and to prove it, I would like to share with you one of most startling episodes of my life.

Powering Up California

In the spring of 2001, Northern California was experiencing unprecedented electrical outages on a daily basis. These “rolling brownouts,” in which the electrical current wavered causing appliances to lose power for brief intervals, were a rare phenomenon in this

prosperous and resource-rich state. However, during this period, outages were becoming increasingly common -- disturbing people's daily routines and threatening the very lifeblood of the community.

To give you an idea of how severe the problem had become, consider the situation in Silicon Valley, located in the southern end of San Francisco Bay in Northern California. At the time, SV was growing like wildfire, and any interruptions in electricity -- even for an *instant* -- not only could disrupt the operations of local companies, but the global Internet itself, including the thousands of companies and millions of individuals dependent on it.

To make matters worse, there was genuine concern that we were actually at the beginning of an even more-serious crisis in which the electrical grid of the entire western United States -- perhaps even the entire US -- could be at risk.

During those anxious times, I like many others in the community showed a keen interest in the rapidly deteriorating situation. However, when brownouts started occurring in my own area, that concern only intensified. As a result, I decided to get involved to see if I could somehow affect the situation.

The first thing I did was educate myself on the history of the energy infrastructure of California, including the key issues and decisions that led to the current crisis. As I continued to investigate the background of the emergency, the situation continued to deteriorate -- so much so that it seemed like every politician, pundit, business leader, and electric utility official were expressing opinions and pointing fingers. Despite the public outcry, acrimony, and posturing amongst critics, I was determined to remain neutral -- hoping to discover on my own the true cause of the current emergency. As a seeker of the truth, I felt compelled to look at the matter without prejudice, from as many sides as possible.

Meanwhile, not only were there new predictions of increased brownouts, but there were warnings of *blackouts* as well -- i.e. where the electrical grid simply shuts down for an unspecified period. Several officials were now cautioning the community that we were merely at the *beginning* of this crisis, and that brownouts and blackouts would be with us for weeks, months, even years to come. With the situation now threatening to spiral out of control, with nearly every aspect of daily life at risk, I, like others, desperately wondered what could be done to ameliorate the situation.

One day, as the crisis reached its peak and impending shortages threatened to bring down the entire grid, I decided to take the matter into my own hands. Right then and there I decided to take action -- i.e. *inner* action -- to bring the menacing situation to an end. And so I gathered myself, concentrated, and focused my mind exclusively on the energy crisis looming over California. Then with great intensity and feeling, I called to the spiritual Force and asked that this ominous situation come to an end. I then offered up the entire matter to the Higher Power. After several moments of passion that bordered on pathos, I relaxed and focused my attention elsewhere.

As history records it, several days later, the public was informed that the energy crisis looming over Northern California had suddenly and most unexpectedly come to an end. Apparently, there was now enough electricity in the grid to avoid both brownouts and blackouts, at least in the near future. In reality, it turned out to be more than a temporary halt to the crisis, but a permanent one, because ever since that time, there has not been a single major energy-related incident in California. Miraculously, a once-accelerating crisis of potentially epic proportions had suddenly and most unexpectedly been resolved.

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This episode suggests that any person can overcome a problem affecting a wider group of individuals by opening themselves to the spiritual Force. Whether it involves our family, the company we work for, our local community, or our nation, if we offer the matter to the Higher Power, sudden good fortune will descend on that collective. Negative conditions will be eradicated, and unforeseen positive will appear out of nowhere.

Though this was a powerful episode in my life, I am of course not the only person to have had this experience. Others I have known have evoked similar outcomes for collectives they were part of, including –

- the evocation of rain when water was in short supply (regional)
- the return of electricity after it had been completely shut down (local)
- the deflection of potentially dangerous snow storms that were on the way (state, nation)

- the attraction of a major household appliance for every person in a living complex (local)
- the prevention of two hostile groups from coming to blows (community)
- the effect on the outcomes of a war (international)
- the bringing of disaffected family members to a state of harmony (family)
- the evocation of huge spikes in revenues when sales were non-existent (business)

In each case, a single individual was able to affect local, regional, national, or global conditions through a personal act of consecration. Though it sounds incredible, each of us can evoke similar response in our own lives by offering related matters to the Higher Power.

Let me add one final point. When we take a comprehensive approach to affecting the mass, we produce the greatest results. That is, if we have a deep, abiding interest in the subject, a studied knowledge of the details, and an intense aspiration for a positive outcome, then our consecrated effort produces the greatest results. In the incident I have just described, all of these factors were contained in that effort.

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Conclusion

We have now discovered the one dynamic and active way to evoke the miraculous. By opening ourselves to the spiritual Force, every activity is ennobled, every aspiration is achieved, and every problem is overcome.

By opening to the Higher Power, life comes under our control -- as negative situations evaporate and positive conditions arise out of nowhere.

By taking to the act of consecration, unprecedented, dynamic, and creative outcomes manifest, and spiritual like experiences become the norm.

Perhaps the most compelling aspect of consecration is this: if you have the life response experience of the Spirit but one time, your life will change forever.

WHAT WE CAN CONSECRATE

ACTS/ACTIVITIES

- Minor or Major
- Individual or Collective

ASPIRATIONS/INTENTIONS

- Short or Longer Term
- Individual or Collective

SITUATIONS/PROBLEMS

- Small or Large
- Mild or Acute
- Past or Present
- Yours or Others
- Individual or Collective

RESULTS OF CONSECRATION

- Life comes under our control
- Negative conditions evaporate
- Positive situations arise
- Unprecedented, creative outcomes
- Spiritual-like experiences

KEYS TO CONSECRATION

- Clear focus of what we are offering
- Intensity in the act
- No insistence on a particular outcome
- Faith that results will come
- Accepting the results in full
- Gratitude for what does come

12. Envisioning and Creating Our Future

In virtually every life response we have covered so far, one or more of four essential human behaviors came into play -- whether an *aspiration* desired for, a *decision* made, an *action* taken, or a right *attitude* employed.

For example, when Erin Brockovich attracted the biggest victims' rights settlement in history, she engaged in *all four* behaviors. She knew what she wanted to achieve (aspiration), she made a commitment to make it happen (decision), she made the persevering effort to bring it about (action), and she did so through positive feelings and emotions (attitude). As a result, life responded beyond belief; bringing about a \$300+ million settlement for her and her clients.

Likewise, in the episode where I consecrated the energy problem in California, I followed the same four determinants. I.e. I aspired for a dire situation to change, I made the decision to bring it about, I took an action to make it happen (in this case an inner one using the power of the Force), and did so with positive motives, feelings, and attitudes. As a result, a day or two later the entire situation completely evaporated.

And yet while each of these powers are impressive, and do indeed attract these miraculous-like results, we have not yet developed a *comprehensive* approach to life response. Though I've indicated that we can pick and choose from our quiver of human behaviors in a given situation, thereby attracting good fortune, this is more of a *reactive* approach to life response than a *proactive* one. In these situations, life is presenting *its* conditions and we are having to react to them. In essence, life is in control, and we are trying to make the best of it. On the other hand, wouldn't it be much better if *we* determined the conditions of life in to begin with, and have them unfold through a series of miraculous-like events?

But is such a thing possible? Can we really control the flow of life, so that all that unfolds around us is a manifestation of our intention? And if we could shape life this way, would we not be able to achieve any goal, fulfill any aspiration, and have it come about through these marvelous life response unfoldings?

After all, we are not simply automatons moving through a series of experiences; pushed and pulled by life's whims; dragged this way and that by Nature's vicissitudes. We are also motivated, driven individuals who seek to achieve specific goals that are deeply meaningful to us. In other words, if life response is to have real power, then we should be able to build our world in our own image!

But does such a power really exist? Is there a process we can follow that would allow us to determine life's conditions, instead of merely responding to them? And if this mastery exists, can these outcomes unfold through miraculous-like life response events? To answer these and other questions, I would like to share with you a critical episode in my life.

A New Beginning

As you may recall, early on in my computer career I had a seminal life response experience when I attracted a huge sale when I overcame my reluctance to work weekends. That magnificent outcome not only fulfilled my aspirations for higher monthly sales and hence greater income, but firmly set me on a course in the personal computer field. And yet it is what took place *before* that episode that may shed some light on our ability to direct the course of our lives and have it unfold through powerful life response events.

Though that weekend sale was a critical turning point in my career, several years before that I found myself in desperate straits. At the time, the sales and distribution firm I founded had just gone out of business, leaving me without a job and a steady source of income. As a result, I began a frantic search for a new vocation in life.

After scanning the local newspapers, I managed to find a sales job at a local company selling energy conservation products to businesses. It was my job to go to single and chain retail stores to sell two of those items. The first was a metallic reflector that boosted the amount of light that a ceiling fixture would produce. The second was a wattage-saving device that fit between the large bulb and the fixture itself.

Though I made a lot of contacts and gave a number of presentations, in the end, I was unable to close a single sale. Making it more difficult still was the fact that I was not convinced the products were actually legitimate! In fact, several members of our other energy conservation

division told me that the claim we made of our products' light boosting and energy savings capabilities were bogus!

Interestingly, though I failed as a salesperson at the firm, the owner turned around and appointed me sales manager of that electrical products division. It was now my job to put together a sales staff to market the previously described line of energy-saving devices to small and large businesses.

And so over the next month, I interviewed a number of applicants, hired a staff, and proudly watched them march off into the marketplace to move these innovative, but unproven products. Unfortunately, the group failed to make a single significant sale. And so without a revenue stream to support us, I had to let them go. Then it was up to me again to try to generate revenue for our now 1-person electrical division. Though I valiantly took up the challenge, in the end I produced the same woeful results.

Interestingly, though the entire sales campaign was a failure, there *was* a silver lining, for along the way I was introduced to the world of personal computers. Like many other organizations at the time, the energy-conservation company embraced this newly emerging technology. They did so by not only purchasing the usual assortment of hardware and software, but by hiring someone to program the system.

As it turned out, shortly after I came on board the company, I learned that the computer operator had developed something called a "spreadsheet program" that automatically calculated the energy savings of our products. Since the program had already been used to support the company's successful hot water boiler line, the owner and I thought we could develop something similar for the electrical-savings division I was in charge of.

And so in the weeks that followed, I worked closely with the programmer to develop that application. Here is how it worked: whenever a salesperson would meet with a customer, he or she would jot down all of the relevant data about that business's lighting system -- including the quantity of light fixtures they had, the wattage of each bulb, the number of hours the lights were on per day, and so forth. We then entered that data into the spreadsheet on our Apple III -- this was after all 1982! -- which then calculated the energy savings the customer would derive by using our product. We then sent the customer a printout of the savings as part of our overall proposal.

Well, the first time, I saw a printout of the customer's savings, I nearly fell out of my chair! I thought that this was precisely the kind of information that would convince them to purchase our energy-saving devices. Unfortunately, as we already know, even with this wonderful new tool, our sales effort utterly failed .

And so with little show for my efforts, my boss and I agreed that my division was no longer sustainable, and therefore it was time for me to move on. Now once again I found myself in a familiar place -- without a job, and confronting the same question that haunted me six months earlier: what was I going to do with my life?

Moving Forward

In the days and weeks that followed, I considered several employment possibilities -- though none seemed particularly appealing. And yet, when I thought about it, I had to admit that my experience using the personal computer and spreadsheet program *had* been very enjoyable. Moreover, as I looked around at what was going on in the world, it was becoming quite clear that a technology revolution was under way.

As I thought about the impact personal computers were having on the world, I reminded myself that I had *already* joined the revolution! I did so when I collaborated with the programmer to develop the cost-savings spreadsheet at the energy conservation company. Energized by that thought, I just knew that there had to be a way to combine my sales experience and business acumen, and apply it in this new field. And yet, I also understood that I didn't really know much about the technology -- save for my limited foray in my previous position. The dilemma was then how to enter the field with very limited technical knowledge and hands-on experience.

The first challenge then was how to increase my skill levels on the computer. I soon realized that the easiest way to become familiar with the machines was to visit local computer shops and get some hands on experience. That way I would at least get a feel for the technology, which would give me the confidence to pursue a job in the field. And so over the next several months, I scurried from store to store, trying out various combinations of hardware and software, while trying not to draw too much attention to myself!

In addition to these short bursts on these systems, I began reading several arcane books on the subject, including titles on computer operating systems and applications software. Though I struggled at first, I slowly began to master the technical jargon, to the point where I actually *enjoyed* working with these formerly alien concepts! As my knowledge and confidence grew, I felt I was getting closer to committing to a career in personal computers. Then, one day, I made the firm decision to pursue that path, and soon after, set out to find a job.

Though I was now committed to this new course, I still had to figure out what *type* of job to pursue. For example, one choice I had was to work for a company that actually manufactured computers -- like Apple or IBM. But would I be qualified for this type of work; and, if so, was I ready for the rarified atmosphere of the corporate world? Yet another possibility was to seek employment at a company that manufactured software; but again, there were the same issues of qualification and joining the very formal business environment. Then there was the prospect of working as a sales rep at a nearby Silicon Valley firm -- perhaps selling PC peripherals to businesses or resellers on the West Coast. After all, I had a solid sales background, and I enjoyed being outdoors. Finally, I thought of working for a firm that needed spreadsheets developed, since I had some experience in that area.

Over time, I considered the pluses and minuses of each option, and tried to see my way clear to a final strategy. That turned out to be rather daunting because one minute I would be excited about one approach, only to realize its limitations a moment later. With the entire matter becoming a bit too overwhelming, I decided to seek out the guidance of others.

And so several days later, I arranged a meeting with two attorney friends of mine. After listening to my plight, one of them suggested that the best place to start out in the personal computer field was to work at the retail level. Because his wife had already worked in the tech industry for a prominent Silicon Valley company, and because he himself was familiar with the field, I respected his opinion.

Though I had thought about working at the retail level before, I must say I was not particularly enamored with the idea. In the first place, I would be entering the personal computer field at what was probably the lowest rung on the ladder. Second, I would be working *indoors* all day under the watchful eye of management -- something at odds with my

natural inclinations. Third, the idea of working in retail sales felt like a body blow to my self-esteem, after having managed a staff of my own at the energy-conservation company, and having earlier built up my own business. In fact, the more I thought about my attorney friend's suggestion, the more I felt depressed -- maybe even a little bitter. And yet, I also had to be realistic that working retail sales in a computer store was the most practical way to enter the field.

After several days, I made the rather difficult psychological adjustment and finally came around to my lawyer friend's point of view. (In fact, I secretly suspected that this was going to be the case all along!) When my emotions then endorsed that position in full, I crossed over a threshold that compelled me to pursue that goal. Now the question was how was I going to achieve it?

Though computer retail stores were popping up like mushrooms, I still needed to consider what type of store to approach. On the one hand, there were the small mom and pop outlets -- often run by technically oriented people with an entrepreneurial flair. On the other hand, there were also several "super-chains" emerging -- the most prominent being Computerland, a very successful franchise operation that eventually grew to 500 locations worldwide. As it turned out, there were a number of outlets in the greater San Francisco Bay Area, including several not too far from my home.

After considering the issue from various sides, I finally decided that Computerland was the best place to begin my job search. Though my original goal was to interview at as many stores as possible, I decided that targeting a more professional-like chain like Computerland was the right choice. And so in the days that followed, I updated my resume, dusted off my best suit, and arranged interviews at several Computerland outlets in the area. The first one I set up was at the Oakland store -- a 15-20 minute drive from my home.

As I headed out to the interview, I thought about the qualities I was bringing to the table. I sensed that though my sales skills were strong, my computer knowledge was still quite limited. Now as I drove the highway, I wondered if *anyone* would hire someone with such limited technical experience. Fortunately, I soon shook off my doubts and reestablished my usual level of confidence. In addition, I offered the entire matter -- including the upcoming interview -- to the spiritual Force.

When I arrived for the meeting, a very nice woman named Janice greeted me. Aside from her friendly manner and engaging smile, the first thing I noticed about her was that she was *very pregnant!* In fact, when we first walked into her office to begin our discussion, I was as concerned about her own comfort and well-being as I was about the meeting itself. After she made several self-effacing remarks about her condition, we got down to the matter at hand.

One of the first questions Janice asked me was why I wanted to work in a computer store. After I answered that somewhat challenging question, we discussed my past work history, as well as my current qualifications for the job. As the interview proceeded, I managed to scan the facilities and observe the day-to-day operations of the store. In addition to its professional look, I noticed how smartly dressed the sales staff was; as well as how friendly, engaging, and technically savvy they were. When the interview finally ended, Janice escorted me to the front door and said she would get back to me shortly with her decision.

When I exited the building and walked out into the bright sunlight, I was not really sure how the interview had gone. Yes, I thought, we had gotten along very well, and yes, she did acknowledge my considerable sales experience, but there was no obvious indication that Janice was going to hire me. Now as I headed down the street toward my car, I reminded myself that it was time to change gears, forget about what had just taken place, and get ready for my *next* interview!

However, a few seconds later, I heard a voice calling from behind. I turned around, but could not tell where the sound was emanating from. I then heard the voice again, but this time I realized that the person was actually calling out my name. When I then strained to see who it was, I saw that it was Janice, calling me from a distance, trying to get my attention. Then of all things I noticed that Janice -- pregnant and all -- was now jogging in my direction!

Without thinking, I immediately started walking toward her; and a minute later, we met around half way. There she breathlessly told me that she wanted me to work at the store, and begin *immediately*. Stunned by this development, I took a deep breath, thought about the offer for a moment, and then agreed to start straight away.

The Way to the Future

Though this story had a happy ending -- a *life response* ending -- one wonders how I was able to attract this wonderful result. Based on our previous analysis of the essential behaviors that attract sudden good fortune, we can identify several reasons. First, I shifted from a position of reluctance to one of accepting the idea of working in computer retail sales. In other words, there was a change in *attitude*. Second, once I made that adjustment, I then developed the *aspiration* to secure a retail job in the computer field. I.e., my intention took shape. Third, I then made the firm *decision* and commitment to find that job. And fourth, I made the full persevering effort to make it happen. (In addition, I also called to the spiritual Force to support my efforts along the way.) With all of the determinants from our pool of four at play, I could not help but attract a powerful response from life.

At yet while all of these factors came into play, there seemed to be something else at work in this episode. There appeared to be a conscious, ordered attempt to achieve a goal. In other words, I seemed to have followed a *process*, a sequence of logical steps that culminated in a dramatic, positive outcome. But what was that process, and what were those steps; and why did they enable me to attract a dramatic and powerful life response result on my very first attempt? To answer these questions, let us go back and retrace the steps that lead to the episode's final outcome.

Direction

When my job at the energy conservation company ended, I needed to find work. Rather than rush out and find a replacement job, I decided instead to take some time out and ponder the issue. First, I analyzed the variety of career paths that were available to me. From that analysis, I concluded that the personal computer field was the best since I found it both interesting and enjoyable.

Then I moved on to the next stage and evaluated the possibilities for employment *within* that field. First, I considered several ways to enter the personal computer market -- evaluating the pluses and minuses of each. However, when I could not see myself clear, I sought the advice of others, who steered me in the right direction. When I reflected on the matter further, I concluded that computer retail sales was indeed the most practical path to pursue. As a result of that conceptual and

psychological effort, I was now able to *envision* a very specific goal that I wanted to achieve. Moreover, now that it had become clear, I was able to gain the sanction and support of my *emotions*. I.e., I developed the *will* to pursue that path, which then led to a *decision* to do so. As a result of all of these steps, I now had firmly established the *direction* in which I wanted to go.

Organization

The process then continued. To actually achieve my vision and goal, I developed a coherent *plan* to make it happen. To do that, I first considered a number of *strategies* available to me. E.g., I thought about whether I should work in a small store, or in a chain outlet --- eventually choosing the latter. I also thought about whether I should work as a salesperson or try for a sales management position -- in the end, opting for the former. In addition to targeting the *right* strategies, I also organized the *small details* by updating my resume, getting my wardrobe in order, and so forth. Finally, I set up the interviews themselves -- establishing a schedule of *action* to do to be taken. As a result of all of these *organizational* steps, I developed a coherent plan to pursue my goal.

Action

Finally, I *acted* on the details of my plan. I did so by physically heading out to the interview as scheduled, and meeting with the resource manager. Moreover, I maintained a *positive attitude* throughout and performed with the best of my abilities (i.e. *skill*).

When the action was complete (at the point the interview ended), life *immediately* responded, enabling me to fulfill my original intention of securing a retail sales position on my very first attempt. Plus, it occurred in a most dramatic and “creative” fashion, when a pregnant woman literally came running after me to offer me the job.

In the end, because I followed a *process of accomplishment*, I instantly achieved my goal. Rather than going through the normal job search undertaking -- which can take weeks or months with no guarantee of success -- I was able to achieve my heart’s desire on my very first try. I did so because I followed a process of accomplishment from vision to manifestation.

The Process in a Nutshell

From this analysis, we begin to see that the key to accomplishment is to follow a universal process of life. It begins with the establishment of our *direction* -- i.e. "where do I want to go;" is developed through *organization* -- i.e. "how do I get there;" and then manifests through one's *action*. By following this process, we not only meet our original goals, but exceed them through powerful life response results.

The sequence of steps of the process can be summarized as follows:

Direction (Where do I want to go?)

- you are aware of various *possibilities* (e.g. X, Y, Z, etc. are available to me)
- you deliberate on and then *narrow down* the possibilities to the one you are interested in (e.g. from X, Y, and Z, I will focus on X)
- a vision of a specific thing you want to accomplish arises in your mind (e.g. I envision accomplishing X)
- your *emotions then fully endorse* that vision (i.e. you really want it), which engages your will (e.g. I very much want to pursue the goal of X)
- you make the *firm decision* to accomplish it (e.g. I am committed to achieving goal X)

Organization (How do I get there?)

- you then organize your goal by considering a set of *strategies* to achieve it (e.g. A, B, C, D, E, and F are possible ways to achieve X)
- you then choose the *best strategies* from among them (e.g. A and B is the best way to accomplish X)
- you then organize the now targeted strategies into a series of achievable time-bound *action steps* (e.g. I set up to dos on the 10th, 15th, and 18th to accomplish A and B)

Action (What should I do?)

- you then carry out your to dos in a *timely manner & with determination* (e.g. your 10th, 15th, and 18th to dos items are carried out on time, and with intensity)
- you maintain a *positive attitude* throughout (e.g. you are self-confident, enthusiastic, expansive, keep an open mind, and have faith in the outcome)

- you also keep at bay *negative attitudes* and perceptions (e.g. you overcome the idea that you will fail, that this is not a good thing to do, that you are not qualified, etc.)
- you carry out the action to dos with consummate *skill* (e.g. you utilize your capacities and talents to execute them)
- *life responds in overwhelming fashion*

A Perfect Day's Outing

When we navigate our way through the steps of the Process of Accomplishment, we not only generate practical results one would expect from taking such a systematic approach, but powerful, life response results as well. In fact, the more perfectly we adhere to the process, the more likely and the greater the intensity of the response. On the other hand, if our effort lacks emotional spark; or is unfocused, haphazard, and disorganized, not only will we fail to achieve in a practical sense, but in a life response one as well.

To drive home the idea of how following the process is the most efficient means of manifesting your heart's desire, here is a little adventure I experienced a while back.

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One day several years ago, I thought about spending the day hiking and picture taking at one of the shoreline parks that ring San Francisco Bay. However, rather than haphazardly heading out without a particular destination in mind, I decided to organize my effort into a coherent plan, following a number of the guidelines listed above.

The first thing I did was consider which parks I had still not visited. I then looked for and found a map of the region, which helped me determine where I had already been, and therefore which park to go to next. (At the time, I aspired to visit each of the shoreline parks in a clockwise direction over the course of several years.)

When I pinpointed the next logical one to go to, I envisioned going there that very afternoon. As a result, my desire to make the trip only intensified. Now that I had the full sanction of my emotions, I made the firm decision to visit that locale for a day's adventure.

However, rather than just rush out to my destination, I decided to organize several of the details. First, I gathered together all of the objects

I needed for the trip -- including the right clothing, a map, binoculars, and a camera. Then I calculated the length of the drive -- concluding that if I left right away, I would have more than enough time for an enjoyable outing.

When I then went ahead and executed my plan -- i.e. got into my car and headed out towards my destination -- I noticed that everything started going perfectly, as life started cooperating from all quarters. Just consider what took place:

The first significant thing that happened was that I was able to locate the site *very quickly*. In fact, not only were the directions I followed accurate, but it almost seemed as if an unseen hand had guided me directly to that place. I.e., there was hardly any traffic, important signs appeared just at the moment I looked up, I arrived sooner than I expected, the parking lot was very accessible, and so forth.

Then when I actually arrived inside the park, I was utterly delighted at how beautiful it was. Though I expected something pleasant, this locale *far exceeded* my expectation. It turned out to be a vast, undeveloped, grassy, and tree-filled recreation area situated on a lovely hillside overlooking the bay, when I only expected a small outlet. As I took in the wide expanse of the park, it struck me that I never would have expected such a delightful bayside open space so close to bustling Silicon Valley.

But then things got even better. When I climbed the main hill of the park, I noticed that I had the entire area to myself. Then when I journeyed deeper within, I felt a freshness and stillness in the air that seemed to be the very essence of that place. As I hiked amongst the hills and took photographs of the surroundings, I felt life cooperating at every step; as every action I took unfolded just right, as every turn brought new discovery and wonder. As a result, I once again had that ineffable feeling of utter perfection in that time and place.

Ironically, the most dramatic moment occurred at the end of my hike, after I descended the plateaued hill and came upon, of all things, the rest facilities at the edge of the parking lot. Usually the sanitary conditions in these public places are unclean at best and repulsive at worst -- but this facility was nearly *spotless*: In fact, it was the cleanest rest area I had *ever* seen in a county park! As I stood there marveling at its immaculate condition, I just knew that this incongruous event was a culminating moment, a perfect topper to all that preceded it.

Thinking back on the episode, I cannot recall if I consecrated that afternoon's proceedings, but I do know I made an effort to plan it out. In essence, I first had a vision of a possibility, which was then emotionalized into something I wanted to bring about, which in turn led to a decision to make it happen. When I then organized the details, and executed the plan with enthusiasm and right attitudes, life responded from every quarter, fulfilling -- actually *far exceeding* -- my every expectation. In essence, I followed the process of accomplishment to a tee, and as a result, life responded in every imaginable way.

We thus see that when we *consciously* develop and then execute a well-thought out plan to accomplish a thing, we not only bring about to-be-expected practical results, but we attract extraordinary ones as well. That day's outing -- with all its healthful, fun-filled, and spiritual-like experiences -- was a microcosm of what happens when we follow that universal process from vision to manifestation.

THE PROCESS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

Direction – You become aware of the possibilities > You narrow down the possibilities > You envision what you want to accomplish > Your emotions endorse it > You make the decision to make it happen.

Organization – You consider strategies to accomplish the goal > You choose the best strategies > You develop time bound action to dos to make it happen.

Action – You execute the to dos in a timely manner > You execute with intensity, skill, and right attitudes > **Life responds overwhelmingly!**

A Plan to Attract Your Heart's Desire

Though the process of accomplishment is a comprehensive way to attract powerful life response results, one wonders if there is something simpler we could follow -- a *template* if you will -- to quickly attract the object of our desire. To that end, I have devised a streamlined and practical version of the process that I call a "30-Day Plan for

Accomplishment.” Its main objective is to attract a cherished goal in 30 days or less, and have it come about through one or more miraculous-like life response events.

Meet the Conditions

To determine if you are ready to undertake the 30-Day Plan, you will need to satisfy several conditions. The first is that you do indeed have a cherished goal in mind that you want to achieve. Naturally, the entire plan hinges on this.

The second condition is that you are crystal clear about what it is you want to achieve. If your goal is unambiguous and sharply defined, -- e.g. it can be expressed in a single sentence -- then you have met the second prerequisite of the plan.

The third condition is that you intensely want to accomplish the goal. Anything less is probably not worth pursuing. (Even if you feel compelled to accomplish the goal now, I would still recommend you wait a week or two to see if that intensity is sustained. If after that period you are still passionate about achieving the goal, then you have met the third prerequisite.)

The fourth and final condition is that you are ready to commit yourself to following the plan for the *full* 30-day period. Remember, we are talking about attracting a goal that can have a major impact or even change the course of your life. Therefore, if you are not sure about making that full 30-day commitment, then wait until you are. If, however, you are certain, and have met the earlier conditions, then you are qualified to begin!

Take the Plunge

Once you are qualified, you can implement your plan by following the following general guidelines:

1. *Develop your vision and its purpose* -- The first step is to write down in one or two sentences precisely what it is you want to achieve; i.e. the goal to be accomplished. Then in another sentence or two explain why you want to achieve this goal; i.e. its mission and purpose. E.g. -
 - *Vision* -- I want to do seminars around the world on the subject ‘The Power of Personal Values.’
 - *Purpose* -- This will not only help attendees improve their personal and business lives, which will bring me great personal satisfaction,

but it will enable me to earn \$200,000+ per annum, which will provide a substantial upgrade in my living conditions.

2. *Develop a Strategy* -- The second step is to come up with several strategies to make your vision/goal occur. They can be practical (outer), as well as psychological (inner). E.g.-
 - Practical/Outer -- In order to do the seminars, I will need to (a) educate myself on the topic more fully, (b) improve my presentation and speaking skills, and (c) find the right organization to market the events.
 - Psychological/Inner -- I will also need to (d) put aside other interests in order to focus on this goal (since I like to do too many things), and (e) overcome my tendency towards laziness and procrastination.
3. *Develop Action To Dos* -- The third step is to develop specific *time-bound* action to dos to carry out the strategy above. E.g.-
 - To carry out detail “c” above -- regarding finding the right organization to market the seminars -- I will establish a relationship with a local event producer. I will do this within 2 weeks of initiating the plan.
 - (Develop additional action to dos for each of the other strategy items listed above.)
4. *Carry out your plan* -- The fourth and final step is to carry out the action to dos in a timely manner.

Success Factors

If you carry out the 30-Day plan outlined above, you are bound to attract powerful results in short order.¹³ However, if you want *100% guaranteed, overwhelming results* -- then you will need to embrace the following success factors:

Total Commitment

The first factor that will guarantee overwhelming success (through life response outcomes) is that your desire to accomplish the goal is *total*

¹³ Often life will respond before you even have a chance to implement the second or third steps! E.g. just making the decision to implement the plan can attract a powerful outcome.

and complete. Any half-hearted aspiration on your part is unlikely to produce the desired results. Your effort therefore should intensify to the point that you consistently feel *unfettered emotional enthusiasm* to accomplish the goal. That will concentrate your energies and quickly attract the object of your desire, and then some.

Be Positive; Overcome Limited Attitudes, Perceptions

The second factor that will guarantee rapid, overwhelming success is that your attitudes surrounding the plan are fully *positive* -- i.e. you bring a level of optimism, faith, expansiveness, and cheerfulness to the endeavor. Releasing psychological energies of these sorts cannot help but attract the powerful of conditions.

Likewise, you also want to avoid negative attitudes relating to the goal. In particular, look out for pessimistic viewpoints (e.g. "It will never work out"); feelings of incapacity (e.g. "I can't do that"); limits to what is possible (e.g. "5% growth is good enough"); and wanting views of others (e.g. "They'll just ruin things"). Interestingly, if you overcome but one psychological constraint or limiting belief related to the goal, you can instantly attract all that you had hoped for.

For example, I know of one individual who aspired to increase his company's revenues by a considerable amount. Though he had the drive and determination to make it happen, life did not respond to his effort, as sales remained flat. Then one day he realized that his entire view of the marketplace was flawed: that he was limiting himself to the *local* market, when in fact the *whole world* was at his disposal. When he reversed that attitude, sales immediately took off. In fact, within several months, his company's revenues literally *doubled*. That is the power of overcoming a limited attitude or viewpoint related to a goal being pursued.

To help you determine which attitudes may be blocking achievement in your case, read over the following checklist and choose several items that are relevant. Then go ahead and implement *its opposite* as an inner, psychological strategy in your 30-day plan. Then look out for powerful life response results.

Sample Wanting Attitudes that Block Achievement/Response	
<p>PESSIMISM, INCAPACITY</p> <p>“That is just too difficult”</p> <p>“It’s just too much to take on”</p> <p>“It will never work out”</p> <p>“It will take forever”</p> <p>“There are no solutions for that”</p> <p>“What’s the use of trying”</p> <p>“I can’t do that”</p> <p>“I don’t have the energy for that”</p> <p>“I can’t do it all alone”</p> <p>RELUCTANCE</p> <p>“I don’t want to do that”</p> <p>“I don’t want to get involved”</p> <p>“Let someone else take care of it”</p> <p>“This is new; I cannot accept it”</p> <p>“Leave me alone”</p> <p>“I’ll do it another time”</p>	<p>LIMITS</p> <p>“5% growth is more than enough”</p> <p>“The market is limited”</p> <p>“There are limits to X”</p> <p>“Let’s play it safe”</p> <p>“We only have limited funds”</p> <p>“Resources are always tight”</p> <p>“I must hold on to my money”</p> <p>OTHER PEOPLE</p> <p>“I’ll have nothing to do with them”</p> <p>“He’s the cause of the problem”</p> <p>“They’ll just ruin things”</p> <p>“They cannot be trusted”</p> <p>“They’re always trying to cheat me”</p> <p>“They are impossible to control”</p> <p>“They just won’t cooperate”</p> <p>“It’s my way or the highway”</p>

Open to the Force

The third factor that will guarantee rapid, overwhelming success is that your effort is fully consecrated. I.e. as you envision, develop, and execute your plan, you offer it to the spiritual Force. Doing so will set all conditions surrounding the effort right, while attracting creative and dynamic positive outcomes. E.g., when I opened to the Force before my interview at Computerland, I was able to find the type of job I was looking for on my very first try. And it occurred under the most unusual and creative of circumstance!

30-Day Deadline

Finally, to insure rapid, overwhelming success, you should focus your efforts on achieving the goal within the allotted 30-day period. *This should be your uncompromised deadline date for generating results.* By setting this limit, it will condense and amplify your energies, which will dramatically increase the likelihood of attracting your heart’s desire.

Putting it All Together

If you meet the preliminary conditions, follow the steps of the plan, and incorporate the success factors, the object of your desire will quickly become your living reality. In fact, results will come so fast, you will hardly believe what is happening.

For example, one young Indian woman I know of who studied computers and worked at a web design company, followed this approach. Her particular aspiration in life was simply to advance her career. As a result of intensely taking to her inner and outer plan, she attracted one remarkable result after another. First, she was able to leave her old job and start her own company. Then, her business quickly expanded to the point where she hired a dozen employees. That in turn enabled her personal income to rise an incredible 10-fold. By consciously directing the course of her life, she was able to achieve in a year what would have normally taken a decade, or a lifetime -- if ever at all.



In the final analysis, we see that we are capable of following a process of life that will quickly attract the object of our desire. When we envision what we want, intensely desire for it to come about, organize the details, and execute our plan with right attitudes and skills, we generate an irresistible force that cannot help but attract our heart's desire. It is the end result of the greatest of all human methods: following the process of creation and accomplishment.

ENVISION & CREATE YOUR FUTURE

- Envision the goal you want to achieve
- Make sure it is clear in your mind
- Passionately desire for it to come about
- Make the decision & commitment to achieve it
- Organize the details, including right strategies
- Develop time bound to dos to make it happen
- Carry out your plan in a timely manner
- Make the full, determined effort
- Remain positive, optimistic, and enthusiastic
- Overcome corresponding wanting attitudes
- Execute your plan with the highest skills
- Focus on its attainment as exclusively as possible
- Aim to achieve the goal by your target date
- Open to the spiritual Force at every stage

Life Will Respond in Overwhelming Fashion!

ONE STEP FURTHER:

THE INFINITE POWER OF CREATION

From the above analysis, we see that there is a process by which individuals create and accomplish in life. Interestingly, this process is not limited to acts we as individuals engage in, but to all planes and field of life -- whether it is a business, social institutions, or society as whole.

For example, when a business does a strategic plan, it follows this same process from vision to decision to execution to manifestation. When followed diligently, meeting all of the conditions described earlier, the company will not only accomplish its goals, but it will come about through powerful life response results. The same is true for a family, a community, a nation, or any collective or aspect of society. When that entity diligently follows the steps of the process, it not only accomplishes what it intended, but far exceeds it through instances of sudden good fortune.

We therefore see that the process of creation is actually a *universal* in nature, and applies to any aspect of life. In fact, that process also reflects how the universe itself came into being from a divine Source. I.e. an Infinite consciousness conceived of a universe of forms of its own Force, and then organized and executed Its intent, bringing about the cosmos we know and live in. Thus, when we follow the process of creation and accomplishment in our own lives, we are following the same essential method of the Infinite – from vision to direction to organization to manifestation. And like that divine Reality, we are able to create infinite-like results in the very shortest period of time.

13. A New Way of Living

Together we have traveled a great distance. We have read about extraordinary situations and circumstances in which life responded suddenly and overwhelmingly. We have also learned why this phenomenon occurs -- in terms of the subtle workings of life, as well as the inner and outer human behaviors that precipitate it.

And yet as we go through these experiences, we are likely to notice something else taking shape: that we are at the cusp of a very different sort of existence: one that I believe is unprecedented in human history. I call this new human functioning “A New Way of Living.”

To help us imagine what this new life might be like, I would like to present a fictionalized account of one person’s experience of this new reality. In the first part, we see her living the ordinary life that we are all too familiar with. In the second, things starts off similarly, but they then take a dramatically different turn as a result of living this new life.



The Old World

Anna Patel rang the doorbell at the Kennedy home. After thirty seconds, there was no reply. She then pushed the button once again. This time she waited nearly five minutes before her old friend Robbie Sinclair came to the door. Though he greeted her with a smile, Anna could see that Robbie was preoccupied with a conversation he was having on his cell phone. Anna then stepped into the house, and eagerly looked around. However, when she turned to say something to Robbie, she saw him walking away with a phone perched to his ear, rapidly moving toward the back of the house. Though she had been looking forward to this annual get-together of friends and associates, at that moment she found herself alone in the hallway without a soul in site.

After she removed her jacket and placed it on the sofa next to several other garments strewn about, Anna turned to admire the lovely home -- especially the beautiful rustic furniture and fine wooden floors. She then drifted into the living room, where she expected to be greeted by other

guests, but instead found the room empty and silent. Anna thought that this was odd, and then wondered where in the world everyone was.

To her delight, a moment later, she heard several voices emanating from the back room, and so she headed in that direction. There she came upon a magnificent part of the house with its sweeping view of the valley. She then noticed several individuals in the corner of the room engaged in a heated discussion. When she strained to see who they were, she realized that she did not recognize any of the faces. Again, Anna felt isolated and by herself, and wondered what had happened to the rest of the party.

With a smile on her face, she approached the individuals who were having the animated conversation. However, when she got close, one member weakly nodded, and the others simply ignored her. A moment later, Anna heard Robbie's voice in the distance, and from what he was saying, it appeared that several guests were having trouble finding their way to the house. When Robbie then came into the magnificent backroom where Anna was standing, he gestured that she take a seat since it might be a while for the others to arrive. And so Anna now sat there by herself in silence, with her arms folded in front of her, and with a very perplexed look on her face.

After nearly an hour of waiting, the first contingent of guests finally arrived. As they removed their jackets and wraps, Anna overheard several people commenting about the terrible traffic ordeal they had been through. Now as they drifted toward the back room of the house, Anna noticed how frazzled and fatigued they looked -- with several shaking their heads in disbelief at the traffic nightmare they had just navigated. With nervous laughter, the guests greeted one another, which enabled the affair to finally get under way.

In the next several hours, people shared their experiences of the past year. There were conversations about personal relationships, homes purchased or moved into, the status of their children, and other matters. Though Anna had several chances to speak, she never really got the chance to discuss her new business venture. Every time she broached the subject, someone or something would prevent her from continuing.

By this time, it was clear that Anna was not enjoying herself. For one, she found many of the conversations mundane and boring. Discussions about car racing, or the furnishing of an upstairs bedroom, or a child's math achievements did not exactly excite her. In fact, when this annual get together finally ended four hours later, Anna was more than happy to

leave. It also struck her as somehow fitting that when she left the house, she did so alone, unescorted -- as if no one cared about her or knew she even existed. Though Anna was momentarily invigorated by the warm November air, inside there was a decided chill in her spirit.

As she drove off, Anna began to review the events of the day. Though she had enjoyed some of the social interaction -- after all, she did visit with several good friends whom she had not seen in years -- she also sensed that few things had gone right. For example, there was hardly any discussion about business matters, let alone her field of work. These were dynamic, creative people, Anna thought, with a wide variety of interest, and yet it seemed that people were interested in the trivial and banal. Moreover, they seemed more bent on celebrating than discussing any issue of substance. Most troubling of all for Anna was the fact that she never got the chance to discuss her new business venture.

As she contemplated that last point, Anna's spirits darkened. She felt that no one cared, and that she didn't really matter. After several anguished moments of reverie and self-doubt, she turned her attention elsewhere, including the traffic she now had to navigate.

The New World

[This scene slowly fades to white; and then there is silence. Then another scene gradually comes into view, as several distinct forms and figures appear. Apparently, it is several weeks before the annual get together that we have just witnessed, and a woman is sitting at her desk looking out the window, pensively gazing into the distance.]

Anna Patel's thoughts were now focused on the upcoming annual reunion at the Kennedy home. One reason Anna was looking forward to the meeting was that she was eager to see several of her old friends. Another was that she hoped to present her new business plan to those who might be interested. In fact, Anna had organized her new biotech venture to the point where she was not only ready to receive feedback, but hoped to attract collaborators for the venture, including financial backers.

As it turned out, before she even began to organize her plan, something remarkable took place. On the very day Anna envisioned the project and made the firm commitment to bringing it about, she received an unexpected call from an old business associate. After listening to Anna's presentation, Dam Sawyer remarked how fortuitous this was

because he had been looking around for just such an opportunity. In other words, he had no idea Anna was launching on a closely related initiative when he contacted her.

Now as she recalled the incident, Anna understood why this serendipitous event took place. When you really want something, organize the details, and commit to a course of action, life starts moving in your favor. If you also open to the Higher Power at each point, as Anna had done, then you create an irresistible force that attracts the most positive of conditions. In this instance, not only did Anna receive an opportune phone call from out of nowhere, but it would produce the first round of funding for her project!

Now let us fast forward to the day of the get-together at the Kennedy home. Though Anna has arrived at the house, she remains in her car, sitting quietly with her eyes closed. It turns out that she is concentrating in order to gain control of her thoughts and feelings. Once she accomplishes that task, she lets go of that inner constraint and drifts into the silence of meditation. Actually, Anna has been practicing this technique for quite some time now, following the ritual not only when she wakes in the morning, but before important events, such as the one she is about to participate in at the Kennedy home. This inner approach not only puts her in a calm and relaxed state, but creates a heightened state of awareness that enables her to be her best.

As Anna moves deeper into this silence, she begins to be enveloped by a sense of peace and serenity. As a result, her face brightens and a gentle smile passes over lips. Several minutes later, Anna emerges from this sweet blissful state and opens her eyes. There in front of her looms the magnificent Kennedy home overlooking the beautiful valley below.

Though she feels a sudden impulse to hop out of the car, Anna catches herself. She then centers herself once more, and prepares to “consecrate” the event that she is about to participate in. First, she relaxes herself once more, and then opens to the Force, ardently offering the coming event to the Higher Power. She then tries something new, and imagines a spiritual Light spreading over and then shrouding the home. A minute later, when the thought of her new venture comes to mind, she consecrates that as well. Finally, she whispers to the Higher Power that she will be happy with whatever It brings her way during. Now feeling fresh, energized, calm, and alert, Anna is ready to join the group.

And so Anna gathers up her things, steps out of the car, and briskly walks to the entrance of the house. Just as she is about to ring the doorbell, she hears a voice coming from the inside calling out “I’m coming.” A few seconds later, the door opens wide, and standing there is Anna’s good friend Shawn, who greets her with a big smile. He then mischievously grins and says: “I saw you coming up the path!” The two then embrace, and they acknowledge how long it has been since they have seen one another. Now standing in the high arching atrium of the house, she looks around to see who else is there, and notices Robbie waving enthusiastically in the background.

Anna then strolls into the living room, where Robbie graciously takes her jacket, which he then hangs up next to other garments neatly arranged in the vestibule closet. When Anna turns around and sees several of her old friends standing nearby, she feels an emotional stir. Then rather unexpectedly, Robbie calls out to the group, “attention please,” and then proceeds to announce Anna’s arrival to everyone in the room. That causes several members of the party to rush up and warmly greet her. As Anna returns the affection, she is a bit overwhelmed, but deeply gladdened by the heart-felt attention she has just received.

After the rest of the guests arrive, and the initial introductions are completed, the group gradually drifts towards the large back room, where they arrive at the great bay windows overlooking the beautiful valley. This also happens to be the first time Anna has had a chance to be by herself since her arrival. Taking advantage of the interlude, she settles into a comfortable couch nearby, and then steals a moment to clear her mind and reconnect with the silence she had established earlier. She senses that the peaceful presence she experienced in the car is still there. When Anna then lifts her head to observe the scene in front of her, she discerns that she is still able to maintain that heightened sense of awareness and sensitivity to her surroundings.

After observing several people in front of her, Anna shifts her focus to the right, and is pleasantly surprised to find close friend Claire Davone sitting right next to her! After warmly greeting one another, the two friends engage in a lively conversation, touching on several important developments in their lives. At one point when there is a pause in the conversation, Anna demonstrates her usual sensitivity by withholding her own thoughts so that her friend can speak. Claire then takes up Anna’s queue and describes several key changes in her own life. Anna then

responds with deep gladness about her friend's good fortune, and in return, Claire commends Anna for being so sensitive to her concerns. This creates a sweet emotional bond between the two friends.

When the dialogue trails off a little while later, Anna looks up to see what has happened to the small group that had gathered in front of her. Not only does she notice that they have dispersed, but she is surprised when she notices good friend and fellow entrepreneur Dave Whittaker sitting right opposite her! Anna then cries out that she had not noticed him there! Dave responds with a hearty laugh, and then tells her that not only has he been there for a while, but he had also overheard the tail end of her conversation with Claire. He then went on to corroborate the fact that indeed Claire has had a remarkable run of luck recently. On hearing that news, Anna turns to Claire and smiles affectionately, showing once more the joy she feels in her friend's good fortune.

As a result of these events, Anna begins to think about her own situation -- particularly, the biotech venture she has recently initiated. Though she feels a sudden urge to share it with the group, she catches herself, sensing that this might not be the right time to raise the issue. Anna also perceives that this is an opportune moment to practice "Silent Will;" where if you refrain from speaking out what is on your mind, others will express it for you. A moment later, -- as if on cue -- Dave turns to Anna and asks her about recent developments in her life. That gives Anna the opening to explain her new venture.

Interestingly, as Anna is getting to the key part of her plan, another old friend, Han Ming happens to drift by. Noticing his arrival, Dave gestures to Han and invites him to listen to what Anna has to say about her new venture. Han, who is himself a provider of financial capital, takes a great interest in the subject, and then eagerly joins the discussion.

In the next fifteen minutes Claire, Dave, and Han, discuss Anna's new endeavor. At the end of what appears to be a very stimulating conversation, Han tells Anna that he is very interested in collaborating with her on the project. Needless to say, Anna is very pleased with this development, and promises to follow up the discussion by sending him a more detailed analysis of the plan. As this exchange winds down, the other members of the group agree that the venture holds enormous potential, and indicate that they are very interested in collaborating with Anna as well. The small party then exchange business cards, and promise

to be in touch over the next several weeks. Then Dave and Han get up, excusing themselves from the group -- leaving Anna and Claire behind.

Just as the small party is breaking up, Janet Mabuchi, one of the residents of the Kennedy house, announces to the guests that lunch is being served. The crowd, including Anna and Claire, then move toward the huge dining room, where a sumptuous buffet is served.

Like this intriguing little get together of four individuals, the remainder of the day would be extraordinarily stimulating for Anna. In fact, it seemed as if at every turn, life presented her something fresh and new. For example, at one point, Anna had a powerful insight into the relationship between “soft speech” and life response, something she had thought of before, but only now had become *crystal real* to her. It was these sort of revelatory experience that would crop up throughout the remainder of that afternoon. No wonder she was so delighted and energized by the gathering!

Now as she headed out the door at the end of that happy get-together, Anna thought about how enjoyable every conversation had been; how smoothly everything had unfolded; and how every encounter presented something new.

Anna then started up her car and made her way made toward the highway that would take her home. As she observed the lovely colors of the twilight, she felt deep emotional satisfaction, as well as a profound spiritual presence within.

Symphony of Life Response

Through these two very different versions of the same essential story, we begin to see the scope of life -- *and* of life response. In the first story, life was drab, difficult, and uncooperative. In this existence, the world was unpredictable -- with positive and negative circumstances coexisting; with events unfolding in ways that seemed beyond one's control. In this “old way of living”, one was subject to the whims of Nature's -- to her ups and downs, twists and turns, and slow and difficult ways.

In the second story, however, life was smooth, serene, spontaneous, and dynamic. In this reality, life was not only full, but *fully cooperative* -- as all of its conditions were under one's control. In this existence, one not only experienced a continuous stream of good fortune, but one felt a deep, abiding joy and delight in living. This was no ordinary life, but an extraordinary one that each of us can experience on our own.

Consider some of Anna's experiences in the second version of the story:

- Out the outset she had a vision of something she wanted to achieve, followed a process to make it happen, and was well on her way to its accomplishment before the meeting.
- Life responded quickly to her initiative and intention by attracting someone (over the phone) who offered to provide an initial round of capital *before* she even revealed her plan to anyone.
- When she arrived at the Kennedy home, she established a level of inner peace and mindfulness that put her in the best position to perceive the unfoldings of life.
- She opened to the spiritual Force before entering the house, imagining it enveloped the home Light, which attracted the deep interest of four individuals to her initiative, as well as a steady stream of positive conditions throughout the day.
- Before she even rang the bell, someone came to the door -- an indicator that a person living in higher consciousness can draw people to her without having to take action.
- She was treated with great respect upon arrival, and was unexpectedly introduced to the group -- a powerful response to her inner efforts.
- When she reestablished the inner connection during a pause in the conversation, she immediately discovered her friend sitting next to her. *Life continued to move toward her without any outer initiation on her part.*
- She showed deep affection and real concern for her friend, which immediately attracted two individuals who showed great interest in her initiative. The principle: *the more you give, the more you receive from life.*
- She refrained from speaking what was on her mind, which caused another person to do it for her -- providing the opening to explain her venture in full.
- When she explained her initiative, she did so with *passion*. As a result, a venture capital provider suddenly appeared, and other members of the group showed that same zeal. The principle: *really wanting a thing quickly attracts results that move it toward fruition.*
- Life responded not only with *material* opportunity, but with mental insight as well. At every turn, she learned something new about herself or life. *It is an indication of being in a state of perpetual growth.*
- The entire experience brought deep *joy and delight* that energized her to no end.

An Invitation

In the end, life response is not only a phenomenon of life that dazzles, or a miraculous-like occurrence that can take us to the pinnacles of success, but is an indicator of a new type of existence -- a new human functioning that is radically different from anything that has come before.

For countless millennia, our view has been that if we negotiated life, met its conditions and embraced its challenges, we would get our fair share. In this view of existence, life itself is the determinant, and we are mere respondents trying to make our way in the world.

And yet in this new reality, this view is reversed; as we shift from the determinism of the Outer to that of the Inner. In this new life, *we* create our world; *we* establish its conditions; *we* determine its unfoldings from within. As a result, life constantly moves in our favor.

In this new reality, the equation of life is reversed, as positive conditions move towards us on their own without initiative on our part. In this reality, we do not seek out life: it seeks us out instead. It constantly moves towards us from out of nowhere. It is a hallmark of this new way of living..

The only question that remains then is this: are you ready to change your ways; to reorient your life; to turn the inner keys that will enable you to be part of this existence? If you are, then I welcome you to a remarkable new world: to a New Way of Living.

INDICATORS OF A NEW WAY OF LIVING

- Good fortune continually comes your way
- Luck comes on its own without outer initiative
- You constantly move life from within
- Your orientation and poise is inward
- You see life through a 'witness consciousness'
- You are in harmony with the unfoldings of life
- You feel a deep sense of oneness with others
- You are consistently selfless and self-giving
- Life inside you is calm, silent, and equal
- All of your aspirations are fulfilled, and quickly
- You follow a universal process to fulfill them
- You constantly open yourself to the Force
- The Force constantly works on your behalf
- The conditions of life are under your control
- The creative and dynamic constantly unfolds
- The seemingly impossible is made possible.
- The infinite moves into the current finite
- The future takes shape in the present
- Space and time are overcome
- Cause and effect are seen in a different light
- You live an ultimate efficiency in living
- You sense a deeper purpose in life
- You feel an intense joy in being alive
- You feel a spiritual presence above and within
- You are constantly growing and changing
- You are a pioneer of a new way of life

14. Strategies to Make Life Respond

Life response is a vast topic because it embraces all of life. If that is so, then how do we begin to incorporate it in a practical way?

Perhaps you have already thought of several ways to make life respond based on the ideas and illustrations presented thus far. If so, I certainly encourage you to try them out! On the other hand, maybe you have already experienced one or more instances of this miraculous-like phenomenon, and are ready for more. Whatever the case, I believe that a little guidance at this point can help you develop a practical, custom approach that will make life response an everyday reality.

With that in mind, I would like to present seven general strategies to make life respond. Read them over, pick out one or two you feel comfortable with, and then implement them as you see fit. Then watch in the days ahead as life responds from all quarters. Results can even happen instantaneously -- a *minute* after you begin!

Strategy 1: Look Around, Be Aware, and Choose in the Right Direction

The first strategy to attract life response is to look around, examine the conditions of life at that moment, and then consciously choose in the *right direction*. Taking this approach will cause your days to flow harmoniously, while attracting a steady stream of good fortune. That in turn will energize you to no end -- filling you with happiness and joy.

For example, one time I was taking my usual daily walk to get some exercise, let the cobwebs out, and connect with my deeper consciousness and self. However, at one point, I wondered if it was better to enjoy the beautiful day or return to my office and attend to several important duties. I sensed that taking care of business was more important, and so I gave up the pleasurable walk and headed back to the office. When I returned a short while later, I experienced a *blizzard* of life response results -- as one fortunate event followed another within an astonishingly short five-minute period.

First, I learned that a customer had placed a *big* online order -- which happened to come at a critical juncture in our business. Then, a moment

later, I discovered that I had secured a large training assignment, which also came at a very opportune moment. Then a few minutes after that I learned that another customer had most unexpectedly paid an invoice that was *five years overdue* -- the largest problem bill I had in two decades of business! There was such a flurry of response from life in that five-minute period that I had to steady myself from becoming unhinged! In the end, this flood of activity came about because an hour earlier I chose *work over relaxation*, which was the right life response-inducing decision in that moment.

Thus, the first strategy to invoke life response is to continually look around, evaluate the situation, and choose in the right direction. At such “crossroad moments,” if you take to what is *helpful* over what is harmful; what is *beneficial to others* over one’s own self-interest; what is *positive and upbeat* over what is negative and pessimistic; and what engenders *calm and patience* over what is rash and impulsive, life will continually respond in your favor. By taking this approach, life response can become your never-ending reality.

Strategy 2: Take to One or More Behaviors to Continually Attract

Before I present my second strategy, I would like to provide a little background information.

Throughout this book, I have described a number of inner and outer behaviors that evoke life response. To arrive at them, I examined several hundred incidents over the course of a decade. My conclusion was that in each event, one or more of the human behaviors were at play. For example, when I evoked the biggest sale of my life early on in my computer career, it came because I overcame a wanting *attitude*. When I then saw this same behavior at work in dozens of other incidents, I concluded that reversing a negative attitude was one of the central behaviors that evoked life response. (In fact, it was #1!) Taking this analytical approach, I discovered a number of other key behaviors that evoke these powerful results – perhaps three dozen in all.

Thus, the second strategy for attracting life response is to examine this list of behaviors (presented at the end of this section), pick several that are suitable for you, and then implement them in ways you deem appropriate. For example, one person -- let us call her ‘X’ -- reads over the list and concludes that reversing her hostile attitudes towards others is a key behavior that needs changing. In addition, she determines that

personal organization is another area she is wanting in, and therefore decides to upgrade her level of cleanliness and orderliness as well. Finally, she realizes that she has to be more forceful when dealing with others, and thus commits to increasing her level of psychological strength wherever possible.

In the days that follow, she comes up with several areas of her life where she can apply these behaviors, and then begins implements them in full. As result, she attracts a series of magnificent response in the hours, days, and weeks thereafter. In fact, one response changes the course of her career.

Meanwhile “Y” puts together his custom group of behaviors. His decides that being more generous and self-giving towards others is the key. He also sees that changing his attitude about his work responsibilities, and being more focused on what he wants to accomplish in life are areas where he should change. When he then devises specific strategies and areas of his life where he can put them into practice, he too experiences a series of magnificent response. In fact, one result is so powerful it literally changes the course of his life.

In this way, each of us can come up with our own custom “toolkit of right behaviors,” implement them in full, and quickly attract powerful results. Because the items we choose are likely to be ones where we are ordinarily deficient or wanting, any serious effort to implement them will release new or extra energy that will quickly align with and attract the very best of conditions.

If this strategy appeals to you, then why not pick two or three behaviors from the list, and begin putting them to the test. If you practice it in earnest, life will respond in ways you never would have imagined!

Key Human Behaviors that Attract

- Be positive, optimistic, and cheerful
- Give up a wanting attitude or belief
- Turn negative emotions positive
- Try to make any situation better
- Choose what is positive and helpful
- Make a decision about something
- Take the necessary physical action
- Embrace what life has put before you
- Overcome any reluctance you have
- Feel deep enthusiasm in your work
- Make the full exhaustive effort
- Take responsibility for a situation
- Increase cleanliness & orderliness
- Systematize an activity
- Organize facts into ideas
- Maximize the use of a resource
- Give people/objects more attention
- Implement money-attracting strategies
- Shift your focus to others
- Be selfless and self-giving
- Show gratitude to others, life
- Send others good will
- Forgive others when wronged
- Take to greater psychological strength
- Hold back a thought so others speak it
- Talk less; and in a low, soft voice
- Take the other person's point of view
- Eliminate thinking in intense situations
- Move from agitation to stillness
- Be calm and equal when problems arise
- See negatives as positives in disguise
- Hold back initiating; drawing others
- Execute an activity perfectly
- Open to the spiritual Force
- Really aspire for something to happen
- Plan, implement, and execute a goal

Strategy 3: Apply the Right Human Behaviors to an Upcoming Event

The third strategy to evoke life response is to pick out an important event in your life and then select the best strategies to evoke a powerful response. (The entire list of behaviors is shown in the previous Strategy 2 area.)

For example, let's say that you have an important meeting with a new client. Rather than just show up as you would on other occasions, you first map out a life response strategy. The first thing you decide to do is be more self-giving in the meeting. You resolve that you will focus on the interests of the person you are meeting rather than your own concerns. In addition, you also decide to practice Silent Will, where if you hold back your thoughts and desires, the other person will be compelled to speak it out for you.

In addition, you target two other life response strategies. The first is that you will aspire that certain specific goals should be achieved at the meeting -- such as the signing of the contract and a commitment on the ABC survey. That will further concentrate and focus your energies. The

other strategy is that you will offer the entire meeting to the spiritual Force. That will insure the cooperation of life, while attracting unprecedented creative and dynamic outcomes.

This combination of aspiration, Silent Will, self-givingness, and consecration are the strategies you decide to employ to evoke the miraculous. When you then implement them at the meeting, a startling series of positive outcomes unfold.

Likewise, another individual in charge of organizing an upcoming marriage ceremony chooses her custom set of strategies. First, she decides to give up her hostile attitude towards several members of the staff who are putting on the affair. She also realizes that she needs to organize the details of her work on the project at a far higher level. Finally, she decides that when interacting with others on the project, she will speak less often and in a low soft voice. When she implements her strategies, not only does the wedding unfold magnificently, but several life-changing opportunities arise out of nowhere.

In this way, each of us can select our own combination of behaviors that will have the greatest life response impact on the situation or event engaged in.

The behaviors you choose are entirely up to you. One approach is to select several that have worked in the past, while another is to select ones where you know that you are lacking. Perhaps the best is to try a combination of the two. For example, if focusing your intent and consecration have produced life response results in the past, then consider using it in this situation. Likewise, on the negative side, if shifting away from wanting attitudes such as self-doubt and pessimism has elicited response before, then consider using it here as well. When you apply this combination of behaviors to the activity or event, you are sure to elicit extraordinary outcomes.

Strategy 4: View a Negative, Correlate it to Yourself, & Make the Necessary Change

The fourth strategy to attract life response is to take any negative circumstance that comes your way and associate it with a corresponding wanting quality within. If you then reverse that aspect in full, you will quickly attract a powerful life response result. To show you what I mean, here is one of my all-time favorite life response stories.

Several years ago, I accompanied a friend of mine to her company's annual Christmas party at a nearby luxury hotel and resort. Over two hundred smartly dressed individuals attended the lavish affair, which was highlighted by a fine dinner, entertainment, and dancing.

At various points in the proceedings, prizes were handed out to lucky employees. My friend -- who had won several in the past -- now silently, but eagerly hoped to win again. One after another, the fortunate winners were announced. However, this time, my friend's name never came up.

Then the biggest prize of all -- which was also the grand finale moment of the evening -- was about to be announced. After the presenter stirred the crowd by revealing the considerable value of the contents, she called out the winner. There was a moment of silence, and then a woman from the opposite side of the ballroom cried out that she was the lucky winner. She then waltzed up to the presenter to pick up her prize, as the crowd roared its approval.

However, when I looked over to see my friend's reaction, I was surprised to discover that she had suddenly gotten up and was heading towards the rest room. When I examined her a little closer, I also noticed that she had a troubled look on her face. It then occurred to me that she was disappointed because she did not win the prize. However, then it occurred to me that this was not the source of her anguish, but the fact that this particular individual was the winner.

When we returned home that evening, my friend found a phone message waiting for her. When she listened to it, she learned that a close relative of hers had suddenly run into some difficulty. As soon as I heard the news, I sensed that it came as a negative response to her earlier reaction to the woman who won the prize. Still, I did not raise the issue until it came up the next day. After a little prodding, my friend admitted that she indeed had a previous run-in with this person. I then suggested that if she overcame her ill will towards the woman, good things would start happening. Fortunately, my friend was familiar with this inner approach -- having seen it produce powerful results in the past -- and therefore agreed to take up my challenge.

A week or so went by, and I had almost forgotten the matter. Then on Christmas morning, my friend and I exchanged gifts. When I opened her last present (she gave me several), I was stunned to see that it contained an expensive iPod media player. Though I was very

appreciative of the gift, I was also somewhat troubled that she had spent so much money on my account. However, to assuage my concerns, she revealed that her company had actually given it to her as an end-of-the-year gift; and since she already had an iPod of her own, she was happy to give me this one as a Christmas present.

At first, I was very surprised by this turn of events, but then when I put on my “life-response thinking cap,” I quickly sensed that something else was afoot. Looking for an inner cause to this outer reality, I began to wonder why she suddenly received this most unexpected gift from her employer.

My friend then told me that several days after the Christmas party, she had actually gone over to the woman who won the prize -- the same person with whom she had a serious run-in a month before -- and *congratulated* her for winning! I must say that I was bit startled by this news, as it became plain that the free iPod gift she received from the company was a *direct response* to her own initiative to make amends with the woman. Fair enough, life had responded to her change of attitude, which, as we have seen, does tend to happen.

And yet as a result of this development, I became even more curious; and so I probed further into the matter. When I raised the issue again, my friend then revealed that in fact *everyone* at the company had received an iPod as a Christmas gift! Now I was truly stunned!

A moment later, I realized the *even-greater* implications of my friend’s gesture toward that woman. As a result of overcoming her ill-will -- actually turning it into *goodwill* by congratulating her in person -- she not only attracted an expensive, prized gift for herself (which she then gave to me), but she did so for *hundreds* of other individuals in the company! Her reversal of attitude attracted a *mass life response* result for the entire collective of individuals she was part of!

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From this incident we see that when we look at any negative situation that comes our way, correlate it to a wanting aspect of our being, and then reverse it, good or even *great* fortune will follow. Why not then consider this very powerful life response strategy in your own life.

(*A Positive Too* -- By the way, you can also adopt this strategy for *positive* life response as well. I.e. watch out for an instance of sudden good fortune, correlate it to an inner or outer positive behavior on your part,

and then replicate it as often as possible from thereon in. For example, let's say that you evoke a response that suddenly frees you from a difficult situation. After analyzing the event, you realize that the result came about because you engaged in a self-giving act toward a friend. Now that you know why the event was precipitated -- self-givingness -- you can *continually* take to it, which will in turn constantly evoke the miraculous!)

Strategy 5: Apply the Right Human Behaviors to Resolve a Problem

The fifth strategy to evoke life response is to utilize the right life response behaviors to resolve a problem. In essence, we examine the list of right human behaviors, pick out the appropriate ones, and apply it to the problem, thereby quickly attracting the resolution to the problem.

For example, let us say that you are having a problem with the people working on a project you are in charge of. Some members of the team are uncooperative, even rebellious, while others are blasé and indifferent. What should you do to attract the resolution of the problem?

To begin with you scan the list of life response inducing behaviors (shown in the Strategy 2 area), and realize that you have not been self-giving enough to your staff. In fact, you have been quite demanding. Therefore, you decide to meet with several of the uncooperative team members on your project, and ask them individually how you can be more helpful to them. As a result, life suddenly responds with word that the company has hired on several new people who would be ideal resources for the project.

In addition, you realize that you have been far too weak with those individuals who are blasé and indifferent. (You realize this after scanning the human behaviors that attract and seeing the "Take to greater psychological strength" entry.) As a result, you decide to be more forceful and persuasive when dealing with these particular team members. A day after taking that tact, you learn that the R&D phase, which was mired in problems, has suddenly and most unexpectedly resolved itself.

Then there is another problem that you need solving. It turns out that is a lot of confusion and anger surrounding the implementation of the design phase. Everyone involved in an uproar and morale is starting to fail. When you then scan the list of behaviors, you realize that taking to

calm and equality of being, i.e. not reacting and being still, is the right behavior to take in this situation. When you then implement this inner approach, the problem suddenly self-corrects itself as if by magic, as solutions present themselves from seemingly out of nowhere.

In this way, we can take any problem we are having, review the list of behaviors and choose the right ones for that situation. Perhaps what is required is a change in attitude, or maybe it's an increase in our level of organization, or taking to a calmer disposition. Whatever the case, if the problem is clearly defined and we apply the right behaviors, we will attract its sudden resolution. In fact, we are likely to attract positive conditions that go far beyond the solution to the problem. For example, if we take to the right behaviors to solve a problem on this particular project, another project suddenly improves itself!

Strategy 6: Open to the Spiritual Force for any Aspect of Life (Consecration)

The greatest secret revealed in this book is the power of the Spiritual Force. When we open to the Higher Power before engaging in a work or activity -- also known as the act of "consecration" -- we attract unprecedented dynamic and creative response from the world around us. In fact, there is no known human capacity or functioning that can compare to it. With that in mind, let us summarize several practical ways to implement this sixth, ultimate life response inducing strategy:

Activities

The simplest approach to consecration is to open to the Force before engaging in an activity. E.g., you could consecrate an act of great importance such as an upcoming wedding you are organizing, or a looming critical meeting with a client, or a crucial company project you are about to begin. Similarly, you can consecrate less significant activities -- like starting out the day's work (one of my personal favorites), preparing a meal, or before meeting with a friend. You can even consecrate the very smallest of acts, like having your dinner, brushing your teeth, or taking a shower. As a result, circumstance will unfold smoothly, positive conditions will arise, and spiritual-like experiences can show themselves. E.g., when you consecrate a crucial meeting with a client, not only are you informed that you have won over the competition and secured a big contract, but it is twice the original size. Moreover, you

also learn that certain financial obstacles that stood between you and the client for years have now suddenly cleared up. Finally, and perhaps most tellingly, you perceived an unprecedented amount of good will and harmony amongst the participants -- something sorely missing in the past.

Problems

In addition to consecrating activities large and small acts, you can also consecrate serious *problems* you are having in life -- such as a shortage of funds, or a conflict with a superior, or an acute difficulty facing your organization. By opening to the Force, not only will these problems quickly dissipate, but unthought of positive circumstances are likely to rise in their place. For example, when you consecrate a difficult relationship you are having with a co-worker, not only does your rapport with that person improve, but from out of nowhere you receive word of an unprecedented career-changing opportunity.

In addition to *current* difficulties, you can also consecrate problems that are dogging you from the *past*. If you see how these circumstances are still burdening you today, make the necessary adjustment in consciousness to rectify it, and then offer the entire matter to the Higher Power, the negative influence will quickly evaporate, and new, unprecedented, positive circumstance will take their place. For example, let's say that through subtle awareness you perceive that your career has come to a standstill because you have not taken care of a long-standing debt. When you then arrange to make payment on that account and consecrate the entire matter with fervor , not only do you suddenly receive word that a long-shot loan application has come through, but it arrives at an exceedingly low rate. As a result, you go through the most dramatic upgrade in your lifestyle in a decade.

Individual & Collective

In addition to consecrating conditions that affect you as an *individual*, you can consecrate matters affecting a wider *collective* of people -- including your family, school, company, organization, community, state, nation, or even the world itself. If you have a deep interest in the matter, have taken the time to understand the issue for a variety of perspectives, and offer the entire matter to the spiritual Force with passion, astonishing results are bound to follow.

I have already described how I took a deep interest in the energy crisis looming over California in 2001. When I offered that matter to the Higher Power with great intensity, it suddenly dissolved a few days later. In a similar incident in 2008, when fires were running roughshod over Northern and Central California, threatening to burn down half the state while releasing highly toxic smoke under unbearable 105-110 degrees temperatures, I consecrated that matter as well. The next morning, when I looked out the window, I saw that the skies had suddenly cleared, relieving 10 million people of further conflagration and toxic smoke.

Strategy 7: Follow the Process of Accomplishment to Achieve Your Heart's Desire

The seventh and final strategy to evoke life response is to follow the process of accomplishment from vision to manifestation to quickly attract the object of your desire. This is the most *conscious* of the life response strategies because you are systematically directing the course of your life to achieve a goal. By deliberately following the steps of the process, you harness a vast power that puts you in alignment with the most favorable of conditions, fulfilling, often exceeding your heart's desire.

For example, when I envisioned obtaining a rewarding job at a computer store, developed a plan to make it happen, and executing it through right attitude and a persevering effort, I not only secured the position, but I did so on my first try. It would also turn out to be the key event that established me in the computer field. Likewise, when a woman friend of ours from India followed that same process, not only did she quickly rise from nothing to running her own company -- included overseeing a staff of a dozen employees -- but her income rose an astounding 10-fold.

When we diligently follow the process of accomplishment from vision to decision to organization to action, life quickly offers its bounty. Having said this, keep in mind that there are situations where it may not be necessary to complete the process in order to attract your goal. In these instances, your aspiration is so strong and your commitment so firm that you are able to attract your heart's desire without taking any outer action! Here is a case in point.

One day several years ago, I made the decision to expand my training and seminar work. To bring that about, I considered several strategies. In

the past, my inclination had been to perform my services for a given client and then move on to the next one. I never seriously considered the possibility that I could instead work for a *single* company on a regular, ongoing basis. This seemingly more efficient and lucrative strategy was a very different approach for me.

And so in the days that followed, I began to shift my thoughts and feelings to the real possibility of finding one repeating client. Well, wouldn't you know it, but only a few days later I was approached by an agent of one of world's largest pharmaceutical companies who offered me the opportunity to provide my services at *dozens* of their locations worldwide! In essence, I had attracted from out of nowhere, the single, repeating client I aspired for, and I had done so without taking *any* outer action. Life simply responded to the intensity of my aspiration and commitment, producing one of the most powerful responses of my life. It was another indication of the infinite-like power we have to move life from within.

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Having said this, let me add two important factors to insure success for this strategy. The first has to do with our attitudes and perceptions. Though following the process will ordinarily attract our goal, there are times when life holds back its bounty. However, if we scrape away the appropriate limiting attitudes or belief related to that effort, powerful response will follow. I have already mentioned the incident involving the owner of a company who wanted to boost sales. Though he followed the process of accomplishment in earnest, he was still unable to attract his goal. However, when he shifted his belief from the local market to servicing the entire world, sales took off and eventually doubled.

The second strategy to insure success is to offer the entire matter to the spiritual Force. Doing so will attract conditions that will simply *overwhelm*. In fact, in the incident where I attracted the opportunity to do presentations worldwide for a renowned pharmaceutical company, I offered that matter to the Higher Power. As a result, life responded in a way I never would have imagined!

(To learn more about following the process of accomplishment to quickly attract your heart's desire, please see the chapter *Envisioning & Creating Our Future*.)

7 KEY STRATEGIES TO MAKE LIFE RESPOND

1. Look Around, Be Aware, and Choose in the Right Direction
2. Take to one or More Human Behaviors to Continually Attract
3. Apply the Right Human Behaviors to an Upcoming Event
4. View a Negative, Correlate it to Yourself, & Make the Necessary Change
5. Apply the Right Human Behaviors to Resolve a Problem
6. Open to the Spiritual Force for any Aspect of Life (Consecration)
7. Follow the Process of Accomplishment to Achieve Your Heart's Desire

You Can Make Life Respond!

Throughout our journey, my objective has been to show you that we have an infinite capacity to move life from within. It has been my contention that when we make the right adjustment in consciousness, the outer world quickly, if not instantaneously responds in kind. This extraordinary faculty *to move life from within* has been the overarching theme of this book -- one I hope you now appreciate.

And yet throughout our lives we have been taught the opposite: that if we have a modicum of ambition, work hard, and act practically and sensibly, we will gain our fair share. In this existence, outcomes and rewards are perceived as finite and limited. In this life, benefits and results come about slowly and deliberately. E.g., if I do my best, others will take notice, evaluate my performance, and reward me commensurately somewhere down the line. In this reality, we perceive *limited* possibilities that occur within a “reasonable” timeframe, following the “normal” constraints and logic of life.

And yet we know from the many experiences presented in this book that life unfolds through a more subtle causality. We have seen that if we make the right inner behavioral change, *vast* results can come about in *extremely short order*. From this new perspective, what matters is not the level of our effort, skill, and knowledge, but the *quality of our psychological perspective*.

When Dee Hock attracted a job position that enabled him to alter the course of the multi-*trillion* dollar credit card industry, it was not because

he demonstrated a particular faculty or business skill, but because in one episode where he had to hunt through foul trash, he shifted from reluctance to acceptance.

And when a manager in Asia was given the opportunity to save the life of the child of the man who could destroy his business, it was not because he exercised a particular skill or negotiated a clever resolution, but because at a critical juncture, he maintained an inner poise of deep calm. As a result, life responded with overwhelming good fortune -- for himself, his company, *and* his adversary.

And when an individual in California helped diffuse an energy crisis affecting 35 million people, it was not because he played an important leadership role or participated directly in negotiations, but because he cared deeply about the situation, had a deep aspiration for things to change, and offered the matter to the spiritual Force. For that intense *inner* effort, life rewarded him and his community with the sudden and most dramatic end to a mounting crisis.

Mix and Match

All of these incidents suggest that any person, no matter what their situation or station in life, can attract similar results. All that is required is a basic understanding of life response and the ability to employ right strategies to evoke it.

For practical purposes then, the capacity to harness this infinite-like power comes down to the tactics we use. Since we are all unique individuals with different interests and temperaments, it would be helpful if there were a variety of approaches to choose from. It is for that reason that I have presented these seven widely diverse life response strategies. From these, each of us can formulate our own custom approach to life response: our own “personal toolkit of consciousness” for evoking the miraculous. Which methods you employ will depend on your individual aspirations, motivations, and priorities in life. Whatever they are, I encourage you to consider all seven approaches, and then come up with your own custom method to evoke these marvelous outcomes.

For example, after careful evaluation, one individual “A” decides to implement the strategy of following process of accomplishment (#7) so that he can methodically move his career forward from being a project manager to becoming portfolio manager, which is a more challenging and better-paying position. When he then follows the process, he quickly

attracts his deep-cherished goal through a series of miraculous-like events.

In addition, he also decides to employ the strategy of opening to the spiritual Force (#6) before engaging in important activities -- such as a critical business meetings or when making major presentations. When he follows that consecration strategy, the activity unfolds magnificently; as life's conditions are brought under control, and unprecedented positive outcomes arise out of nowhere.

Yet another individual "B" takes a different approach. She decides to focus on strategy 2, in which she targets several wanting personal qualities -- including her hostile attitude towards others, as well as a penchant towards psychological weakness. She also decides that she will consecrate certain major activities in her daily work routine (Strategy 6). As a result of implementing these strategies, she elicits one magnificent outcome after another. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, she begins to see herself and the world around her in a whole new light.

Sincere Effort

Having said this, I must add one small caveat. To be truly successful at evoking the miraculous, you need to be *sincere* about making the effort. If life response is a mere passing fancy -- something that holds your interest from time to time -- then it is probably not worth pursuing. However, if a life response is something that grips you, that calls you from a deeper place, then you are a perfect candidate to be part of an extraordinary adventure.

Does that include you?



A Call to Action

Though we have come to the end of this journey, another one awaits us. Though we have been privy to a vast array of powerful life response incidents, the true adventure begins when we experience them ourselves.

With that in mind, why not try to evoke a powerful response of your own in the next day or two. Pick out a behavior that is appealing to you - - perhaps an attitude you want to change, or an area of your home or work that needs cleaning, or an important activity worth consecrating -- and implement it ASAP. Remember: the life response will tend to come

quickly -- in a day, an hour, or even *instantaneous* to employing your strategy!

Keep in mind that by taking to life response, you will not only evoke results that will astound, but you will also see dramatic change in the condition of your life. Depending on which strategy you employ or aspect of your being you focus on, you are likely to experience dramatic changes in your work situation, your finances, your relations with others, and your energy level, to name a few. In fact, if you carry out your custom approach in earnest and with intensity, your level of success and happiness in life will *skyrocket*. It often happens so fast, you have little time to think about it.

So why wait months, years, or even decades for life to offer its bounty, when you can attract it out nowhere in the blink of an eye. Why not implement your own personalized life response strategies now, which will speed up time by bringing the rewards of the future into the present. Why not attract *anything* you want, *whenever* you want it -- leaving life's slow and difficult course behind.

An opportunity of a lifetime awaits you, if only you take the first small step. If that is the case, why not begin today by changing a *single* wanting behavior, or committing to one positive course of action, or opening to the spiritual Force in one situation. If you do, life will rush in with extraordinary results!

If you take that first step, and have that first life response experience, your life will never be the same.

The Central Message of Life Response:

Changes in consciousness *instantly* attract good fortune; indicating that the inner is the true determinant of the outer.

Postscript: Going Beyond ‘The Secret’

As this book moved to press, the video and book *The Secret* arrived on the scene, taking the world by storm. Its basic premise is that our mere intention has the power to attract the object of our desire. That if we visualize that which we want to bring about and put our emotions fully behind it, it will quickly manifest on its own.

It has been particularly interesting for me to see *The Secret* and this book on Life Response arrive at around the same time. In fact, it has been suggested by others that the sudden worldwide popularity of *The Secret* is no coincidence at all, but a “response” to the decade-long journey to bring this book on Life Response to fruition.

While that is a flattering assertion that alone would justify my efforts, the sudden popularity of *The Secret* is more than an answer to one person’s hopes and dreams. It is rather a response to the *world’s* yearning for something deeper and more fulfilling. It is a response to the emerging aspiration of humanity to go beyond the materialistic and mechanistic view of existence, that reduce us to machines, and denies us credit for that which makes us quintessentially human -- *the power to create our own universe*. The dramatic arrival of *The Secret* is indeed an indicator that the world is ready for this profound knowledge; and is mature enough to harness its infinite-like power. It is also a sign that we are ready to take the Next Step in human evolution.

In essence, *The Secret* is a composite of ideas taken from a variety of sources, including ancient Indian spiritual thought. Together it creates a general theory about the inner power we have to attract our heart’s desire. It can be summarized as follows:

- Intensely visualize and emotionalize the goal you want to achieve.
- Put your thoughts and feelings in harmony with what you want to accomplish.
- Express only positive feelings, avoiding negative emotions of all kind.
- Do not have any expectations of what form the result will take.

- Wait for the universe to respond; for circumstances to turn in your favor.

The Secret concludes that if you take this approach, the “Law of Attraction” will take over and quickly evoke you’re the object of your desire. This is indeed a profound understanding of the subtle nature of life, and in many ways parallels the phenomenon of Life Response addressed in this book.

But if our two approaches are so similar -- i.e. if we both indicate that we can quickly attract what we intensely aspire for -- then why bother reading *another* book on the subject, especially when *The Secret* has already captured the world’s imagination?

There are several reasons. For one, where the authors of *The Secret* have described in simple terms a powerful method to quickly attract a result, they have not really delineated the *how* and the *why*. Life Response, on the other hand, not only explains in full the process by which we can attract the object of our desire -- i.e. the *how* -- but describes the underlying reality that makes it possible -- i.e. the *why*.

Second, though *The Secret* provides a profound knowledge and approach for evoking a result, it is really focused on a *single* method. I.e. visualize what you hope to achieve; aspire deeply for it (with your emotions in full support), and the universe will do the rest. Though there is great truth in this approach, and it can often happen just this way, the reality is usually more complex, demanding an understanding of other forces at work -- including the psychological condition of the individual, the social and environmental context, and a variety of subtle laws and principles of life. Life Response, on the other hand, fills in those missing pieces by providing a vast array of approaches for attracting the miraculous for any and all circumstance.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, life response is not only a means of attracting success, but addresses our *entire nature*, showing the way for *complete fulfillment in life*. Where *The Secret* seeks to accomplish an objective, Life Response seeks realization at *all* levels of our being -- material, psychological, social, and spiritual.

After all, life is so vast, with infinite possibility and potential. Not only can we attract a targeted goal, such as a better job, but we can also experience the infinite wonders of existence! Life Response therefore gives a knowledge that is a *totality*, touching *every* aspect of the human

condition. It is the means of rapid accomplishment, but also a way to acquire deep insight into the nature of life. It is a path to career success, but also to deep psychological and spiritual fulfillment.

I congratulate the founders of *The Secret* for their remarkable breakthrough and gift to the world. Now I invite you the reader to begin a similar journey, and yet travel many steps beyond. –RP

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