Introduction

This is book three in the Natural Mind Series by Alan Macmillan Orr.

This book takes the concepts of “the natural mind – waking up” to a new level, placing the individual as sole creator of all he perceives and experiences. If you need to explore these concepts more deeply please return to book one, “The Natural Mind – Waking Up, which is a 250 topic, personal journey into being human.

Why 21 Days?

There's nothing important about the number of days, it could be a one day, sixty, or a six hundred day manifesto; and if you search the web, there are people everywhere trying to sell you a book that tells you you can change a habit in 21 days. I am under no such delusion. For me change is timeless.

Change is instantaneous but the resistance to the change could take a lifetime.

For me, the 21 days suited the timing up to the end of the Mayan calendar on the 21st December 2012, nothing more. If you would like to change the way you think about something, then change. No need to wait for 21 days.

Why a manifesto? Isn't that a political thing?

A manifesto is defined by the oxford english dictionary as “a public declaration of policy and aims, especially one issued before an election by a political party or candidate:” but it is also generally accepted to be “a written public declaration of the intentions, motives, or views of the issuer” (wikipedia).

For me, it is the right term to attach to statements which are personal to me. These are my words for me, which are made public only as a concept to help others think about the way they think, and to ultimately create their own public manifestos.

Why is it written in the first person?

As a manifesto is a public declaration of the intentions of the issuer, it makes sense that it is not written in the third person.

If you ever read life instructions, or life affirmations, they are always referring to “you,” e.g. “today be the best person you can be,” which always seems like someone telling me what to do, or how to live. When I read and write in the “I” form it is personal. My mind recognises it as an instruction I give to myself which I believe is more powerful than an instruction given by someone else.

Why do all the statements within the manifesto start with “Today...”?
Well, there's no time like the present! In fact it's the only time we can say is “real” as it is the only time we can directly experience.

Although we can think about the past and the future, today is the only time we exist, and even if we may believe that we may “exist” in all timelines, it makes sense to deal with the “present”. Well, for me anyway.

Why does each statement usually contain the words “begin to” or “start to”? Whatever we may choose to believe about the nature of mind, and how long change takes, it seems to make sense to me to offer statements as possible future states of mind, not absolutes that must be dogmatically followed.

I see each statement as a seed, planted deep in my mind, ready to take root in any shape or form “I” see fit. Ready to be called to action when “I” see fit to let it.

Why should I follow your manifesto?

I have never sought followers, and in fact, I thoroughly discourage the use of my words for any individual. Rather, I see my work as a possible framework that helps you develop your own concepts and ideas.
Day One

“Today, I accept that everyone in the world has different opinions. I respect their right to hold these opinions free from fear or the threat of violence.”

Acceptance is a word you may not like. After all, accepting that someone holds an opinion about something you find abhorrent may go against every fixed idea in your mind, but let us explore this together.

“I believe that women should not be allowed to have abortions”
“I believe that women should be allowed to have abortions”

If you notice the above statements they are exactly the same, except one says should, the other says should not. Only one word is different, but it has the potential to create violence and anger amongst believers of either statement.

Opinion

“A view or judgement formed about something, not necessarily based on fact or knowledge.”

“I'm right! You're wrong!”

Every day, somewhere, someone is thinking, or telling someone, that, because, you see, when you have an opinion about something, you must be right, and anyone who holds an opposing view is, in your opinion, a foe, with whom to do battle.

Occasionally the opposing views will end in murder. Why? Well, when people run out of words they resort to more convincing methods – guns, knives, fists, etc... That's how primitive we really are as a species!

Whether the opinion is in a classroom, or is held by teachers, religious people, or governments makes no difference. You see, any opinion is an extreme position, as it does not allow room for any movement. “That's my opinion, and that's the end of it!”

But. And there is a but.

If all we do is hold an opinion to ourselves, what harm does it do? None.
But. And there is another but!
We can't keep our opinion to ourselves can we? We have to share it, and try to convince people at any cost that we are right and they are wrong.

Whether we have any evidence that we are right is irrelevant. And even if we do, the point of trying to convince people (in my opinion) is to bend them to our will. It seems to make life better for our brains!

“Yes you are right, I see that now,” even if you don't is better than being physically or mentally beaten into submission.
And the winner of the opinion contest can go away happy in the knowledge that he is right. It doesn't really help us in our quest for enlightenment, knowing we are right, does it?

So how do we transcend this? Well, you notice that I made the statement “I respect their right to hold these opinions...” To me, respecting people’s rights to hold (not express) opinions is fundamental in helping us move past fixed positions. If I respect your rights and you respect mine, then what is the point in holding onto fixed opinions? If you hold an opinion but do not express it, then the whole contest of your opinion vs. my opinion becomes very childish indeed. Do you agree? And even if you do agree, why should it matter to me?
Day Two

“Today I will start to take personal responsibility for my thoughts, actions, and the consequences which arise from them”

Personal responsibility is a hard concept to grasp for most of us. There is always someone to blame for how I'm feeling, how much money I have or don't have, why I can't get a job, why I can't pay my bills, why I can't find somebody to love me, why I'm in debt, why my wife left me, why a loved one died, why the world's is in such a terrible state, why I'm afraid, why someone was murdered, etc. But who is really to blame?

Blame

“Feel or declare that (someone or something) is responsible for a fault or wrong”

If we take a long, hard look at our lives and the people who have been connected to our lives in one way or another, we can always find someone to blame, and that makes us (temporarily feel better).

“The capitalist scoundrels are to blame for the state of our economy, muslims are to blame for the west living in constant fear of a terrorist attack, christians are to blame for everything, Banks are to blame for me losing my house, the government is to blame for me not having a job, large corporations are to blame for destroying the rainforests...” etc.

So now we have that out in the open. Yes we're angry, yes we're hurt, yes on the surface it looks like someone was to blame. Yes the drunk driver killed your son. Yes the murderer killed your wife. Yes the child molester raped your daughter. Yes the terrorists blew up your family. These are facts. These we accept. Terrible as they might be to us, they have happened. So who do we blame?

Of course we must blame the perpetrators; we must bring them to justice. Yes we must!

“So, what's personal responsibility got to do with blame? How is me taking personal responsibility going to bring back my murdered wife?”

Let me start from the beginning.

We are supposedly the most intelligent species on the planet. We are all capable of great creation, and great destruction. So when I talk about taking personal responsibility I am talking to every person on the entire planet. Murderer, politician, religious extremist, banker, do-gooder, charity worker, oil worker, gun assembler.

We are all responsible for everything that is happening, has happened or will happen. Do you see? We live in a connected world. We are all parts of the whole. And although we may not have the power right now of “seeing” the future, we need to begin to.

Every action begins with a thought, and ends in a consequence, and round and round we go. I, as a powerful individual creator, one part of the most intelligent species of the planet have thoughts. Those thoughts may have been formed through the actions of another, which ended in a consequence, which started my thinking process...
“He killed my wife. He's going to pay for what he did. I'm going to kill him.”

Can you see the stupidity of statements such as “an eye for an eye?” How childish, and at the same time, so destructive.

Most people talk of taking responsibility for your actions but forget that every action is preceded by a thought and ends with a consequence. And anyone who says “I'm sorry I wasn't thinking...” is not telling the whole truth. Sure, you may have appeared to “just act without thinking,” but I guarantee there was a thought which triggered it (even if the person suffers from a delusional mental illness).

We never look forward to see the the consequences of our actions. For some reason that is unimportant.

I'm sure the inventor of gunpowder (apparently in china in the ninth century) could not have foreseen the murder of twenty seven people at a school in Connecticut in the U.S in December 2012. I'm sure the person who worked on the production line at the factory which made the Bushmaster .223 assault rifle used in the killings, would not consider themselves responsible for the murders.

But here we have two people, separated by oceans and land over 7,000 miles and 1,200 years apart, connected by an event that neither of them could have foreseen.

“Seems a bit of a loose connection” says you. “The only person responsible for the shootings at the Sandy Hook Elementary School was the person who pulled the trigger.”

“Was it?” says me.

I'll leave you to think about that one.

I'm sure the inventor of the motor car could not have foreseen the car crashes that kill over a million people every year, or the inventor of radio communications foreseeing that billions of people are now addicted to their mobile phones.

Connecting personal responsibility for consequences over hundreds or thousands of years seems like a crazy idea, and indeed it is, even if we can prove a definitive link.

We live in the present. We live right now, and personal responsibility exists right now. That's why we can only take personal responsibility for thoughts, and actions which exist right now. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't be rolling the thoughts forward to see if our actions will have any negative consequences in the future.

Impossible?
Let us go into this more deeply.

The thoughts we have may become actions and actions must have a consequence. Whether that consequence is 5,000 miles or years apart.

So let us begin to look at our thoughts carefully, and not hand responsibility to others for the consequences which may arise from them. It may seem like a crazy, time consuming exercise, but if we don't, there will always be someone looking for someone to blame. Wouldn't it be a shame for the amazing human race if that person was us?
Day Three

“Today I will slow down, just for a moment, and be thankful for all that I am, and have”

It all sounds a bit hippieish doesn't it? You're not here to listen to empowering new age nonsense are you? Slow down? Be thankful? Ugh.

So let’s look into this statement a bit more deeply shall we?

I assume you are alive, as you are reading this! You may have been born ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, or eighty years ago, and all your life you have battled through each day, studying, working hard at whatever your chosen (or forced) profession is, bringing up a family, paying your bills, and generally keeping your head above water, working to benefit/destroy nature and humanity.

You are one part of a seven billion whole. You are significant only in that you exist and will be forgotten quickly or slowly over time, depending on your influence on the world and the historians desire to let your memory fade or be kept alive for some purpose or other.

But today you are alive. And whether you perceive your life to be good or bad, your heart keeps beating, and save throwing yourself off a building, or being killed in a deliberate/accidental act, you will be alive until your body has had enough.

You will then be placed in a coffin, or covered in cloth and depending on the culture you were indoctrinated with, either burnt or buried. Your ashes may live on a mantlepiece, or be scattered to the wind, or your body eaten slowly by creatures in the ground.

So there you have it. You came out of your mother's vagina, screamed, breathed oxygen, were fed milk, opinions and propaganda, until you were old enough to earn a living, or were thrown onto the street to fend for yourself. You worked hard or you did not. You caused chaos or created beauty, got old, and then your heart stopped. The End. And whether you believe in an afterlife, reincarnation or nothing at all. That's it.

Was it fun? Did you enjoy yourself?

Whether the world was created by god, or we evolved from apes, it doesn't really matter, no matter who you tried to convince during your short life on this planet.

So what did you see? What did you experience? Who did you help? What did you understand about yourself? What do you mean you were too busy?

Of course you were busy! Everyone had you learning or doing something for close to the 24 hours in every day, and you liked it. You liked being busy. After all, the world must keep turning (even if it turns without us lifting a finger!).

So if you were that busy how could you have time to slow down?

I see your point!

The human heart beats on average over 100,000 times a day, in order to move blood and oxygen all over the human body, yet it asks nothing in return. It requires no education, flattery, money, or
praise.

And you're telling me you don't have anything to slow down and be thankful for?
Yes, I hear you. You're too busy to listen to this hippie nonsense.
Day Four

“Today I will start to notice my surroundings & the natural world of which I am knowingly or unknowingly dependent on”

We’ve done pretty well as a species, wouldn’t you say? So whether a supernatural being created the world or we evolved from apes it doesn’t matter.

Neither god, nor the apes invented the internet, the car, gas central heating, flushing toilets, antibiotics, the jet engine, the television, the knife and fork, agriculture... That person was Man – homo sapiens, the most intelligent species ever to walk the Earth.

Through the constant desire to explore, Man has systematically invented some of the most amazing things we take for granted.

From the humble brick to build our shelters, to satellite navigation to help planes, ships and cars navigate to their destination without fear of getting lost, Man the invincible has been there creating new ideas and new technology to better his world.

I say “his world” because that is the only world that exists to Man, and why wouldn’t it? A lion only sees what it needs to survive, that is the limit of its world; an ant only sees what it needs, to ensure the survival of the colony; a bird only eats what it needs in order to ensure its own survival, and the survival of its offspring.

Wait a minute. something's not right here, is it? Here I am comparing Man with all manners of creatures but the comparison doesn't make sense; how can I compare Man the Inventor with creatures whose operating model is pre-programmed survival? The simple answer is, I can’t. Man is alone, sitting on his throne, as self appointed King of the World.

So what’s makes Man different?

Man is no longer bound as a slave to pre-programmed survival. Through his big brain, Man has been able to cast off his primitive shackles, and reach for the stars. Remember that even if god did create the world, everything in it, and last but not least, Man, he didn’t create the man who could use his brain creatively as he does now.

He didn’t create a human being in his image who had the power to create atomic weapons or build roads, drill for oil, or make fast food, for that is the domain of modern Man. No other creature on Earth has created what we have. Why? Well, I’m not completely sure! But it seems we are well adapted to make and use tools, and have developed a brain capable of creative problem solving; but as I’m no scientist I’ll leave my guesswork there.

Suffice to say, the industrial revolution (which began in Britain in the late 18th century) was the turning point for human development.

Industrialisation freed Man from mundane tasks; automating processes, and allowing increasingly advanced specialization.

Since the first domestication of plants that signalled the birth of agriculture and the domestication of livestock for food, and animals to use for transport, and pull farm machinery, Man has been freeing himself from his old hunter gatherer ways to develop his own intellect; to create art
and music, to create wealth for himself, to understand the world, to never have to worry about food shortages ever again, to overcome nature and put himself firmly in control of all that surrounds him.
I’m not dependent on anything. Am I?

Most of us have been given some education about “the natural world,” but this is seen as something external to us, something we observe, that we watch tv programs about, that we visit whilst on holiday, but we don’t see it as something we have a deep relationship with.

Let’s start with the basics shall we?

Me: “Where does your food come from?”
You: “I earn money and I buy my food.”
Me: “Where does your clothing come from?”
You: “I earn money and I buy my clothes.”
Me: “Where do the materials to build houses come from?”
You: “I earn money to pay my rent that’s all I know.”
Me: “Where does the heat come from to cook your food, heat the water, and heat/cool your house?”
You: “I earn money and pay my bills.”

Four basic but essential needs. Paid for by money, created by a mystery force! And if you live in a poor country you are probably closer to the mystery force than those of us living a very nice lifestyle in “The West”.

So what is this mystery force I speak of? Well, the mystery force is all around us. Soil, trees, rocks, oceans, rivers, animals, insects, are all part of it. Got it yet? Of course you have! It’s planet Earth, also known as “home.”

But what does this have to do with you? Well, if you look around your other home you will start to understand.

I am sitting in a small kitchen right now. Around me are the following items (feel free to skip through this list if you start getting bored.)

Two chairs, a table, a radiator, two boxes of cereal, a drawer full of knives and forks, a cupboard full of cups, a cupboard full of plates, bowls, glasses, a dishwasher, a sink with hot and cold taps, a toaster, a kettle, drying cloths, washing cloths, a pineapple, two bananas, a bag of oranges, a microwave, a fridge freezer (full of various purchased items), an electric cooker, a microwave, cooking utensils, cleaning products, aluminium foil, a wall clock, pictures on the wall, a bin (full of food that is out of date / plastic packaging / anything not required), a cupboard full of reusable plastic bags...

Phew! That’s some list. And I haven’t even been through all the cupboards, and certainly not through the house. Do you want me to, or would you prefer to take your own inventory in your own time?

That list of products are not external to me, they are component parts of the Earth, put together by other humans to sell, to make money, to make my life “easier”. But how many of the Earth’s resources had to be used to make even one item on that list? Do you even care?

That depends on how much money you have! You see, the more money you have the further you will be from the source.

If you have nothing, you will be closely connected to the source. Your heating / cooking fuel may come from firewood, but there again where does the ignition source come from? A lighter? Matches? All of which had to be made using materials from the Earth.

If you have plenty of money you will happily pay for food to be imported, then processed and prepared for you so that you can put it in the microwave for five minutes. If you have very little, you will have to plant seed (if you have any) hope you have enough water to grow your crops
(where does the water come from?) the right tools to manage your crops (where do these come from?) and finally tools to harvest your crops (assuming that you have land you can work, shelter, clothing, and enough food and water to survive until your crops are ready to harvest).

So you see, the closer you get to the source, the more connected you are, and the more complex it becomes to survive on your own. Life on Earth is suddenly not as appealing as it seemed a moment ago.

No more arts, flying, creating, education, cars, holidays, exotic foods, wine, entertainment, engineering, science, discussion, philosophising, mobile phones, laptop computers. Instead we are left with work to allow our continued survival, much the same as the animals whom we believe we have nothing in common with, because, you see, we were created by god etc...

The life we have on this planet has been made possible by 10,000 years of a surplus of food made possible by agriculture, of the subsequent specialisation of Man, of us all playing a small part in a big wheel.

Yes we have been inventive, but when we look closely, everything is made possible by “the natural world,” (you know, the one we are external to, that we have conquered).

So before we use up every available resource on this planet, maybe we should have a long hard look at our houses, our food, our clothes, our bills, and realise that although “money” paid for them, the Earth and its inhabitants, provided them at a cost far greater than the money you gave to get them.

One day we may find the Earth realises that in order to protect itself, something’s got to give. And that something, ladies and gentleman, will be us – homo sapiens, self-proclaimed King of the World.
Day Five

“Today if I feel angry or feel the need to criticise anyone, I will not try to justify the feeling, instead, I will let it go.”

Anger is a funny thing isn’t it? It seems to come out of nowhere! One moment we are all having a good time, and the next, Bang! Anger! Shouting, screaming, belittling, criticizing, name calling, threatening, pushing, punching, stabbing, shooting...

Some or all of the above may be present when someone is “angry,” (a state of heightened psychological, emotional and physical tension), and may be caused by perceived insults, a build up of tension to such a point it cannot be contained any more, feelings of being wronged, not getting what you wanted etc.

For now, let’s just accept that anger however justified, is not the most healthy of emotions, no matter who tells you that it is. Some people also say that suppressing anger is a bad thing as well, and it needs to be managed, by helping people deal with how they feel when they are “insulted” or “channelled” into an activity that allows a controlled release, such as boxing.

So anger management can be a good thing, after all, we don’t want people running round the world screaming and fighting each other due to such a simple thing as “perception.”

Is anger real?

Let us go into that question carefully. “Is anger real?” Well, the effects of anger certainly are. People can be afraid when someone is angry, people can get hurt when someone is angry. But the emotion of “anger” itself is not visible to the naked idea, just the consequences of the release of energy which we have named “anger”.

So here I am, living my life when suddenly someone says or does something which starts to make me feel like I am going to boil over. Should I “turn the other cheek” or should I engage them in verbal or physical battle?

Let’s look at it from the other person’s point of view for a moment shall we? If anger is generated through our perception of events then you must have said or done something that made the other person angry!

You didn’t? Well, maybe it was how you were dressed, (what is that man doing wearing muslim clothing in a christian neighbourhood) how you were behaving, (having fun and being boisterous near older people who didn’t like it) how you looked (a white man in a black neighbourhood), in fact, it could be anything, couldn’t it?

Let’s face it, until we can see through other people’s eyes and perceive ourselves, we will never really know what triggers anger. You took my pen, you pulled out in front of me, you spoke to that boy I liked, you didn’t say thank you when I held the door open for you, you pushed past me in the street, you’re from a different group, you don’t believe in god, you believe in the wrong god, you looked at another man, you talked to another woman, you didn’t do the housework when I asked you....And on and on and on...

Some “anger” may even be subconscious reflex due to cultural conditioning, parental views, peer
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group views etc..

We can never truly understand what it is that is making people angry. They could probably find a million things to be angry about; but we can’t worry about other people and how they perceive the world, we can only concentrate on ourselves – on our perceptions, and the personal responsibility we have for those perceptions.

Today I take responsibility for my anger

Today I personally have several things to be angry about. I am still owed money by a person I did work for several months ago. I am angry with myself for putting on weight over the last year. I am angry that I do not have enough money for my trip in four weeks time. I am angry that someone was rude to me in a coffee shop. I am angry that someone bumped into me and didn’t apologise.

All very justified I would say. Any normal person would be angry finding themselves in just one of those situations, wouldn’t you agree? Well, whether you agree or not, and whether I am justified in feeling angry the fact remains that I must take responsibility for the feelings, not blame others for me feeling angry.

“It’s your fault! If you hadn’t bumped into me I wouldn’t be angry, would I?”
“It’s your fault! If you had just paid me I wouldn’t be angry would I?”
“If you had just done as I said I wouldn’t be angry, would I?”
“If she hadn’t parked in my space I wouldn’t be angry, would I?”

Are you starting to see how ridiculous this anger is? We are supposed to be the most intelligent species on the planet but how easily risen to anger we are! Our large brains seem to struggle to cope with day to day situations, because our ideas of right and wrong and how people should act, and how they should speak to us, have been imprinted onto us from such an early age.

Let’s face it, we don’t know why we get angry do we? We may be able to justify it as I have done above, but we don’t understand the neurological processes that happen when someone pulls out in front of our car, do we? And although scientists may be able to map parts of the brain which “light up” when a perceived threat or insult takes place, it isn’t going to help us in the long term to be a less violent species, any more than anger management training will.

Sure I may be given some positive self-talk for when I feel angry, or hang a boxing bag in my garage to hit when I feel angry, but what if we dropped the word “Anger” and “Angry” from our vocabulary?

How would I describe how I am feeling? How would I connect with the processes in my brain and body? How would I use my mind to see through these “feelings” and understand their true nature? What does the feeling I used to call A-N-G-E-R look like? What is it comprised of? What colour is it? Where is it?

Can you see it? Can you feel it in your chest? In your feet? In your arms? Does it exist in others, or in you?

What purpose does it serve you? Does it protect you? Does it show others how powerful you are? Does it do anything to create a more harmonious world?

No?

Well I have one suggestion, let whatever it is, wherever it is, flow through you and ground to the Earth. After all, it is only energy! Energy just needs to find an exit from the body. Let it go through your feet and dissipate through the Earth. The Earth doesn’t mind, in fact it positively encourages you to do something that creates more harmony and less violence. Try it today.
Day Six

“Today, I will start to evaluate what I do to earn money, and how what I do impacts the lives of others around the world”

“Who are you to tell me I have to evaluate what I do for a living?! That’s nobody’s business but mine.”

Of course, you’d be right. We don’t live in a totalitarian society where what you do is controlled by the state (and if you do, it’s time to move.)

You have been educated, you have been given careers and further education advice, and you have decided on a career. Congratulations!

What you do may depend on whether you passed or failed your exams, what your parents want you to do, what your peer group is doing, or you may have decided to go your own way.

You may have decided on a job that interests you, but one thing’s for sure, money is the reason you get up every morning. It isn’t? Well, you must have plenty of cash then, so congratulations again!

For those people who get up every morning to go to work, the one thing on your mind is not “how is the work I am doing affecting the lives of others around the world,” or indeed “how is the work I am doing impacting my own well being, the well being of my family and friends, and last but not least, the impact on the planet?”

You’re too busy worrying about working, I can understand that. When I was working in information technology all I could think of was the project I was working on, and what I had to achieve. If you had asked me the same question I have asked you today, I would turn off completely and think “why doesn’t he mind his own business!”

So when I say I understand that this question may make you feel slightly uneasy, I do!

Last year, one of the readers of “the natural mind – waking up” sent me an email, and whilst most was complimentary, he took me to task on the jobs section.

“I found the section titled jobs left me very angry, an emotion I know you would not approve of, to suggest that people should choose their job according to the damage it does to the planet etc., is just fanciful bullcrap. if we did that it would mean there would be very few jobs people actually could do, everything has a knock on effect to something else, I produce parts for cars and lorries I’m sure you could give a million reasons why I should change my job, is this just an excuse for you to not get a job and justify it to your disappointed father, you are an author your books are printed on paper taken from trees destroying the natural environment of countless animals is this hypocritical...”

I think the writer of this email perfectly encapsulates the feelings of most people who read works of philosophy where the writer shares some big ideas or concepts. The thought in most readers minds is “this is impossible, this could never work,” and of course, when we think things are impossible
they usually are.

The most profound statement from the writer is when he says “to suggest that people should choose their job according to the damage it does to the planet etc, is just fanciful bullcrap. if we did that it would mean there would be very few jobs people actually could do.”

So let's go into this paragraph very very carefully. What he is actually saying is, if people chose their job according to the damage it does to the planet etc, there would be very few jobs people could do. Wow! He's absolutely right!

Currently, there are over seven billion people on this planet. Seven billion people who are all programmed to get a job to feed, clothe, and house themselves. Seven billion people. Do you know what that number looks like? On paper it is 7,000,000,000 but in the real world, can you imagine how many people that is? No, neither can I. Suffice to say, that is a lot of mouths to feed.

Stop for a moment and reflect...

Great, now we've all caught our breaths, I think we should start looking back, back to a time before the birth of agriculture, back to a time when life was very different from it is now; a time when people lived in small groups, where “work” was hunting animals and gathering edible plants.

According to archaeologists and historians these people lived in caves and temporary dwellings, and the world population was estimated to be anything from ten thousand to one million people.

So what did these people do for a “job”? Well, given that there was no formal education, no industrialisation, and no career guidance councillors, I would guess that their job would be hunting and gathering food and doing anything else that would help keep the small tribe alive.

A difficult life? Yes, in a way, for they were always trying to find food, but also a much simpler life. Did they have the time or the awareness to enjoy that simple life? That is another question, one which I do not have the answer to, but one thing's for sure, their impact on the lives of others was fairly low, as it was on the planet's resources (that's enough of the history lesson.)

“Sounds boring to me”
“Yeah, me too! What did they do in the evening, there was no entertainment or anything”
“No arts or books, or tv”
“...And no bars or clubs...”
“And no holidays!”
“I'm glad I didn't live then, sounds terrible. How did they survive without facebook and twitter, and mobiles?”
“How did they pay for anything without a credit card???”

We have come a long way since the time of cave dwellers and hunter gatherers. We are Modern Man!

But what we call “Modern Man” hasn't been around that long. Until the dawn of the industrial revolution in the 1800's, jobs were in traditional industries closely linked to the land, and the population wasn't huge either. I'm not suggesting people lived in harmony, far from it, but the impact they had on each other and the planet itself was low.

The population crept up slowly at first, reaching the first billion only in 1804, then it started its steady acceleration to two billion in 1927, three billion in 1960, four billion in 1974, five billion in 1987, six billion in in 1999, and seven billion in 2012, but this isn't a topic on population growth, so why are we discussing it?

Over the last few paragraphs we talked about jobs, from nomadic hunting and gathering for survival, through to the settling of Man, made possible through the domestication of animals and plants, but now it's time to fast forward to the present and in particular to the capitalist societies most of us live in (even if we are governed by so-called communists, socialists, or dictatorships).
Whatever the social policies pursued by governments, the people are firmly entrenched in making money — lots of it, and just because you haven’t made your millions yet that doesn’t mean you wouldn’t like to.

So let me ask you a question. What would you do to make money? How far would you go to make money?

Some of you might say that you have ethics and morals that would stop you from doing things like selling drugs, but whatever your ethics, we can be sure that you haven’t mapped out the impact of your job on the planet as a whole, including the impact on your fellow man and all the other species.

“What!!?” says you. “You want me to do what? Are you crazy or something? You must be! I don’t have time to do that, and anyway, what’s the point of me doing it if I’m the only one doing it.” And I see your point.

What is the point of me doing anything if no one else is doing it. But if you remember, this is an “I” manifesto, we are not worried about anyone else but ourselves here. This is our life and we take responsibility for our thoughts, actions and the consequences which arise from them.

Let’s start with me shall we? I do many things but my official “job” is probably a writer, and although I earn very little from it, it is my main source of income.

The reader who corresponded with me says this “you are an author your books are printed on paper taken from trees destroying the natural environment of countless animals”, and he would be right. Although I know 99% of all readers download the book over the internet, and do not buy printed copies, that is no justification. The computers they download onto need resources from the Earth, people have to sit in factories in repetitive jobs assembling them. The computers need electricity as does the internet which has a harmful effect on the environment, and the money paid to the electricity companies and internet companies is lining the pockets of individuals, put into banks who may be investing in companies who have unethical practices, and paid in the form of taxes to governments who may use the money to oppress their own people, and start wars in other countries (whilst lining their own pockets).

And the circle continues.

Just because I write a book which I believe will help people change and therefore affect the world positively, I am also aware that I am a part of the problem.

And in case this all sounds too crazy or too difficult, take a deep breath, and let’s relax for a minute.

Good, now we may continue.

I say that I am aware that the way I choose to earn money has an impact on my fellow man and the natural environment, but I am also aware that just by being alive has an impact somewhere, and as I don’t plan on committing suicide any time soon, I’ll have an impact every second I breathe.

So what’s the solution to the terrible impact we are all having on each other and the world. Well, as I said, we are not here to worry about others, even though we may think that someone who makes bombs or guns for a living or works in an abattoir is having more of an impact than our job working as a web designer for a charity which saves children in Africa!

Remember this - I am responsible for my choices to earn money. I am responsible for the impact my choice has on the world, and once I take responsibility, and map the impact, I will make the right decision. I cannot hope to understand the impact without making the connections.

As we draw this topic to a close, let’s not worry about there not being enough jobs to go around. If we are truly concerned about creating a more enlightened life, we will find the right path, and if we aren’t, well we, our fellow man, and the planet will find out the consequences of that decision soon enough.
Day Seven

“Today I will start to realise that the world as I perceive & experience it is created through the choices I make from moment to moment”

We have talked about blame and personal responsibility in previous topics but in this topic let's go further, let us look into the world with new eyes.

When we talk about “the world” we are talking about it in it's current form, where objects appear solid, where events are uncontrollable, where things happen that appear external to us, but does this mean we have nothing to do with its creation?

We have been told that the world was created by either a “big bang” or “by god” and we think that's it - world created. Now we just live in it, coasting along on its and everyone else's whims. But that assumes that we have no power in its “creation”.

For most of us, creation is an event which takes place once, whether that be the creation of a universe, a child, or even a seemingly inanimate object like a car or a television, but let's try to think differently for a moment.

Imagine a world where no one had told us it had been “created” how would we perceive this world?

Creation

“The action or process of bringing something into existence”

If we accept this definition, we are assuming time is linear, that there is a beginning and an end, and just because things appear to have this quality does not mean it is necessarily so!

I was born in 1969 and eventually I will die. How do I know this? Because I have seen other people be born and later on die, and I have been told that this is so. Science has also “proved” that there is a beginning and an end to life. Well, the visible life anyway.

A tree is born and eventually dies. A dog is born and eventually dies. All things have a finite existence within this universe and eventually die. How do I know this? Because I have seen a tree be born and die, and I have seen a dog be born and die.

The idea of infinite or eternal existence is not able to be tested because I cannot see it, although some people try to express this in religions as “afterlife” a word which frankly borders on the ridiculous, in my opinion.

If time is finite, and all things are born and then die, what is this state of eternal life which comes after death? It seems to me that whoever came up with this concept wasn't really thinking it through!

But enough of all this talk of birth, death, finite and infinite, and straight line theories, we are the most intelligent species in the known universe and as such are able to explore new concepts which may actually be old concepts. Are you with me so far?

What if we perceive and experience the world from moment to moment which creates our “reality”?

Am I able to test this? Am I able to prove it to you? And whilst we're on the subject, what is
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“reality”?

Reality
“The world or the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them”

In quantum physics there is a concept that nothing truly exists until you look at it, but you don't believe that do you? The tree was there when you last looked, and you “know” when you look back it will still be there. You know the tree exists because when you touch it, you can feel it is still there. The world is solid and you know it. Everything is in its place, as it was, should be, and always will be (until you're not around to look at it!)

But how do these discussions help us? Isn't it irrelevant to our daily lives what the nature of reality is? Haven't we got more important things to worry about than some silly science question? After all, I am not a collection of subatomic particles and neither is the tree. I am a human and the tree is a tree. End of story.

Perception
1. the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses
2. the neurophysiological processes, including memory, by which an organism becomes aware of and interprets external stimuli.

What is real? What are you seeing when you see a tree? Are you just channelling light into your brain and thinking nothing? What is the object your brain is actually perceiving? Who told you that this is a tree? What if you found out after many years that what you think you are perceiving as a tree is actually a cat?

If you touch this object in direct experience with it, is it a tree now? Not if someone had told you it was a mountain. How does it “feel”? Does it feel like a tree, does it smell like a tree? Where did these interpretations come from?

Could it not just be a transitory object in time and space having certain physical properties you have been instructed to perceive and experience as a tree?

Of course, these questions are not going to help you get a good job, a nice family, and plenty of money, and that is what is important in life, so let's move on.

When I see a black man what do I see? When I see a white man what do I see? When I see a homeless man what do I see? When I see a vegetarian what do I see? When I see a woman in a beautiful dress what do I see? When I see a meat eater what do I see? When I see a soldier what do I see? When I see a terrorist what do I see? When I see a man in authority what do I see? When I see an american what do I see? When I see lots of money what do I see?


You may be wondering why I have conveniently labelled these people for you? Well, you didn't need me to label them did you? When you read “see a white man” an image flashed into your mind, and possibly brought up certain emotions.

When you read “see a terrorist” what did you actually “see”? Was there in fact a “terrorist” in front of you when you read it? Was there a man dressed in military style clothing, covering his face, holding a kalashnikov? No? And while we're at it, do you find it strange that I could describe this terrorist, you know, the one you were thinking about? The one who is not in front of you, that you
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have cannot directly experience?

So how can we perceive these people at a distance? How can we perceive and experience these people that we may never have met, and yet justify a certain feeling towards them? How? It's easy, just ask your parents, grandparents, friends, teachers, religious leaders, governments, co-workers, newspaper editors...

A short dialogue with a man experiencing grief

Man: “My wife and son were killed by american Soldiers.”
Me: “I understand that the loss of your wife and son must be terrible for you.”
Man: “I hate all american soldiers!”
Me: “I understand that you must be very angry at the specific people who did this, but hating everyone who wears an american uniform just creates more hate.”
Man: “I don't care, I want to see the death of as many american soldiers as possible. They will pay for what they did to my family”
Me: “Your family have been killed, that is a terrible thing that happened to them. They were the one's who were killed. Not you.”
Man: “But their deaths must be avenged.”
Me: “How would you avenge them?”
Man: “I would hang the soldiers who did this.”
Me: “But that's not going to bring your wife and son back, all that will happen is two more people will die, and two more families will be grieving, and then want vengeance for the deaths of their sons.”
Man: “I don't understand. What do you mean?”
Me: “They killed your family. You kill their sons. They come here and kill you, and then kill as many of your people as they can. All that has happened is more people perceive that they have been wronged, even if the actual event happened to someone else, and more people will die.
Man: “But my family!”
Me: “Are gone from sight, but not forgotten. They exist within your memories, and your feelings.”
Man: “But I will never forgive...”
Me: “No one is asking you to. Forgiveness is a word that does not help us here. The world exists within you right now, no matter when your family died. The world is yours to perceive and experience anew. You can take the opportunity to perceive it anyway you like. But it is your choices that will create your reality.”
Man: “How so?”
Me: “Last week when you saw an american soldier what did you 'see'?”
Man: “I saw the uniform and I wanted to kill them.”
Me: “So let me get this straight. These weren't the men who killed your family, but you perceived the uniform, and would have killed them if you had the chance?”
Man: “Yes.”
Me: “Can you understand that you weren't actually 'seeing' a human being, nor a uniform, nor an american, with your eyes but a mental representation of the person who killed your family?”
Man: “Yes I suppose that is what was happening.”
Me: “What did you feel when you saw these men?”
Man: “I felt anger, rage, but also I felt great sadness.”
Me: “Do you think you can start to perceive these men differently? Do you think there is a chance you will realise that the world as we see it is not set in stone; that we can make
choices about how we perceive the world every moment we exist?”

Man: “I always thought I was perceiving the world from moment to moment, I did not realise my brain was running on automatic pilot. Now I have time to think about it, I don't think I ever knew there was another way to see the world. I trusted my brain, and I trusted the information that was being fed to it by everyone.”

Me: “The mind is tricky, and although it seems strange to distrust your own brain, it is the only way we can set ourselves free from the traps we have been set, intentionally or unintentionally.”

Man: “I am beginning to see that. Thank you for helping me see differently, if just for a moment.”

Me: “The moment is all we really have, and it's my pleasure.”

Choices are so much more than what to have for dinner, what job to do, where to go on holiday, or what type of new television you are going to buy. Are you ready to make a choice to perceive and experience the world differently, if only for a moment?
Day Eight

"Today I will give my brain a rest from endless thinking & as such make my world a quieter place"

We have sometimes described people as thoughtless, but does that mean that there isn't a thought going on in their brain? Does that mean that their mind is quiet? No, it generally means we believe they are not showing consideration for others.

So perhaps thoughtless is a bad word to describe being inconsiderate, for I would like to use the pure form of “thoughtless” to mean no thinking, but it’s not going to be an easy task, no sir!

We are engaged in thinking from the moment we wake up until the moment we go to sleep, and sometimes our brain wakes us up to do some more thinking!

So what do we think about? Well, have a look around the world and you'll see. Everywhere people are thinking about jobs, education, status, relationships, money, bills, debt, justice, respect, cheating, murder, hatred, love, cars, household appliances, music, television, children, exams, jealousy, greed, holidays, happiness, fitness, fatness, sadness, health, alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, today, tomorrow, yesterday, next year, next life, and on and on...

People can't help it. They just have to think about something! They may take time out for quiet time, but that is usually external quiet time. Inside there is still a mind storm raging! So we try everything to quieten our minds including meditation, but even meditation isn't quiet, although externally it may appear to be so.

So how do I quieten my mind without years of buddhist meditation techniques? How is it possible that I can stop thinking, even for a moment? Well, the simple answer is, it's complicated!

Our minds have no off switch, we cannot decide, through will alone, to stop thinking, even for a moment! So what does that tell us about our minds? Does it tell us that even though we “think” we are in control of our own minds, there is another force at work? Does it tell us that our mind is divided between two controllers in direct competition?

Do you find this strange?

Control
"Determine the behaviour or supervise the running of"

Right now ask “yourself” a question. “Who is in control of my brain?” What is “your” answer? Was it “I am” or “you are”?

Whether “you are” or “I am” the one thing that should be apparent, is that you are one person, yet there seems to be two of you upstairs!

Who is watching who? Who is master, who is servant? Who is god, who is the lower being? Who is talking, who is listening? Who is worrying, who is calming you? Who is battling who?

So many questions, it's enough to fry your already over-worked brain, and you thought there would be a simple matter of flicking a switch. But do not worry, help is at hand from your friend and foe – your brain.
Divided at birth?

So when did this division start? Was it a genetic error? Was it pre-ordained by god in order to torment us during our long arduous life on Earth? Or was it something which developed in line with our physical development? One thing's for sure, the constant thinking, questioning, discussing and arguing that goes on between our ears does not help us, nor the world around us, live in quiet.

So what is to be done with our brain? Should we have it removed? Extreme and impractical it may be, but a definite improvement on what we have now!

All jokes aside; like any animal of great power, learning to understand it, rather than dominate it is the best way to tame it.

“A wild ocean may cause death to those who ride its waves, or try to have power over it, but those who watch from the shoreline may experience great serenity.”

So how do we tame the lion with two heads? How do we understand our minds in such a way that they naturally quieten without resistance?

The answer lies in the mind itself.

Once the mind knows our intention is merely to watch, to understand, without any threats of dominance it lets its protective guard down. Who is it protecting, you may ask. Why, it is you! Owner and user of this extraordinary machine.

hello brain, I'd like a chat...

Me: “I want to understand. I want to know why I keep thinking all the time”
Brain: “What do you think about?”
Me: “Oh you know, the usual stuff, money, relationships, oh I didn't get the promotion I wanted and I hate the bloke next door, he's always playing loud music.”
Brain: “Those seem like very normal day to day issues, why consult me?”
Me: “Because I keep thinking all the time. I can't stop it. Sometimes I get really bad thoughts. Is it you doing that to me?”
Brain: “I am doing nothing. I am the repository of information, the interpreter of all you perceive, I am the diary, the alarm clock, the reminder…”
Me: “What do you mean, reminder?”
Brain: “Ah, I see where you're going with this. Ok, let us look at a scenario shall we? Your neighbour plays loud music, right?”
Me: “Right…”
Brain: “Who does he play that loud music to?”
Me: “I don't know.”
Brain: “Well I'll tell you. He plays the music to himself. He likes to play it loud for several possible reasons: a) he likes it loud b) he is trying to impress someone in the house c) he is inconsiderate d) he deliberately wants you to become annoyed. Maybe there's something else but that'll give you something to go on.”
Me: “Right, well he definitely does it deliberately. He knows I've got to get up early, and he deliberately plays music so bloody loud. Honestly, I could strangle him. All I keep thinking is shut up! Shut up! The things I'd like to say and do to him!”
Brain: “Ok. We're getting somewhere. What else do you think about?”
Me: “Well, I was supposed to get this promotion and then they went and hired a new guy for the job. They knew I wanted that job. I've been at the company for over ten years. I could do that job standing on my head!”
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Brain: “So why didn't you get it?”
Me: “They said they needed someone younger with a degree. This new bloke's got three years experience against my ten, and he gets the job just because he's got a degree! I've threatened to leave. They won't know what to do when I've gone. I practically run that place!”
Brain: “What else?”
Me: “My wife. She's always moaning. She's always complaining about money, and how she wants a new television and carpet but can't afford it, because I'm not bringing in enough money. She drives me mad. She does nothing but look after the kids all day. She doesn't realise the pressure I'm under.”
Brain: “So we have three scenarios here to look at. One is a neighbour who plays loud music. The second is the promotion that you wanted but didn't get. The third is your wife who complains. Let me ask you this, 'do you think these people are doing all this to you, deliberately?'”
Me: “Of course they are. The bloke who plays his music loud knows it pisses me off, but does it anyway. My boss knew I wanted the promotion but gave it to someone else. My wife knows I work hard to earn money for the family but she still complains.”
Brain: “And why do you think about these things all the time?”
Me: “Because all of these things really piss me off.”
Brain: “But you want your mind to be quiet. You want a rest from all this thinking?”
Me: “Absolutely, it's driving me mad.”
Brain: “Yet still you hang on to these thoughts?”
Me: “I can't help it. I try really hard but I can't block the thoughts.”
Brain: “Remember the story of the wild ocean?”
Me: “Yes.”
Brain: “Remember I also told you that I was a reminder, like an alarm clock which drew things to your attention that needed to be dealt with?”
Me: “Yes.”
Brain: “Well, I'm here to remind you of three things. One. You must deal with the neighbour with the loud music.”
Me: “What, do you mean like go and sort him out, give him a talking to?”
Brain: “The neighbour is just a man living his life, running his life the way he wants to. Do you think his mind keeps him awake worrying that he may have upset you with his loud music?”
Me: “No I'm sure he doesn't care.”
Brain: “Never presume to know the content of another's mind.”
Me: “So what should I do, just ignore it?”
Brain: “On the contrary, you must notice how it makes you feel, and write down that feeling.”
Me: “Then?”
Brain: “Then you must calmly go to your neighbour and explain how the loud music makes you feel.”
Me: “What if he doesn't turn it down?”
Brain: “You asked me how to quieten your mind, but we cannot tame a whole ocean in one day.”
Me: “What else?”
Brain: “I only remind you of things you know you must deal with, but remember it is your feelings about unresolved external events we are talking about here. Whether your boss gave your promotion to someone else because he doesn't like you is nothing to do with you, it's your method of dealing with the feeling of not being given the promotion we are talking about, not the external to your mind. Your mind, me, is magnificent, but we must learn how to communicate with each other, in the same way, you must learn to deal with others minds.”
Me: “So what you're saying is, my wife isn't actually angry with me?”
Brain: “No, I am saying that until you understand how your wife feels and she understands how you feel you will always have unresolved thoughts. That is why I keep reminding you to deal with them.”

Me: “Will this make my mind quiet? I already told you that this is all driving me mad!”

Brain: “Listen to how you feel, write down how you feel, try to understand how others feel, and resolve whatever is making you unhappy with the source of that unhappiness. You.”

Me: “So it's all about me? Not the others?”

Brain: “Of course it's all about you. How you perceive and experience the world is your choice. You know that.”

Me: “You're right. I need to resolve each issue as it comes up and not let it trouble me so much.”

Brain: “The world external to you is like a raging ocean, but how we let that affect us is up to you. To quieten the mind, all we must do is not allow the external to dictate the movement of our internal ocean. Now if you don't mind, I'd like a rest from all this constant discussion with you. I suggest you do the same.”

Me: “I understand.”
Day Nine

“Today I will give my body a rest from the strain I put it under every day. Today I will allow myself to rest.”

“Rest? How have I got time to rest! I'm too busy to rest. I've got a job to go to, I've got to pay my rent, buy food, put fuel in the car, pay my insurance; only rich people have time to rest! Even when I'm on an official day off I've got things to do. There's always something that needs doing.”

Busy, busy, busy, faster, faster, faster...

Even god, if you believe the story of the creation of the world, only took one day off. That means if god took a year to create the world he would only get fifty three days off a year. “Fifty three days?!” says you, “what I'd give to get fifty three days off!”

But of course, most of you are forgetting that time off is broken into two areas, weekends, and paid holiday. So based on a weekend being two days, and the average company holiday being 14 days, you have (assuming you don't have sick days) a whopping 118 days a year off! Sounds like a good deal to me!

Oh, if you work for yourself, are unemployed, need to work to bring in some money just to live, or live in a country where these rules do not apply, please accept my apologies.

Let us now look at your day, and assume that you work for 40 hours a week.

Assume you work from Monday to Friday from 9am until 5.30pm, with half an hour for lunch.
Is that all the time you are working? What about the time you have to get up and the time it takes you to get to and from your work? Depending on your location from your work, you may spend at least one hour commuting time each day.

Assuming you work from 9am, that means leaving at 8am, and getting up at 7am (conservative estimates). At lunchtime you don't really have time to do much so you might as well sit and eat your food at your place of work. 5.30pm comes, and assuming you don't have to work late, get home about 6.45pm. Is that a fair analysis of your day?

Written on paper it seems like not too bad a day! But we have asked someone who has a life like this to write down a diary of their day. Peter works in an average job in the accounts department of a large company in the south east of England. He is 36 years old, is married to Jane and has two children, James, 10, and Isabelle 7. He lives approximately one hour away from his job and catches the train. Over to you Peter!

Monday

“I got up late today. I was so tired after the weekend. There were delays on the train on Friday and I didn't get back until after 8pm. The kids were still up so I spent a bit of time with them, then had a glass of wine, something to eat, then crashed out.

Saturday, I had to be up early. James had football practice at 9am so, after a quick breakfast, I dropped him off then came back to pick up Jane. She was dropping Isabelle off at her music lesson,
so I grabbed a quick coffee, and when she got back we rushed down to the supermarket to do our weekly shop. As usual the shops were so busy and parking was a nightmare! Conscious of the time, we rushed round and managed to get everything we needed.

We got home, unpacked the shopping and I went to pick up James. He was hungry so we stopped at McDonald’s for a quick snack.

Both kids were going to birthday parties in the afternoon so Jane had to make sure they wore something smart. Of course, neither of them wanted to wear what she had picked out for them, but several tantrums later, they were clothed and delivered to the party. I forgot to take James’ present so I had to rush back pick it up and drop it off.

Saturday afternoon was usually my day to watch sport but Jane had some jobs around the house she wanted me to do. A quick visit to the local DIY centre, and I was back.

I mowed to the lawn, and put together a new chest of drawers which had been delivered in the week. It was now 4.00pm and I had to pick up the kids. Jane was out having her hair done and buying some new clothes, as we were going out for dinner with some old friends that night so it was up to me to feed the kids and make sure they were ready for the babysitter at 7.00pm.

After what seemed hours, Jane got back, made me a sandwich and I got ready to go out.

Of course, I had way too much to drink, but it had been a stressful week and I needed to let off steam, but by 12.30am we were in bed.

Amazingly, I got a lie in on Sunday, well, till 10am anyway. Jane had been up with the kids since 8am and had made me breakfast. I read the papers, showered, and got ready. We were having her parents over for lunch and it was down to me to set the table, and do a general tidy up whilst making sure the kids were amused. Isabelle and James were fighting over the nintendo, and it took all my strength not to shout at them to be quiet as I was still feeling fragile from the night before.

At 1pm, the parents-in-law arrived, and although I get on with them, the idea of having to entertain them all day was a bit too much for me, but we had a good lunch.

In the afternoon we all went out for a walk in the park, and by early evening all I wanted to do was crash in front of the television. At just after 11.30pm we retired to bed. I was exhausted and not at all looking forward to work the next day.

Sorry, where was I? Oh yes. Monday. Well, as I said, I got up late, fifteen minutes late to be exact, which meant I didn't have time to have breakfast.

I jumped into the car, and drove to the train station, fortunately it's only ten minutes away and the traffic wasn't too bad. I found a space, but by the time I got a ticket from the parking machine I only had two minutes to catch the train and had to run! I just made it, but of course there weren't any seats, so I had to stand for almost fifty minutes; then a five minute tube ride, followed by a five minute walk and I was in the office.

The first thing I did was grab a coffee, well, two to be exact. I hadn't eaten and I needed to wake up.

As usual my boss David was on my case for the morning reports, and by 10am I was in a meeting for two hours. I couldn't wait for lunch I was starving. Unfortunately we don't have a canteen so I just ran out the office at 1pm to grab a sandwich.

The afternoon was quite slow, just a bit of work on the computer, and no real stress, well until 4.45pm when I was called to another meeting to discuss some accounts discrepancies. All I could think about, was I was going to miss my train if I didn't leave on time. Fortunately the meeting ended just after 5.30pm and I grabbed my coat and ran for the tube which was solid as usual, meaning I had to run to catch my train home.

No seats again, so I had to stand, but the train got in at 6.50pm and ten minutes later I pulled into the drive. I had arranged to meet my friend for a game of squash at 7.30pm at the local gym, so it was a case of get changed and go.
I like squash, it's really fast moving and takes my mind off the day, and helps me unwind. I lost the match, but it's all a bit of fun, and after a quick shower, had a quick beer with my friend and went home for dinner.

The kids were in bed but I read Isabelle a story, watched the late night news and was in bed just after 11.30pm. That was my Monday.’

Thanks Peter, for sharing your weekend and your day. Would any of you like Peter to tell you about his Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, or the next weekend? No, neither would I. There isn't enough space on the paper for that!

So what did we learn about Peter's work day, and his rest period at the weekend? Did any of you see yourselves in his story or was it all a bit too unbelievable for you?

Well, apart from the kids part that could have been me twelve years ago, constantly on the go, constantly in demand, where the idea of a rest day couldn't have been further from my mind.

“Young people should be busy!” my father always used to say, and whilst I agree with him that sitting doing nothing is a bad thing, we are never taught how to rest.

“You get plenty of time to rest when you're asleep” said a friend of mine, but sleep is essential and not a conscious decision to rest.

So how do we rest? Should we sit and watch television? Should we read a book? Should we go to a spa? Should we take an extended holiday? Should we meditate? Should we spend time in prayer?

Unfortunately, everything we consider as rest is actually an activity. We have been conditioned by the society we live in that “Work Is Good! Work Is Beneficial!” And of course people would say that. It benefits the employers to have you believe that, and it benefits the government to a. get your tax, and b. keep you occupied so you don't come up with any notions of overthrowing them.

Your parents want you to work because they say it is only right for people to go out to work and pay their way, and your peers want you to work, because, well, they're doing it, and so should you.

But we are not questioning why people work. We know the reasons. If we don't like work then we'll just have to find some other way to feed, clothe and house ourselves.

What we are trying to uncover is why we are driven to move at such a rate, even during our “official” rest periods.

Could this have something to do with our hunter gatherer heritage; the need to be on the go at all times in search of food, water and shelter? And if this is so, could our need to be constantly occupied be a trait left over from early Man that we haven't let go of?

I would like to see early homo sapiens trying to cope with the madness we call modern life! Sure, they were always on the look out for food, but compared to the mental and physical stress our friend Peter was under during his weekend of rest, I think our ancestors would be happy to stay right where they were!

We keep going under incredible physical stress on the body, but are we biologically equipped to deal with it?

We are at heart a simple species, with the potential for complex problem solving, and complex social relationships, but the system that runs the complex system is the same one that was powering our hunter gatherer ancestors.

Even if we did have a system that managed the stress perfectly without us having to resort to alcohol, and spa retreats, what is the point of having an incredibly complex mind, without using it to contemplate the beauty and diversity of the world in which we inhabit for but a short time?

So in case you thought this would be a topic on meditation or how to breathe deeply to rest or sleep more soundly, it isn't.

We are here for but a short time. We have the ability to appreciate, to watch, to listen, to
understand, to love, instead we fill it with children's music lessons, trains, reports, meetings, football, parties, shopping, holidays...

Rest in the silence of your own mind, give yourself time to rest. You are here to experience life as you, not to spend time in a constant rush just to tell everyone how busy you are. You aren't. You would like to think that rushing and being busy are someone else's doing – the children's, your boss's, your wife's, your friend's, but alas, it is of your own doing.

Sit and rest a while...
Day Ten

“Today I will start to realise that the more I possess, the less free I truly am”

Possessions. They're funny things. Even though I have let go of 99% of mine, there are still some that I can't/won't let go of. The first is my laptop, which I write all these books for you lovely people on. The second is all my camping gear in case I ever need a place to stay. The third is my music in case I ever get asked to DJ again, fourth is my guitar, in case I ever practice enough to become good at it, fifth is several books on traditional thai massage and anatomy in case I ever forget how to massage, sixth is several books on growing fruit and vegetables, and last but not least, my shoes, and clothes.

I do not currently have my own place to live as I could not pay the rent asked due to the work I do, so I must stay with kind hearted family and friends, but if I did I'm sure the list would be in the dozens if not hundreds of items.

You see, houses and apartments take a lot of furnishing (just imagine the number of utensils one needs in a kitchen!). But all of these things seem necessary when you have your own place to call home.

So if all these items are important what's all this talk of being free without them? Can't I be free with all the possessions? Well, the definition of free is “not under the control or in the power of another; able to act or be done as one wishes” which on the surface does not appear to have anything to do with possessions, but let us investigate this further.

Me: “Not under the control of another” and “able to act as one wishes” are the two statements within the definition, so let me ask you a question. How did you get the possessions?
Man: “I worked for them. I don't owe anyone a penny. Everything I bought is mine.”

Let us reflect on the definition once again, shall we?
“Not under the control of another” and “able to act as one wishes”.

Me: “So let me ask you the question again. How did you get the possessions?
Man: “That's unfair, that's a trick question! Alright, so I had to go out to work for many hours to be able to pay for the things I bought, but it was my choice to go out to work.”
Me: “And no one would disagree with you there. It was your choice. No one forced you. But I have to ask you the question 'are you free?'”
Man: “Well, I live in a society where I am able to speak my mind without fear of arrest, and I am free to do what I want as long as I don't break the law.”
Me: “That's true, but that is the political state of affairs in your country at the moment, able to be changed on the whim of the next government. So what is this freedom you are talking about then?”

I'm sure most of you have your own definitions of freedom; freedom of speech being the one most people tout as the ultimate freedom. But I give myself that right, and if anyone wants to imprison
me for saying something that they disagree with, then that is what they will have to do. For when we worry that we will be locked up or murdered for speaking out against terror, torture, or inhumane acts towards humans, animals, or the planet itself, then we must question our commitment to what we believe in.

So if you don't mind, with that out of the way, let us go back to the task at hand, that is trying to understand why I am less free when I have more possessions.

Our first discussion was with someone who had worked hard and paid for everything with the money he had earned, but he quickly realised that the true cost to possession was the need to go to work every day to pay for it.

At least he didn't buy it on credit, where he has now added another layer of complexity to his “freedom”. Now he must go to work, not just to earn money, but to pay back the loan, with interest, for the items he now possesses before he is back to the first layer of just working.

Let us assume that our person is a very forward thinking young man and decides to purchase a house. He already has the deposit from his savings that he has worked for, but must now borrow money from a bank for an average of 20 years, meaning he is tied to work for at least that time (unless he wins the lottery, or earns a lot of money).

But our person doesn't care about that. It is considered a worthwhile task to purchase your own house. He goes about furnishing it with various loans, and soon he has a lovely home to call his own.

He only has a small two bedroom home, with one bathroom, one lounge, and one kitchen but already has more possessions than half the population of the world; not that most of them wouldn't jump at the chance of having them! But that's another story!

In time, our person finds that special someone and they decide to get married. It is a wonderful wedding and they receive many gifts, and move in together, but soon realise that if they are to have a family they will need a bigger house. They borrow more money, buy a beautiful new house, and purchase many more possessions and furnish a baby room (Our person's wife is going to have a baby!)

But our person is only on a modest income, and his wife decides that if they are going to bring up their child well and give him a good life, she will have to return to work soon.

The child wants for nothing, and is signed up to a very good school (after all, our family want to give him as many opportunities as possible).

Car repairs, insurance, income tax, council tax, new carpet, new television, re-paint the house, more gadgets for the kitchen, new garden equipment, a holiday to de-stress... All normal things in the life of our family.

Oh did I tell you they are thinking of having another child?

Our person, born naked into the world, now has so many layers piled on top of him, all dependent on him keeping his job.

A lot of you will think that there is nothing higher in life than holding down a job, owning your own house, having a family, and giving your children the best start in life.

But we're here to talk about freedom. The freedom to just be, free from restrictions, free from the burden of possessions. Whether you see it is up to you. Whether you unburden yourself is up to you. But remember that you can't take the possessions with you (as the ancient egyptians found out).

Oh did I tell you our person lost his job last week. Then his world came crashing down. Everything has a cost.
“Today I begin to accept that I am not a victim of circumstance. I begin to accept that I create circumstance.”

There's a guy I know who spends his life complaining that everything happens to him. He's been mugged, drugged, had his wallet stolen, been accused of troublemaking, harassment, barred from lots of bars, got involved with women who have ripped him off, been punched randomly in pubs, lost his licence for drink driving, been thrown out of his apartment, etc... But it's never his fault. He sees himself as the victim in all these scenarios. He's not a bad person, but it gets to the point where you begin to lose patience with all these endless tales of woe.

A victim of circumstance could be said to be someone who suffers ill consequences because of factors outside of their control, but that assumes that there are events which are outside of one's control.

“Absolute nonsense,” says you, there are many things which are outside of people's control like floods, fires, wars, rape, theft, violence.”

Are all these events outside of our control? Let us stop and think about this for a moment.

Remember, we are not talking to the perceived “victim” here, we are talking to everyone, not just the person who has been raped but the perpetrator of the rape, the person who has created the “circumstance.”

Circumstance

“An event or fact that causes or helps to cause something to happen, typically something undesirable.”

If I acknowledge that I am a creator of all which I perceive and experience, there can be no circumstance. There is always a creator of the circumstance.

Let us put aside so-called “acts of god” for a moment, and concentrate on the human experience such as victims of war, people who could be said to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. It wasn't their fault that they happened to be walking down the road when the bomb went off, all they were doing was minding their own business, they didn't deserve to die. Whilst it is sad when anyone dies, this was no accident, this was deliberate.

Another definition of circumstance is “a fact or condition connected with or relevant to an event or action” so let us concentrate on the word “connected”.

In Newton's third law, it states that all forces exist in pairs, and thus there is no such thing as a unidirectional force or a force that acts on only one body. It is also known as the action-reaction law.

Let us think about how this applies to our victim of circumstance. In order for him to be robbed, he had to be present, the balancing force of the robber. In order for him to be ejected from the public bar he had to be present. He was the balancing force of the ejector.

This may all seem a little strange for you to read, because on the surface, it seems as if he did nothing wrong. He was walking along the road minding his own business. A hooded man jumped...
out of the bushes, threatened him with a knife, and forced him to hand over his wallet.

The police and everyone else reading the case would see him as the victim, and would press for the perpetrator to be arrested, and sent to jail. But remember, we are dealing with our human eyes and brain, which we already know cannot be trusted!

We need to understand that everything we think and do is in relationship with something else. Everything is connected.

So how is our victim of robbery related to the knife wielding hooded robber. He does not know him, and before that day had never been robbed before. He had walked that same path many times without incident.

“He was just in the wrong place at the wrong time” said the policeman called to assist him.

But is there such a thing as “wrong” place, and “wrong” time? As far as I know there is only place and time, although we may perceive that it is the “wrong” place and time if something happens which we do not like, and the “right” place and time if something happens which we like.

At a deeper level, what we call a robbery is just the coming together of two forces in the same place and time. The robbery may seem like a terrible thing to happen but if we could see the energy forces at work, what would we see? We need to start looking beyond the visible, hard as it may be.

*A robber's story*

We have talked at length about our victim of robbery, the man who was walking along the road minding his own business, and hand over to the man who did the robbing! Remember everything in relationship, nothing in isolation.

“Growing up, we didn't have very much, my mum worked as a nurse, and my dad wasn't around much, and when he was, he was always drunk, didn't work, and used to beat me regularly. I'm not using that as an excuse for what happened to the guy I robbed, it's just a fact.

I never did well at school, the group I hung around with were always messing around in class, and shouting at the teacher, it was pretty funny.

I failed all my exams, which wasn't a surprise, and never had any desire to work. I couldn't see the point of it. We lived in a council flat, and I never had to pay any bills, so life was pretty easy.

The guys I hung around with seemed to make a few quid breaking into cars and houses, and they always had enough money for cool clothes, and alcohol so I got involved with them. It was pretty exciting, wondering if we were going to get caught.

Anyway, one day, one of the gang said we could make more cash if we started robbing people in the street; all we had to do was grab a handbag and run off. I did a few of these, but one day a lady I tried to rob hung on to her handbag and was shouting help! What could I do? I didn't want to get caught! I punched her, grabbed her bag and ran off. I was pretty lucky I was a fast runner.

We all laughed about that stupid woman holding on to her bag; if she had just let go, I wouldn't have had to punch her would I?

I only came close to getting caught once, before, but the buzz of grabbing bags kept me going. Well until I got caught for robbing that stupid bloke.

I don't feel sorry for the bloke I robbed, he could afford it. I've got nothing, I haven't got a job, my dad beat me, and I got involved with a bad crowd. In a way, you could say I'm a victim of circumstance.”

*Nothing in Isolation*
A father's story

“I was the son of poor immigrants. My father worked hard but didn't bring in much money. He was also a hard drinker. You could say I had a pretty harsh upbringing. There wasn't any love in my house, that's for sure. My poor old mum tried hard to keep the family together, but my father was a cruel bastard and used to beat her regularly. I used to see my mum crying regularly, but any time I asked her if she was all right, she always wiped the tears away, and said 'don't worry it's nothing', but I knew.

I left school as soon as I could and ended up in a factory doing a menial job, and the only pleasure I got was going to the pub every night. It made my shit life tolerable.

That's where I met my wife. She was a nurse and used to come in with her friends after work sometimes. One night I plucked up the courage to buy her a drink, and one thing lead to another.

Two years later we were shacked up in a council flat, with a baby. I don't know, I just couldn't handle it. I couldn't stand the bloody crying all the time, then the wife was always moaning that I was spending all my money at the pub. She'd had to give her work up so it was just me bringing in the money. She didn't know how hard I had to work, I don't think she appreciated anything I was doing. I needed a drink when I finished work. I needed to let off steam.

Anyway, one night I stayed out all night, and when I got home the next morning, she was screaming at me that I was sleeping with another woman, well, I just snapped, and smacked her. I think I cut her lip but nothing too bad, but she told me to get out! I told her it was my house and I could do what I liked.

When the kid started growing up he was always talking back to me. He had no bloody respect for his elders, so I taught him a lesson or two. He deserved it.

By this time the wife had gone back to her job as a nurse but I was on the sick. Sometimes I stayed round the flat, but my wife didn't like me when I'd been drinking so I stayed round a friend's.

My son was always a lazy bastard never wanted to work, always hanging round with those no good friends of his, getting into trouble, I don't know what happened to him.

Would I say I enjoyed my life? No I would not. I had a drunk father, a demanding wife, a lazy good for nothing son. You could say I'm a victim of circumstance.”

So do you want to hear the mother's story, the wife's story, the grandfather's story, the lazy good for nothing son's friends stories, or are you starting to see? Everyone sees themselves as a victim of circumstance. No one realises that they have the power to create their own life, no one is a victim, although it may appear so.

Although it is easy to apportion blame for what happens to you to someone else, it is you creating the circumstance which enable an event to take place.

“What absolute rubbish,” says you, “the man who was robbed was the victim, your ideas are stupid”. Are they? Let's ask the man who was robbed again shall we?

Victim

“A person harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or action”

Me: “Sorry to hear you were robbed. I have just one thing to ask you. Do you see yourself as the victim in this?

Him: Of course I'm the victim in this, what a stupid question! He jumped out at me with a knife.

Me: Do you think he could have robbed you if you weren't there?

Him: What sort of question is that? No he couldn't but I was.

Me: Would you have been happier if he had robbed the person who was walking in front of you less than a minute before you or the person who walked one minute after you?
Him: What? No I wouldn't!
Me: So what you're saying is, you are happy that this event happened to you and not someone else.
Him: No. That's not what I'm saying. It shouldn't have happened at all.
Me: But the man who robbed you was intent on robbing, he had no idea you would walk through there did he?
Him: Well, why did he pick on me?
Me: You have said that you are glad that he did not rob the person in front, or behind you. Do you accept that you may have had a hand consciously or unconsciously in creating the event which ended with you and he being entangled in a particular space and time?
Him: Now you're just trying to twist my words. No I have no idea if I helped create the circumstance of that night. I can't be responsible for another's actions. That is just stupid.
Me: Is it?

Things don't just “happen” they are created, and just because we see ourself as a victim, that isn't necessarily either true, or how others see us. The word victim may be used in legal terminology but it doesn't mean that the word exists in the world we cannot directly see or perceive. We have applied it to events to remove our responsibility in helping shape the event. When we all see that we are not victims (robber/robbed) and take responsibility for the creation of our lives from moment to moment our world will change.

As for “acts of god” we are assuming there is a supernatural being in control who creates random catastrophic events for their pleasure. Even if we believe that to be so, notice the word “create”.

Robber/robbed, terrorist/terrorised, rapist/raped. They are all elements of the same word, entangled in a relationship that leaves nothing to chance.

Set free the victim, and empower him as a creator. That means you. And me. And in case you are wondering what we are going to do about the robber? If they read this, and recognise that they are a creator of circumstance, and decide to change, they won't be there when the man walks past...
Day Twelve

“Today I will start to notice an intense dissatisfaction building inside me at the pain & suffering caused to the inhabitants of planet Earth through my beliefs & actions”

If you'd asked me several years ago about what I was dissatisfied with, I'd have told you that I didn't have enough money, I wanted to own my own house, and I wanted a better car, a more attractive girlfriend, I didn't have enough holidays, and I wanted a bigger television. How times change!

Dissatisfaction

“The condition or feeling of being displeased or unsatisfied; discontent”

Being dissatisfied is usually something that can be attributed to a lack of something, something tangible like a car or intangible like love; but one thing's for sure, it's always about “me”.

So what are you dissatisfied with? I won't hazard a guess, but take a moment to reflect, or even write a list!

Right, I assume you are ready to continue? Was your list similar to mine or did it have noble things on it like war, poverty or hunger? It did? Good for you!

Man: “I am dissatisfied that there is still poverty and hunger all over the world and I want to do something about it.”
Me: “How will you stop world poverty and hunger?”
Man: “For starters I sponsor a child in India, and I donate money to Oxfam, I am also thinking about taking a year out of my job and volunteering with a charity in Africa or India.”
Me: “Well, that is good to hear. What is it you do?”
Man: “I work for a bank. And before you say anything we donate a lot of money to charity every year”.
Me: “Good for you. I'm sure the children of the world will thank you.”

So is that it for this topic? Is donating to charity or volunteering the way we deal with our dissatisfaction? Of course not!

Remember the title for this topic is “Today I will start to notice an intense dissatisfaction building inside me at the pain & suffering caused to the inhabitants of planet Earth through my beliefs & actions”. So what is it I am doing that is causing pain and suffering to the inhabitants of the world?

Although we are talking about “the world” remember the world starts with me, and radiates outward. It begins with a thought but may end in war, hunger and poverty. My choices can have an effect that can be felt the world over.

Belief

“Something one accepts as true or real; a firmly held opinion or conviction”
When we talk about belief, I'm sure many of you are thinking we are talking about belief in "god", but belief can be about anything that we think is true or right.

“I believe that sending in the troops to overthrow dictator x is right”
“I believe that the state is right to execute the criminal.”
“I believe smacking my child to teach them what they are doing is wrong is right.”
“I believe I was justified sacking that employee has benefited the company.”
“I believe communism/capitalism/socialism is the best form of government.”
“I believe we need to keep secrets from the general public if it is in the national interest,”
“I believe cutting down the trees is fine, as people need wood and it provides jobs.”
“I believe that I was right in that argument and my wife was wrong.”
“I believe climate change is not affecting the planet.”
“I believe the right to bear arms is my human right.”
“I believe that pollution is a necessary by-product of industrialisation.”
“I believe the armed forces are needed to protect me.”
“I believe killing animals is right as man is a meat eater.”
“I believe we should hang paedophiles.”

So, belief is much much more than just about god. Holding a belief is part of our every day lives, but we never think about our belief having an external effect, and if we do, we can easily justify it, after all it's our firmly held opinion!

Search your minds right now for any firmly held beliefs, and write them down. Now no one is saying you can't hold these beliefs, after all, I respect your right to hold these opinions.

The Earth Speaks To Humanity

“As you may or may not be aware I am the organism that sustains all life on this planet. I have been quietly doing my job for many years, and have observed you throughout your short history. I have provided oxygen for breathing, have filtered the sun's rays to allow you to survive without being burnt to death, I have provided water for you to drink, and provided the materials from which you make fuel, cars, televisions, and guns, and cities. I have provided animals, fish, insects, and bacteria to keep the world in balance, I have provided plants for you to eat, and land for you to stand upon.

This is my role. For doing this I ask nothing in return. I provide management services at no extra cost to you. I seek out imbalance and rectify it, and although I have stood silently all this time, I have decided to come to you to tell you that you are making my life increasingly difficult. You are pushing me to my limits and I think it's time I told you all what I think of you.

I breathed life into you, and nurtured you as you grew. I gave you a mind capable of great understanding, and a body capable of great creation. I fed you and clothed you, but you weren't happy with what I gave you. You decided you wanted more than you already had, even though just by being able to experience the beauty which I created is more than any other planet I know has given to its inhabitants.

They all thought I was stupid giving you all this power but I told them that you would deal with it responsibly. Little did I know that you would let me down so badly! I have now become the laughing stock of the universe.

All you had to do was live well and enjoy yourselves. I provided you with plenty to eat and plenty to drink, but the large brain I gave you must have been flawed, for as soon as you could walk you used your brain to think deviously. You used the beautiful hands I gave you to create weapons; weapons you used to kill my animals, and my fish. You used the amazing brain I gave you to plot
against each other, and developed traits never seen before in the universe.

You planned murders of people who didn't agree with you, you took land that wasn't yours to take, you robbed my soil of all its nutrients, and minerals which you used to make yourselves more powerful. You polluted my rivers, and my oceans, but even that was not enough for you. You created weapons capable of such destruction that you would end my world forever.

What am I to do with you? You have reached the point where you can no longer be allowed to continue. The planet I created and manage is not your playground although you treat it so, and in my role as estate manager, I have to make a decision.

You have been given numerous opportunities to change but you will not. In the end I will not be able to manage you any more, you will destroy my world, and yourselves. But you know this don't you?

You know you hold the very same power of creation in each of your individual minds but choose instead the way of greed and destruction.

I come to you now, as your friend to plead with you to change your ways, to understand your minds and transcend the violence within you. This is the last time I will come to you.”

Your friend,
The Earth.

“What a load of rubbish no one's going to stop me taking what I want, I don't care about the stupid planet. I can do what I like”.

So maybe The Earth was right, maybe humanity is past the point of no return. What a shame.

“Yes but I sponsor a child in india and I give money to oxfam.”

“Sorry, too late...”

You see, being dissatisfied with hunger, poverty and war isn't going to save us. And don't think I am a merchant of doom when I tell you this. I tell you this because we have destroyed so much so quickly, and become so numerous that when The Earth itself says it can't keep going on like this, you have to sit up and listen. Don't you?

Well if someone had handed this topic to me twelve years ago, I would have thought what a load of nonsense, I'm too busy to think about this and I wouldn't have listened. I was busy thinking about salary increases, new televisions, girlfriends and holidays.

So what happened? Well, I woke up! I started to notice things around me that had never been on my radar. I started to notice the futility of my acquisitive life, I started to notice that people close to me were suffering through the way I behaved towards them. I noticed how much I wasted and wondered where it all ended up. I realised that things I was buying had a huge human and environmental cost attached to them – in short, I started to care about the impact I was having as opposed to my superficial desires. I started to realise what a great opportunity I had been given just to breathe the air on this planet.

I realised that my beliefs about what was right and wrong had no truth in them, that I only saw what I wanted to see, that my eyes were not truly open to what was happening in the world.

I was asleep.

Of course, I thought that sponsoring a child in india or giving money to oxfam was the way I was going to overcome my dissatisfaction, but I soon realised that I had to become dissatisfied with myself, for helping to create this world of pain and suffering through my beliefs and actions. So I fundamentally changed the way I thought and acted, and here I am twelve years later, writing for you fine people!

And before you think it's going to take twelve years for you to change, don't worry, I've done a
lot of the hard work for you here already. But you must open your mind and your heart to the consequences of all that you create. Once you start, it won't take long for the dissatisfaction to begin.

And if it doesn't well, that's up to you.
Day Thirteen

“Today I will start to investigate my mind, & begin to realise that the thoughts & opinions I have may not be my own, but are a result of conditioning by those closest to me.”

I don't know if you remember the day you were born? I do. It was a wintry April as I exited my mother's womb, I remember remarking that there was a slight chill in the air, even in the maternity ward...

“What a load of old nonsense says you, how did you notice all those things, you couldn't speak, let alone understand the english language and had no idea how to express complex observations!”

And you'd be absolutely right. I don't remember my birth, and although I'm sure some new age healer could offer me regression therapy so that I could experience coming out of the womb again, I think I'd rather leave that event in the past!

I was born on the sixth of april 1969 at eleven minutes past midnight, so my birth certificate tells me, and I don't have any recollection of life before the age of at least five. That part of my life is a complete mystery to me.

A short dialogue with my mother

Me: “Perhaps I was abducted by aliens for the first four years,” I told my mum recently whilst discussing this topic.
Mum: “No, you weren't abducted! I was here, feeding you, looking after you, clothing you, teaching you, and comforting you when you were scared.”
Me: “So what did you teach me during these years that I don't recall?”
Mum: “I taught you to read, write, count, draw... you know, the usual things. I also played my guitar and played you lots of music. We didn't have a tv, but I read to you every night. We used to go on outings all the time, and you spent a lot of time with your grandma.
Me: “What was our home life like? Did you and dad have lots of arguments?”
Mum: “We had a happy home life, although your dad was working hard most of the time and wasn't really a part of your early upbringing. But I don't think your dad and I argued a lot.”
Me: “Ok mum thanks for the information!”

So what did I learn about my early life from that conversation? Nothing I hadn't expected. It seems she brought me up the best she could, looking after my needs, and teaching me all the basics I needed to know. I wasn't exposed to any violence or anger in the home. Apparently I was a happy child so that's good to know.

Fifteen years later I remember a very different person from that happy child. I remember a highly anxious, angry, twenty one year old , with a liking for too much alcohol, addicted to cigarettes, skilled in the art of lying and cheating, filled with opinions on why it was everyone else's fault I wasn't making enough money, and why I was so unhappy.
Something changed. But I am not here to blame anybody. I just wish to explore my mind to understand myself.

Nature vs. Nurture

This is perhaps one of the biggest questions asked. So did nature (the universe or god if you believe our nature is pre-ordained by a supernatural force) or nurture (the way my mother and father brought me up during my early years) made me anxious, angry, and wanting to get drunk at every opportunity to calm my over-active mind.

What do you think? Who is responsible?

I'm sure you all have your own opinions but opinions do not lead to truth, and that is what we are searching for here. So let us discard the idea that it was either, or, and look deeper.

We are told that although we only have one brain, in reality, there are two. The “old brain” controls the primitive mechanisms such as the drive to reproduce, control and dominance, fear, reflex, motor control, repetitive learned routines, and breathing, whereas the new “higher” brain is our consciousness, that which gives us conscious thought, ethics, morality, the power of reason, of appreciation of art, and beauty, logic, creativity and ingenuity, compassion, and empathy.

It appears that our species, homo sapiens, originated with the old brain, which like all animal brains is there to help the individual and thus the species survive at all costs. The new brain then appears to have developed over a period of time and hey presto here we are in 2013 with modern thinking beings unshackled from the domain of the old brain, living in peace and harmony with each other, with each of us in search of enlightenment for the benefit of all.

If only!

Here we are in 2013 with modern thinking beings capable of living in peace and harmony, capable of searching for enlightenment doing some or all of the following with their new brain.

Lying, deceiving, torturing, cheating, stealing, brainwashing, murdering, destroying, polluting, corrupting. Oh, a few people are also painting some nice art, philosophising, making films, and creating music.

So, it seems not only do we have two, not one brain, we also seem to have some dodgy wiring between the two! The two brains are competing to be the dominant force, and the poor old human doesn't know where the information he is acting on is coming from. He is in a most difficult position indeed!

His old brain wants to have sex with the woman right away to preserve the species, and his new brain wants to cultivate a relationship. What does he do? Does he a. drag her to an alley and force her to have sex, or b. ask for her phone number?

“Society” or the ruling new brains have thought about this question and have decided that not only is it wrong to force a woman to have sex, and given it a name (rape), if you are found guilty by the society you must be punished, either by having your liberty taken away, or perhaps even your life.

Here, even those who have used their higher (conscious) brain to show compassion for a woman's suffering, they have used their lower (unconscious) brain to inflict a punishment such as is done in some animal societies (as a way of showing dominance or to keep adolescents in line amongst other things).

Fast Brain. Slow Brain

“He's a really quick thinker”
In this modern fast moving world we have created, having a quick thinking brain is seen as an asset, and a slow moving brain a hindrance to progress. But which brain is working at which speed?

“The new brain is doing the quick thinking as it's more advanced, and the old brain is slower as it's older” says you.

On the surface that would seem to make perfect sense, but it may surprise you to know that it is the other way round. Why? Well, remember the old brain is the brain of reflex, of learned routines, and the new brain is the one which gives us the power of reason. Let's play a game shall we? Shout out as soon as you know the answer. Which brain is controlling which thought?

“All paedophiles should be hanged”
“We should love everybody in the world.”
“Anyone demonstrating against the government should be imprisoned.”
“Creating art and music is the purest expression of being human.”
“It is good to earn as much money as you can.”
“Being charitable shows you care.”

Right. Did you manage it? How long did it take you? One second, five seconds? Did you get each one right? Of course you did, it was too easy!

The lower brain, which doesn't think, said that anyone demonstrating against the government should be imprisoned, as it is the brain of control and dominance, but it may surprise you to know that it was actually the old brain answering each time, even for things which seem to be processed in the new brain like creation, art and charity.

Remember, the old brain is responsible for automatic responses, and taking care of repetitive tasks. You may have agreed with the statement “it is good to be charitable” but you couldn't have really thought about the question in your conscious, logic oriented brain, if you answered in two seconds. It takes much much longer to process complex questions.

So here you are back at the beginning. You have no idea why you answered the way you did. This can only mean one thing, your thinking has been influenced and may actually be under the control of others (dead or alive).

As my dad said to me yesterday, “you're forty three years old, don't you think it's time you became independent and started earning a living.”

No matter how many times I tell him I think that one of the problems in human society, is that we are told that our highest purpose is to earn money, buy a house, and live independently from everyone, when I believe that understanding what it means to be human and being of benefit to all others for the mutual benefit of all the inhabitants of planet Earth, is, in my opinion, the highest purpose which one can seek, he still tries to convince me that the ideas of “independence” “job” and “money” are what I “should” be striving for.

So where did he get these ideas from? Where did these ideas originate? He certainly did not think “as soon as I am able I must study hard, get a good job, and borrow money to buy a house, as he exited the womb. Did he? That would assume that the human brain (old and new) were pre-programmed to think like this.

He was influenced by the ideas of his parents, teachers, peer group, government, who in turn were influenced by their ancestors, and their ancestors and back back back to the original thought by someone's great great great great great great great great grandfather!

So here he is living in 2013, with ideas which were possibly planted in someone's mind a thousand years ago.

I don't know about you, but I want to find out what my mind looks like, free from ideas and
opinions that are not my own, no matter how real they seem to be. I want to find my own path. I want to bridge the connection between old and new brain, so that I am thinking as the whole - undivided. Is that not a noble purpose?
Day Fourteen

“Today I will start to realise that I, and the planet I inhabit, live in fragile balance. 
That I would destroy it with my callous actions, becomes unthinkable to me.”

Ecosystem

“A community of living organisms (plants, animals and microbes) in conjunction with the non-living components of their environment (things like air, water and mineral soil), interacting as a system”

I think it's fair to think of the world having at least two separate ecosystems - the human ecosystem, and the natural world ecosystem.

Our ecosystem is comprised of humans working in banking, agriculture, design, technology, construction, medicine, transportation, forestry, mining, business, criminality, government, security, medicine, waste disposal, industrial production, the arts, management, data processing, hospitality, and customer service to name but a few. The natural world ecosystem does other unrelated stuff.

So now we understand. We do our thing, they do theirs, and as long as what the natural world lot do doesn't affect us, then the world will remain in balance. The end.

Balance

“A harmonious or satisfying arrangement or proportion of parts or elements”

“An influence or force tending to produce equilibrium; counterpoise.”

Me: “What do you understand the word balance to mean?”
You: “Well, for me, it's all about having a balanced lifestyle. I work hard, but I also eat healthily, drink moderate amounts of alcohol, go to the gym regularly, and I always make sure I have plenty of time for my family.”
Me: “Sounds very balanced, thank you for your input.”

What I Do – The Earth

I am the Earth, I have an axial tilt of approximately 23.4 degrees and it takes me 365 days to orbit the sun. When my northern pole is tilted towards the sun it is warmer, and when tilted away it is colder. This dear readers results in what you know as seasons. If I did not have this specific degree of tilt, your world would look very different. Who knows what you would get! I might have huge areas of ice (where your office and gym used to be) or huge areas of barren desert (where you used to holiday in the tropics).

My friend the sun is approximately 150 million miles away depending on what time of year it is, which might seem like a long way away, but trust me, you wouldn't want him to get much closer, as he has a temperature of about 6,000 degrees Celsius. That being said, if he was any further away photosynthesis couldn't happen, and there wouldn't be any life on this planet, so bang goes your healthy diet and balanced lifestyle.

I keep you all safe from harm from my overheating friend by stopping the nasty ultraviolet
radiation, warming the surface through heat retention, and reducing temperature extremes between
day and night, so you can get on with making money.

If you haven't already noticed, I have quite a lot of water in what you call oceans, but not too
much! If I was covered in water with no land how would you conquer other countries?

Thanks to my friend the rain there is enough water for every living organism on the planet, and
for your bottled water you take to the gym.

Sorry, what was the point I was trying to make?

Oh yes. Everything was fine until you lot turned up, and if I sound a little disgruntled you'll have
to forgive me.

I know your job in the army, or the office, or whatever you do is important, but I'm starting not
to enjoy my job. You are making it increasingly difficult.

You see the natural world ecosystem as something external to you, but for me, the one with the
job of keeping the whole show on the road, it's all one.

When I started this project I had just the right amount of animals, insects, fish, trees, plants,
oceans, land, and even allowed for large variations in each of these over time. Everything was
perfect! Bloody Humans!

I think we've heard enough from the Earth, don't you!? There's always someone complaining about
us humans. Hasn't the Earth got anything better to do!

But at least one of the things he said made a bit sense to me, “...it's all one.” That's strange,
because most people always divide the Earth into humans on one side, everything else on the other,
when actually we live in a tightly connected world. Every action has a reaction.

“I need to walk a path from one side to the field to the other, but across the whole field are tiny flowers. They
won't know I'm walking on them. They don't have a consciousness. It's only a few flowers after all.”

“How will I know if I am keeping the world in balance or destroying the balance? What job will I
do that keeps the world in balance? How do I live a life that keeps the world in balance? I like my
lifestyle, I like my job. In fact, stuff the world, the I'm going to keep doing what I'm doing. I bet no
one else is having to think about this. I'm not going to read any more.”

Whether you read on or not, the Earth is still trying to balance a simple equation, made complex
with the variable no super being could ever have dreamed of: “Modern Man”.

Why would anyone create a species which has become a parasite, a blight on an otherwise
perfect creation? And Modern Man has become a parasite, no question about it. If you wish to argue
the point of being a parasite, please write a letter to the Earth detailing your reasons.

Parasite

“An organism that lives in or on another organism (its host) and benefits by deriving nutrients at the host's
expense.”

Modern Man has become somewhat of an environmental conservationist. Righting wrongs and
restoring balance where he sees fit. Just this week it was reported that 3000 reindeer are to be shot
as they have become a threat to the environment of the small island of South Georgia. In 1911 ten
reindeer were brought to the island by whalers (people hunting whales) as a source of fresh meat.

Over the last hundred years they have happily procreated, but according to us, we need to protect
the island and the King Penguins there.

It was reported that “most of the animals will be slaughtered with a bolt gunshot to the head. However, those in remote areas, or those near penguins where stampeding reindeer could trample
birds, will be shot by rifles.”
Even a World Wildlife Foundation spokesman said the cull (murder) “is the kind of action that's needed from time to time to correct previous mistakes”.

We cause a problem and then try and fix it by murdering millions of animals worldwide, depending on our view of which species is invasive, which needs saving, which needs controlling, and has as much to do with money as conservation.

After all, who is the biggest threat to the planet? Maybe, with seven billion humans invading and trampling the whole planet, it's time for a cull?

But you are horrified to read that aren't you? Cull (murder) millions of humans to save the planet? What if it got to a point where certain nations were consuming so much and leaving nothing for you. What would you do? Would you argue that all human life is sacred and must be preserved? It doesn't seem to stop people from killing each other. So let's not fool ourselves that we value all human life. We don't. In fact, we only value life when it suits us.

We kill billions of animals and fish so we can gorge ourselves on their flesh. We tear up millions of trees and millions of acres of forests. We pollute our rivers and oceans, and we dig and drill to fuel or adorn our balanced lifestyles.

Let's face it, whether we assign ourselves a god given right to be here, as the most dominant species, we are in fact a parasite on this Earth, and we won't be content until we have used or destroyed every last piece of it.

Several years ago I began to think that perhaps Modern Man doesn't belong on this Earth at all. And when I say Modern Man, I am talking about the species homo sapiens of which I am a part. I began to realise that all I have contributed to the Earth was to take, which is not a contribution at all.

No other species has been around for such a short time, yet, has a death wish to destroy himself and his fellow man and destroy his home. Not much of a lifestyle choice is it?

You may not think you are part of the parasitic species homo sapiens, and if you are disgusted by your actions as much as I was, then perhaps it's time for those who want to help the Earth in its job of keeping everything in balance to stand apart from those who are content to let themselves, and their fellow man, self-destruct; to stand apart from those whose actions are destroying the only known planet which gives us life, without asking for one thing in return; to stand apart from those who would kill every animal and fish in the name of being a flesh eater; to stand apart from those who place their own desires above all else.

To those people I say that you are well on the way to showing that there is a species of human that is prepared to stand up for our only home...Earth.

I look forward to meeting you one day.
Day Fifteen

“Today I will start to realise that all I am does not depend on how much I have, that I have infinite potential for creation and understanding the true nature of existence.”

Me: “Could you tell us a little bit about yourself please?”
You: “Hi, my name's alan, I'm forty three, I work in banking, I own my own house, and I drive a BMW and I have a holiday villa on a golf complex. I have a wife and two children.
Me: “Thank you alan for telling us what you have, but could you elaborate on who you are”
You: “Well, I was brought up in London, and went to Eton college, and then Cambridge. My father is an industrialist, and both my brothers work in business.”
Me: “Thank you alan, but that's not what I meant. Could you tell me who you are? Who are you when we strip away everything you have?”
You: “I don't understand the question. I already told you everything about myself.”

Imagine yourself on a desert island. You are sitting there naked. You have enough water to drink and enough to eat. Who are you?

Imagine yourself on your death bed. You have minutes before you breathe your last breath. You are alone. Who are you?

Imagine yourself in an office surrounded by people you work with. You have worked there for twenty years. You are summoned into your boss's office and told you are being let go. Who are you?

Imagine yourself sitting on a cloud, looking upon the life you created. Who were you?

Strange questions? Stupid questions? “Who am I? What's he talking about? I know who I am!” Or do you?
The great thing about the question, “who am I” is that it can never be answered! The brain is limited by itself, and the question will have you running around in circles for the rest of your life. You will be stuck in a loop!
The great thing about humans, is that underneath the old, I am a banker, I have a BMW, I have a wife scenarios, they know it's all a load of superficial nonsense, but still they continue with the pretence, as it's good to fit in!
If there's a terrible storm that floods everybody's houses and causes chaos to the city, the banker knows that nobody needs a banker, but they might need someone to put up sandbags, help old people out of their home, help coordinate rescues, and the banker may rise to the challenge and be the hero. On the other hand he may become the victim, and hide in his house like a frightened mouse!
But let's give him the benefit of the doubt, and make him a hero. And our hero did well. Here he is interviewed for television news.
Interviewer: I'm standing here with local banker alan macmillan orr, who has been assisting the emergency services helping people out of their homes to safety. Alan, what made you want to help?

Alan: I don't know really. My own home was completely flooded, and everything was ruined.

Interviewer: That must have been shocking for you?

Alan: It was at first, knowing that most of the possessions we had worked hard for were lost, but then I saw one of my elderly neighbours out in the street helping someone. This was someone who I had dismissed as being just an old man, but he inspired me to get out there. The emergency services are doing a great job, but I am supporting them in any way I can.

Interviewer: Thank you alan, keep up the good work.

So what happened to our wealthy banker? Did he instantaneously change and become a decent person when disaster struck? Or was it in him the whole time? Whatever the truth of it may be, his job is not the sum of him, even though he would like to think it was.

But why does it take a natural or man made disaster to uncover some truth about ourselves? Why is it when the order of society breaks down for even a few days, that some people reach out to help others, some steal from unattended department stores, and others hide and do nothing?

What we are seeing is people beginning to show, not “their true colours” but a side that may have been hidden under the controlled society we live in.

As we go deeper into our minds we find words like banker, hero, thief, coward, start to dissolve and we start to uncover beautiful colours, pathways we have never walked, and a level of understanding that has been closed to us since soon after we were born.

Five years after the flood, I went back to talk to various people who had been affected by it.

The Banker

Soon after the flood waters receded I went back to work. Everything downstairs was ruined but the insurance company was very helpful. We got brand new everything, and although the house smelled terribly damp, we were so busy organising all the contractors who were re-painting etc. that we didn't notice it.

We also took the kids on a holiday to the maldives for three weeks to get away from it all. I didn't want them having to suffer while the building work was going on. They were really upset as all their toys got ruined.

Yes it was upsetting for everyone in the floods but we've all got to get back to work.

The Thief

Do you know what, when my mates told me they'd seen me on tv running out of a store with a flat screen tv, I couldn't believe it. I knew I was going to get nicked by the police, but you've got to take what you can. There was no one in the shop, and it wasn't doing anyone any harm.

I got fined a lot more than the telly was worth, that's for sure.

Would I do it again? I don't know. Probably. As long as I wasn't going to get caught on CCTV!

The Coward

I was so glad when it was all over. I was scared half to death! I know there were people trapped in
their houses along my street, especially an old bloke I knew but you've got to look after yourself haven't you?

I heard he died soon afterwards, but I don't think there was anything I could have done. I mean, my house was under water too! I had to stay upstairs for two days before anyone came to rescue me! It's ridiculous. I don't know why we pay so much in taxes if they can't get organised in a disaster.

Three stories. All different. I bet you thought they would have changed their ways after the natural disaster didn't you? I would have thought so too.

I would have imagined the banker understanding the nature of his superficial possession led life, and given it up to help people, after all, he showed that he cared in the floods didn't he?

I would have imagined the thief, after being publicly humiliated on tv, and fined, would have realised the errors of his way (and the irony of his crime, given that he stole an electrical appliance when the electricity was cut off) and realised that stealing was a pointless way for humans to live.

I would have imagined the coward would have realised that sitting in your house waiting to be rescued is no way for someone to live, that he would have changed the way he thought, and created personal power, taken responsibility, and started living as opposed to just living in fear.

But none of these people had made the changes I thought they would. I thought people changed when large scale events like this took place. Obviously not!

Why could they not change? Why would they not change?

The flood could be interpreted as a pattern interruption, not a pattern changer. They were aware in the present moment just for a moment. They experienced a change in how they perceived the world, but only for a moment, then allowed the pattern to resume.


I stare down from my cloud
I am aware that I am observing
I am looking through time
I see myself
I see through myself
I see my mind and body, though they are not solid
I see for the first time, the beauty and simplicity of myself
My truth
My light
My being

I am present but I am timeless, for time bears no boundaries on who I am. Long past is my concept of who I am. I am no longer banker, thief, coward, I am all of them and I am none of them. I am the creator of all I perceive. I experience my life through that which I choose to perceive. I am no longer constrained by this body yet I choose to stay within it.

Moment to moment I experience what I choose to experience. I am not limited by words, nor events. I am not limited by anything in any time or space. I am the banker, the thief and the coward, and today I let go of them.

I am.
Day Sixteen

“Today I will start to realise, that the only way to free my mind is to stand alone, free from the limitations of group thought, free from fixed ideas and national identity”

I am a muslim, I am a buddhist, I am black, I am scottish, I am chinese, I am a catholic, I am a manager, I am a worker, I am a conservative, I am a socialist, I am a communist, I am working class, I am middle class, I am a thinker, I am a drinker, I am an indian, I am a drug addict, I am a football supporter, I am a rugby supporter...

Let me ask you a quick question, what do all these people have in common? Well, the “I am” should give you a clue!

Is the answer that they are all speaking in the first person; that they are all members of different groups; that they are all individuals describing their place in society; that they are speaking english? How about that they are all members of the group homo sapiens, humans!

But that's not enough for us is it? We all want to subdivide ourselves into smaller groups, no matter how many people live on the planet!

“Right, there's ten of us on Earth, who wants to be in the hunting group and who wants to be in the gathering group?”

We have a strong sense of needing to belong, and whilst family ties can remain strong throughout our lives, individuals sharing the same religion, colour, class, interest, or job, army, bond quickly, through some shared “heritage” or purpose, or but only when it suits them.

Let's have a quick look at how groups work shall we?

In the news today, there is fighting in an african country called mali. Mali was formed first as the mali federation after the sudanese republic and senegal gained independence from france in 1960, and renamed mali from what remained of the sudanese republic after the withdrawal of senegal.

As of 14th January 2012, france is in the middle of a military intervention as an attempt to halt the advance of islamic rebels towards Bamako (the capital) from bases in the north and east!

So what happened? Well, needless to say, groups are involved!

I have used mali as an example because the fighting there is current, but it could be any country we are talking about.

According to the CIA world factbook, the ethnic groups are mande 50% (bambara, malinke, soninke), peul 17%, voltaic 12%, songhai 6%, tuareg and moor 10%, other 5%. The religions followed are muslim 90%, christian 1%, indigenous beliefs 9%.

Currently one of the groups above is marching on the capital with some intention or other. Which group is it? Why are they doing what they are doing? It doesn't really matter.

What is important is that this would never occur if people did not group together under any banner. And whatever people tell you about shared ethnicity, religion, political beliefs, every human being is able to stand alone. And when people stand alone things start to change!

There's an old expression which says “it takes two to tango” which is fairly self explanatory. If one person tried to tango, it wouldn't be tango!
Muslim vs. christian. Communist vs. fascist. Black vs. white. Government vs. rebel. Whenever one thing exists its counterpart exists. As soon as we fix an opinion everyone who holds an opposing opinion must be our enemy.

Of course not everyone who holds an opposing opinion will be killed by us! We may be happy just to hold these opinions, and that's at least a step in the right direction, but what would it take for us to take up arms?

If you strongly feel that “your” country is being overrun with immigrants and “your” government is not listening to you, what will you do? Will you just complain bitterly to your friends or will you start or join a group? What will your aims be?

What if you strongly feel that your religion is the only religion that should be followed around the world and its laws should be applied globally, what will you do? How far will you go to ensure your opinions are listened to, respected, and ultimately enforced?

What if you feel that no one should have the right to enforce their religious beliefs on anyone else? What will you do?

Remember, every group thinks that it is in the “right” which means the opposing group must be “wrong”, but you don't really believe that do you?

Do you think holding/sharing/enforcing an opinion makes you the standard bearer of truth? I would say that anything which instantly could have an opposing view must be headed in a direction away from, not towards, truth.

But we feel powerful in a group don't we? We can do or say what we like when we're grouped together. We can take on the world!

Unfortunately we also take on something else: Group thought. We begin to think and act as one, and carry out actions which may be abhorrent to us as individuals.

"Go on, do it, go on stab the black bastard. Go on."

Who could refuse such a direct order from the group;; the group whose opinions you share? Not many? Suddenly you are in there with the others kicking and punching him, you reach for your blade - “Do it! Do it!! DO IT! they scream, and you plunge your blade into his chest, once, twice, thrusting it inwards and twisting it until his body goes lifeless and everyone cheers you.

You feel elated, happy to have completed the group task, no matter that this task was murder; the murder of another human being.

"Go on shoot him, shoot the white bastard. Do it. Go on."

Do you think there has ever been such a thing as “group enlightenment?” No? Why do you think that is? Why is it that groups of people who believe in the same thing cannot be enlightened together?

Let me ask you this question. Where does enlightenment come from? What is it? What does it feel like? What does it smell like? What does it look like?"

I'll tell you. It comes from a profound connection to everything that can exist, has existed or ever will exist. You can see the structure of everything, you can feel the connection to everything. It smells pure like the air, earth, water, and fire combined. It is the most incredible understanding of how this world pieces together.

How do I know? Because I have found it.

You believe me that I have found it don't you? It makes sense to you. It fits your belief system perfectly. You believe you are enlightened too. You want me to share in it with you, and you want to join me in creating a group called “the enlightened ones”.

Whenever we come across someone who is enlightened, we will get them to join us, and together
we will take our enlightenment across every ocean to every corner of the globe. We will fight stupidity, blind belief, dogma, injustice, everywhere...

Sound familiar?

“We are “the enlightened ones” and we come to you in peace. We come to bring you knowledge and our wisdom of the universe.”

But what happens if you do not want our knowledge and wisdom? What if you do not like the way we think, what will we do with you? Will we leave you alone and say “that's fine you can believe anything you want,” or will we start to become more dogmatic, will we try and enforce our knowledge on you for your own good, for the greater good, for the benefit of all mankind?

What will we do with all those who oppose us? For there will be an opposition.

How will we protect those who want to stay in our group when people from the opposing group “the unenlightened ones” want to try to bring their knowledge and wisdom to our people?

There is only one thing for it. We must be prepared to fight for what we believe in. We must be prepared to take up arms, albeit unwillingly, to protect the enlightened ones. We must fight to overcome those who do not wish to live in peace and enlightenment. We have truth. We have right on our side. (sound of people cheering and clapping).

We have seen this before, we have seen what happens when people group together under a common idea and purpose, however noble and “right” it seems to us. We know through the experience of our forefathers that humans bonded in groups of any kind cannot see farther than the group.

They cannot have individual thought, lest it come into conflict with the group idea, so we embrace the group, even if our higher self is telling us to stand apart. But stand apart we must.

We must challenge our own minds not the minds of others, challenge our belief systems, challenge our ideas of who we are, and what we stand for; not to create new ideas for people to follow, but to free ourselves from the shackles of primitive Modern Man, and embrace our true nature, whatever we find it to be.

This is a journey you can only take alone so think carefully before you embark on it. Are you ready to uncover the secrets of the human mind and beyond? Are you ready to let go of the past and create a new beginning right now and every moment henceforth? You choose to stand alone but know that you are always connected to everything and everyone. There is nothing to fear.

I wish you well on your journey.
Beyond The Natural Mind – A 21 Day Manifesto

Day Seventeen

“Today, I begin to realise that what I project to the world may not be a true reflection of how I truly feel. Today, I will begin to allow the outside to match the inside.”

Just because I smile does not mean I am happy

From a young age we are taught to mask our true emotions, those which we are actually experiencing. Why? Well it helps in the construction of a controlled “civilisation”.

Big Boys Don't Cry And Other Nonsense

Wherever these expressions started from, you can be sure that it was part of the original control process, a process designed to assign roles to men and women, to compartmentalise the species into easily identifiable traits.

Psychologists may note that “women are more naturally in touch with their emotions”, and “men compartmentalise and intellectualise more;” and whilst it may or may not be true, it does not tell us that it has always been like this since Man first existed on Earth, or whether boys are culturally conditioned from the moment they are born to express themselves in a compartmentalised and intellectualised way. All we know is, we expect women to cry and get upset, and we expect men not to.

But let us step outside of our assigned emotional roles right now, and be honest with ourselves. Let us express something about how we really feel. We all know that we put on a good show for ourselves and everyone else, but no one really knows when we are struggling emotionally (men and women).

We constantly lie, which if you think about it, is the complete opposite of how a complex system should behave. It causes feelings of guilt amongst other things, which eats away at us every minute of the day even if we are not consciously aware of it.

In order to protect the “civilised” world we are taught how to behave, and told to abide by the rules of our society, which have been put in place over centuries and are the definitive instructions on what it means to be human.

But they're not are they? They are rules to protect the governing powerful elite from “civilisation.”

Civilisation

“The most advanced stage of human social development and organization.”

Given the number of humans actively involved in the oppression and murder of other humans, the murder of animals and fish, the destruction of the natural environment, lying, cheating, polluting, controlling, dominating, and torturing in 2013, I think it's fair to say that we are not at the most
advanced stage of human social development and organisation.

Every day we go to school or work, and whilst we openly tell people that we enjoy our work is that how we truly feel? Are we showing the world our true selves or are we just conforming to an idea? An idea formed externally to ourselves.

How does this idea relate to our emotional selves?

If, like me, you believe that it is our responsibility as humans not to conform to an idea, but to understand our true nature, our role in the creation of all which we perceive, then matching the internal and external emotional state is also part of that responsibility.

So how do we know what our true emotional state is? How can we be sure that what we are feeling isn't caused by an external, hidden force, such as the idea of shame or honour? How can we be true to ourselves?

“He was quite a happy person. I have no idea why he would want to kill himself.”

The problem lies not in how we perceive ourselves, but that we care how others perceive us. If I Alan MacMillan Orr were a captain of industry, I have to be strong, and never show any weakness, no matter what is going on inside. How would it be perceived if I broke down into tears during a board meeting? It is unthinkable is it not? I cannot tell anyone, so I “soldier on” never showing that I am depressed, anxious, or deeply unhappy with my life.

I keep up appearances that everything is fine, until I cannot contain my emotions any longer and in a fit of desperation decide that I cannot live with myself any longer and commit suicide.

Everyone is shocked, wondering what they could have done to help me, but even they know that weakness cannot be tolerated, that “if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen,” so the culture of “keeping up appearances” must continue. After all, the individual is not important, the company must continue, at any cost.

Man vs. System

The system, which has been created for, by, and through us as humans is deeply flawed, but without it we would not have great inventions, money, healthcare, commerce, education, and government, and we would never have progressed as a species.

So, ladies and gentleman, in order to live in a nice house, with a nice car, well educated children, and enjoy two holidays every year, the cost is keeping your true self in the shadows; to put on a mask every day; a mask which has been carefully prepared for you so you can fit in to the “civilisation,” and if you ever have any internal emotional issues please keep them to yourselves, no one wants to see them.

Much as your boss may say he likes you, he tells you to “leave your personal problems at home, they have no place in the workplace.” But does he not know that everywhere you go you take yourself with you? Apparently not.

If we do not like the system or cannot wear the mask everyday, we cannot share in its benefits and rather than exposing ourself to ridicule, we are encouraged to stay out of it. There is no place for people with problems in this world, so pull yourself together!

If, like me, you are not prepared to put on the mask every day, and do not want to conform to this strange system created neither for me, nor by me, then you have to start to investigate what is going on in your mind.

It is up to us as individual creators to take responsibility for our minds and bodies; no one else is going to do it for us. That is the first step.

The second step is up to you. If you feel that there is nothing you can do to help yourself you must ask for help; reach out to anyone you trust.
The third step is in recognising that no system or organisation has control over you, no matter what anyone tells you.
The fourth step is in creating a life for yourself not a life that has been designed for you. The human race is the most powerful, adaptable species on Earth, and has survived thanks to individual creators, like you, who were not afraid to express their true selves.
The fifth step is in letting go of anything which goes against your better nature.
The sixth step is easy. Live! And enjoy your life. Those who have sought to control you through culture and fixed ideas of how you should live are just jealous that you broke free.
It is high time we all break free of the false idea of being “civilised,” and seek understanding of our true selves. Only then should we be happy to call ourselves a civilisation.
Day Eighteen

“Today, I start to accept that though there may be many choices, many paths, and many possible outcomes, there is one right way to conduct my life”

Choice

“An act of selecting or making a decision when faced with two or more possibilities”

“I lie here in the hospital waiting to die. The doctors have told me that I do not have long to live. My family is all around me, some are crying some are silent, watching, waiting for the moment I die. I am not afraid of death, I have seen much over my life, and the act of dying seems very simple. I lie here with tubes in my arms, chained to the bed through an illness which is consuming every part of my being, yet strangely I feel at peace. Perhaps it is the morphine coursing through my veins.

My name is not important and neither is where I come from. I am 74 years old, and for a large part of my adult life I was the president of a country whose name is also unimportant. Where shall I begin?

I had a privileged upbringing; I never wanted for anything, which is more than could be said for the people I ruled over for 30 years. My childhood was filled with games, and toys, and I was looked after by servants who took care of my every want, and desire. I was educated in a private English boarding school, and went to university where I studied economics.

I returned home at the age of 23, where my father thought I would go into business, but I knew what I wanted to do. I knew I wanted to work in politics, to make use of my privileged upbringing, to help the poor people of my country.

These people had nothing and I had everything, I would make their lives better. I would work for the government. I would help improve sanitation, education, employment.

I rose quickly through the party, and by the age of forty three I was standing for president. I was elected by the people, and looked forward to finally breaking the years of poverty in my country. But it was not to be.

I realised how difficult it was to get anything done. There was so much corruption, everybody who worked for the government supposedly helping the people who were paying taxes they could barely afford were lining their own pockets.

I soon realised that no one wanted equality, no one wanted poverty eradicated, they were much too comfortable with their houses, government cars, and banquets. I realised that we were running the country for ourselves. We didn't care about “our” people, we cared about ourselves.

I had my presidential palace, and anything I wanted. I started to notice I could take riches for myself, and I did. It was so easy. It wasn't government money, it wasn't the people's money, but no one seemed to care, and neither did I.

Poverty and disease were still rife in the country, but the people loved me. They seemed to be complicit in my deceit. They knew what was happening yet they did nothing about it. These were simple villagers, and farmers, they believed in me. They didn't know or didn't care that I was taking
their money under false promises, but I could sometimes see it in their eyes; the unspoken sadness that said “I know you are stealing from me, but I will support you.

More fool them! I thought. If they are too stupid to notice that their money was being used to line our pockets, well, that's their own fault.

But they couldn't stand up to me and they knew it. Everywhere I went I was protected by the army, who we made sure were well paid. Any dissent was quickly crushed. And we went about our business.

I was elected for five years, at which point there were supposed to be elections, but I couldn't let go of power! Why would I? I liked my palace. I liked the money. I liked the power.

So we rigged the elections, and I was voted in again.

Another five years past, but this time there was more opposition to my re-election. Someone was stirring the people up, so he had to go.

You know what power is, it's being able to give an order, and people blindly follow it. I issued a warrant for his arrest and he was found guilty of treason and executed. We could not have dissent. I was in charge of the country, not the people, not the opposition.

Admittedly it got out of hand. People were protesting against my rule, saying that I was corrupt, that I was a dictator, which I denied at the time, but now I must accept it.

Of course I was a dictator, supported by a well paid army that would do whatever I said. I amended the constitution giving myself executive power over government, I raised taxes, I moved money offshore, I built new palaces, and had monuments to myself constructed.

The people smiled and waved as I paraded through the streets, and although I saw the smiles, I knew that it was only because I kept them in fear.

They could have overthrown me and the government and the army in an instant but they did nothing, and that strengthened my grip on power. They gave me the power to oppress them, they were complicit. They could have stopped paying taxes, started a general strike, but none of them were prepared to lay their lives down for the cause.

If they had stopped paying tax there would have been no money to pay for my army. There would have been no money to pay for the murder of dissenters. They would have won. Yet they did nothing. That always amazed me.

Fear. It is man's worst enemy and his best friend. If you feel afraid of me, then I have power over you. If I feel afraid of you, you have power over me, but the former was always true. I was but one man, supported by people who benefited from the fear I exerted over them, and the fear they exerted over others.

Of course it all came to an end one day, and I knew that day was coming. It was so simple. The money did run out, and the army turned on its paymaster. They took charge of the country, and I was declared a criminal and went into hiding.

If they had caught me, they would have hanged me for sure, but in a sudden twist of events, the people finally rose up and attacked the army. I couldn't believe my luck. Civil war!

Of course it wasn't long before the war was brother against brother, neighbour vs. neighbour, sect vs. sect, religion vs. religion, north vs. south, east vs. west, rich vs. poor.

They looted the palaces, pulled down my monuments, but I was safe. My family had been escorted out of the country and were safe. My money was hidden in foreign bank accounts and was safe. All I had to do was rally my supporters to help me leave.

But I didn't have to. Soon, the Western powers decided to intervene, and although we knew it was to protect their financial and commercial interests, I managed to broker a deal which saw me go into exile.

Ha! I couldn't believe my luck.

Here was I, the man responsible for creating the problems in the country, safe, well and rich, watching the death and destruction in my country from a hotel room thousands of miles away.
Beyond The Natural Mind – A 21 Day Manifesto

There was talk of putting me on trial for war crimes against humanity, but fortunately due to developing a terminal illness, was deemed to be too ill to stand trial. A stroke of luck!

Unfortunately here I am, days away from death, but in a way I see myself as getting off lightly, I could have been put on trial and hanged, but instead I am in a comfortable hospital bed, surrounded by those I love, having the best medical care in the world.

I have been thinking about my life over the last few months, wondering if I would do anything differently; wondering if I could have been a better person, but I had a good time. I have a beautiful wife, and three daughters, I have had riches most men couldn't dream of; I had the respect of an entire country. People looked up to me.

Would I do it all again? Of course I would. It wasn't an accident that this happened and it wasn't pre-ordained by god, it was all my own doing, and I take responsibility for what happened.

So, people suffered, but I was the president of the country. I couldn't very well let people go around doing and saying what they wanted, otherwise no one would have respected me.

This was my life, these were the choices I made. I have no regret.

Now if you'll excuse me, I would like a few moments with my family.

Conduct

"To direct the course of; manage or control"

What is the right way to conduct your life? Is it to lead a life of compassion and love for the whole world, or to dedicate yourself to god or to charitable works?

No, the only right way to conduct your life is the way you choose to conduct it. You are responsible for your life, no one else.

And if you find this man's actions abhorrent, then you have the ability to choose to conduct your life differently. I cannot tell you how to conduct it though.

However, if becoming a dictator and murdering people who disagree with you is the way you would like to conduct your life then that is something you must do.
“Today, I will start to understand what truth is. I will begin to notice how I feel when I think or speak words which go against my true nature.”

There are plenty of unhelpful expressions in the world like “a leopard can't change its spots” which people use to illustrate that although someone may appear to have changed, they are still the same underneath; that their true nature hasn't changed.

So if I am a habitual liar, what is my true nature? Was I born a liar? Will I die a liar? Is that just who I am?

Most people would agree that “yes, once a liar, always a liar” which doesn't help us uncover our true nature.

Would you agree that lying is a learnt behaviour, that there is a reason the brain is protecting us by telling untruths? That we weren't born with this “affliction”?

I for one have told many lies over the course of my forty three years on this planet. So why did I tell them, what was the purpose?

Well, I covered up actions I didn't want anyone else to know about, things that I was ashamed of, and I also lied to people I wanted to impress.

So if I was ashamed of my actions why did I do them? Why didn't I “do the right thing” in the first place? Well, I would say that I was “doing the right thing”. I wanted to sleep with a girl who was not my girlfriend and I did it, but as it is customary to be monogamous in our society, and that is what my girlfriend expected of me, then I could not tell her the truth, not if I wanted her to still be my girlfriend that is!

Why did I lie to people about how much money I earned? Why could I not be honest with them? Well, I wanted to appear better than them, I wanted to be looked up to? After all, the society I live in expects people to do well don't they?

All of these are just excuses. I did not have to sleep with that girl, I did not have to lie about my income; but nothing in either of those lies suggests that it is my “true nature” to lie.

Lies are just a method of covering what we do not want others to know, but they cause chaos. Everyone is lying to everyone, making it almost impossible to know what others are thinking, creating a deceitful world, quite unlike any other species on the planet.

So why do we lie? Well, I am sure there have been studies done throughout the world, by scientists and psychologists, but for our conversation here, let us accept that over thousands of years, thanks to humans becoming so controlled, that to act in a way contrary to society’s rules is considered a heinous crime; that we have also been taught to believe that unless we earn a lot of money, or are very well educated, we are considered a failure.

But these are more excuses aren't they? This does not help us understand our true nature, or for that matter, the nature of truth.

I have found out over the last few years that truth is a very personal thing; your truth is different from my truth. We bend the truth to our advantage, some may even see it as an evolutionary adaptation, a survival mechanism.
So why do we lie?

Why do I act in a way I know will upset others, when I know I will have to tell an untruth to cover it up?

Well, I act in the way I decide to act, making it “right action” in that it was right for me (at the time). It is only when other people are involved who may decide that it is “wrong action” that I seek to cover it up.

If no one was ever going to find out, I wouldn't feel guilty, and I wouldn't have to lie. So lies are actually nothing to do with me, it's everyone else's expectations of how I should behave that are causing me to lie!

Perhaps I have presented myself falsely, knowing that I could not live up to their expectations but have let them place their trust in me all the same.

It seems to me that humans wouldn't need to lie if they were on their own, if they did not mix with other humans, but that's not going to happen is it? We live in a social society and we must learn to behave accordingly even when we don't want to.

Have you ever met anyone you did not need to lie to? Have you met someone with whom you can share everything without judgement? If you have you are the luckiest person alive. When you can just be yourself with someone, that is worth more than all the money in the world.

We are always being true to ourselves though, we know truth from fiction, we know when we tell a lie, what the truth of it really is, even if we manage to hide it from others.

So let us not worry about ourselves. No matter what anyone tells you, you can never truly lie to yourself.

So how do we live in a world dominated by untruths? How do we know truth from fiction? Should we develop mind reading techniques? No, that would just disappoint us when we discover that the person we trusted was actually lying to us.

There must be another way forward.

There must be a way of living with truths and untruths, without resorting to distrusting everybody. So how do we do it?

You know you are already being truthful to yourself, so that takes care of one person, but what are we going to do about the others? What about all those people who lie to us and we to them?

It is simple. It is all about choices. It is about choosing who you communicate with, who you are in a relationship with, who you are friends with, who you work with, who you spend time with.

Remember when I asked you if you have ever met anyone you did not need to lie to? If you haven't, now is the time to seek them out.

Only through choosing to be with people you do not need or want to lie to, will we begin to create connections, and networks of people who are bonded in truth.

Does this sound like a load of rubbish? Do you want to say “no one ever tells the truth” or “how can I only mix with people I don't need to lie to, I'm busy, I don't have time for this, I work in an office, I have lots of friends, how can I ever know if those are the people I should spend time with” or “what a ridiculous idea, there's billions of people on the planet ,this could never work.”

Couldn't it?

Remember, it is up to you and the choices you make; your thoughts, your actions, and the consequences which arise from them. When you begin to realise that it's all about you, then everything becomes a lot simpler.
Day Twenty

“Today, I will begin to let go of all emotions which hinder me from greatness. I will begin to leave the past behind, not carry it with me, and let my future create itself through my good thoughts and actions every day.”

Greatness
“The quality of being great, distinguished, or eminent”

How would you define greatness? What does it mean to be great? Is it that you are superior to everyone else? Are you naturally better than everyone else? Or is it something else?

If you tell everyone you are great does that mean that you are suffering from delusions of grandeur. Does it mean you are “big headed”?

The thing is, even if you are top of your class, the best singer, or extremely rich, no one wants to hear you boasting how great you are! We don't like people telling us they are better than us do we?

It makes us feel bad about ourselves. It makes us feel like we are in some way inadequate. It affects our self-esteem.

The thing is we all want to be the best don't we? We all want to be rich, we all want to be the president, or the boss of the company, don't we?

Actually, that's not true is it? We know we can't all be great. We know that we we have to stay at our own level, and just accept it. Not everyone can be the boss, after all, if everyone were the boss who would do all the work.

Who would clean our streets and or toilets? Who would grow the food we eat, who would serve us meals at restaurants, or do all the work unbecoming of being the greatest? It's just not practical and you know it. So you live your life according to what others perceive your abilities to be.

You quietly take the job on the factory assembly line, you follow orders, you do as your told, and then tell everyone that you enjoy it.

You failed your exams or did very badly at them, or you did ok, but not good enough to be the greatest. You know there can only be very few truly great people. You know that everyone must take their dedicated place waiting for them on the wheel of life.

You failed your exams or did very badly at them, or you did ok, but not good enough to be the greatest. You know there can only be very few truly great people. You know that everyone must take their dedicated place waiting for them on the wheel of life.

You are a cog in the wheel and you know it. Your only purpose is to be that cog. For that you will be paid a wage which will allow you to house, clothe and feed yourself. That is your role.

If you try to break free of the wheel or find it too hard to stay on, you will find yourself in a position of being on your own. If you cannot house, clothe and feed yourself and your family you will be seen as a failure. You will be ostracised from the other cogs who cannot understand why you don't just keep quiet and do your job. Your self-esteem will deteriorate, and although people may take pity on you, that is all they will feel for you. You have failed at your task of being human.

So who defines what your job on the wheel is? Who is directing your life? Who says that the most important thing for a human to be is as a cog in the wheel of life? I'm sure that most children when asked what they would like to be would not say cog in the wheel, or feel pitied, they want to be a pilot, a doctor, or a singer.

But we have to ask ourselves why any child would come up with these “job” titles, for they are still jobs which mean they are still cogs on the wheel. Even jobs like “boss” or “president” are
merely bigger cogs.

So why do we ask children what they would like to “be” when they grow up? Surely what we are asking them is, what task would you prefer to perform as a cog in the wheel when you are old enough to be considered ready to earn money and pay taxes.

For me, greatness is something more than being exceptional at a job, it is a state of mind, so let's forget about what jobs we would like to do. Let us forget how we did at our exams. Let us let go of the idea that we are merely a cog in the wheel of life, for that idea is surely not our own. Let us start to explore our greatness together!

If greatness is defined as the quality of being great, then by just being, we are great!

Do you know what species you belong to? Well, I'll tell you anyway. You are a member of homo sapiens, the most advanced species on the planet, characterised according to wikipedia, by “a large brain, a particularly well developed neocortex, pre frontal cortex and temporal lobes making them capable of abstract reasoning, language, introspection, problem solving and culture through social learning. This mental capability, combined with an adaptation to bipedal locomotion that frees the hands for manipulating objects, has allowed humans to make far greater use of tools than any other living species on Earth. Humans are the only extant species known to build fires and cook their food, as well as the only known species to clothe themselves and create and use numerous other technologies and arts.”

So that's you, and me, and seven billion other members of the same species. Did you read anywhere that says we are limited by how well we do in our exams, or limited in what we do in our lives? No, I didn't either!

Somewhere along the line ladies and gentleman, we have been tricked by a powerful conjurer, someone who has made the majority of us believe that we are limited, that there is a specific role which will fit our level of education. This role will involve working at least five days a week doing a repetitive task which cannot at this time be completed by a robot. For this you will be able to call yourself a bona fide member of society. You will receive money for your labour, but just enough to stop you from staging a revolution. Entertainment will be provided for you in the form of music, art, theatre, cinema to be enjoyed when you are on official rest periods from “work”.

You will also be allowed to drink alcohol to help you relax from the stress you are under from the work you must undertake.

You are encouraged to “buy” your own house, get married and have children as soon as possible as this shows you have conformed to the plan.

If you do anything which interrupts the plan such as not paying your taxes you will be punished, as will you if you break any of the laws of the system for which you work.

“Keep quiet and conform and all will be well”

Of course it will be. The system rewards all those who play their part without complaint.

Are you starting to understand? There is no other species in the known universe as great as you, yet you are limited, not by yourself, but by external forces intent on running the wheel to their own advantage.

But you're still not convinced that you are great are you?

Isn't it strange to know that physically your brain is exactly the same as some of the greatest minds in history? You have the same brain as Einstein, Galileo, Newton, Plato, Michaelangelo... Actually why don't you think of one of your greatest heroes? Have you got it? Right. Now know that your brain is made of the same stuff.
So what makes your hero greater than you?

I'm sure you are starting to compare their achievements – he painted the sistine chapel, I paint people's houses. He discovered the telephone. I use a telephone. He designed the flushing toilet, I clean toilets etc..

So they may be silly examples but why are you comparing yourself to anyone? Why are you comparing what people have done that you admire with what you do? You already know that you have the same brain as people who earn a million dollars a year, and those who survive by begging for pennies.

So what is stopping us from greatness? What is holding us back? I'll tell you. It's us! We are limiting ourselves based on an external idea that only exceptional people will be great. But does the fact we are here as part of the great species homo sapiens the only species capable of abstract reasoning, bi-pedal locomotion, and introspection not start to make you think that perhaps you are capable of unlimited greatness?

It doesn't? Why not?

Because, you see, I didn't do very well at school, I come from a country with no education, I was beaten as a child, I have to work in the fields to help my parents...

Remember, we are not talking about greatness as defined by what you do to earn money. So tell me, what is holding you back from unlimited greatness?

I'll tell you. Everything you think and feel is holding you back. Every negative thought and emotion is holding you back from potential greatness. Everything everyone has ever told you about you is holding you back.

Today is a new day. Right now, it is time to let go of the past, and go on a journey to find out what true greatness is. Don't worry you don't have to travel anywhere. Stay right where you are.

So what will you do when you find you are so much more than just a cog in the wheel; that you have infinite potential? Well, as long as you don't take a job oppressing everyone else, thinking you are somehow superior, you can do whatever it is you choose to. You are an incredible human being, and when everyone else realises their greatness, the world will indeed be a great place to live, for all its inhabitants.
Day Twenty One

“Today, I will begin to realise that there is more to my life than I see. I will start to dedicate myself to a life filled with depth, meaning & purpose. A life filled with compassion for all, & most of all, laughter.”

That is my statement. That is what I, the author of this book will do. This statement does not apply to you, and you know it.

There is no point in dedicating yourself to a life filled with purpose, and filling your life with compassion for all if that is not what you want to do.

If you want to be a rock star, a famous actor, a drug addict, a dictator, a murderer, a liar, a cheat, or a thief, then go out and do it to the best of your ability; but don't blame anyone else for why you are doing it. Take responsibility for it.

One more thing. Don't come back to me telling me your life didn't work out the way I said it would if you followed what I said.

Don't follow me, and don't listen to me, you are the conductor of your life. This is your show. Enjoy it.
Beyond The Natural Mind – A 21 Day Manifesto

Every Day

“I will create a new beginning...”
Beyond The Natural Mind – A 21 Day Manifesto

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