

KEEPING YOUR SOUL ALIVE

BILL O'HANLON

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1

BURNED OUT
STUCK
UNINSPIRED
DEPRESSED
NUMBED
FRIED

2



3

LOST (DAVID WAGONER)

Stand still.

The trees ahead and bushes beside you are not lost

Wherever you are is called here

And you must treat it as a powerful stranger

Must ask permission to know it and be known

Listen, the forest breathes

It whispers: "I have made this place around you.

If you leave it, you may come back again, saying, 'Here,'"

No two trees are the same to raven

No two branches are the same to wren

If what a tree or a branch does is lost on you,
then, you are surely lost

Stand still: the forest knows where you are.

You must let it find you.

4

SOUL SICKNESS

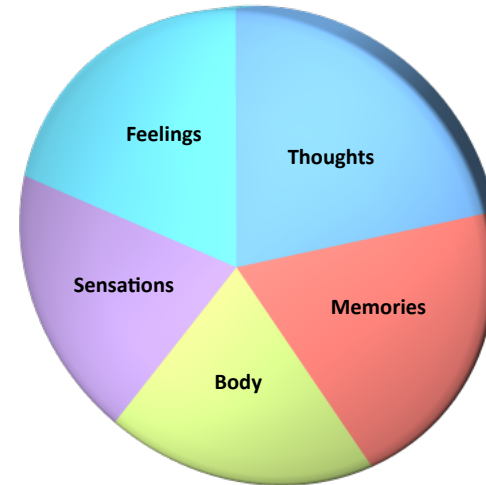
You know of the disease in Central Africa called sleeping sickness

There also exists a sleeping sickness of the soul. Its most dangerous aspect is that one is unaware of its coming.

That is why you have to be careful. As soon as you notice the slightest sign of indifference, the moment you become aware of the loss of longing, of enthusiasm and zest, take it as a warning. -Albert Schweitzer

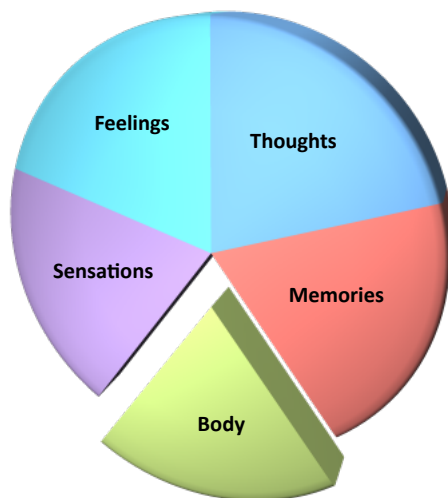
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360° SELF



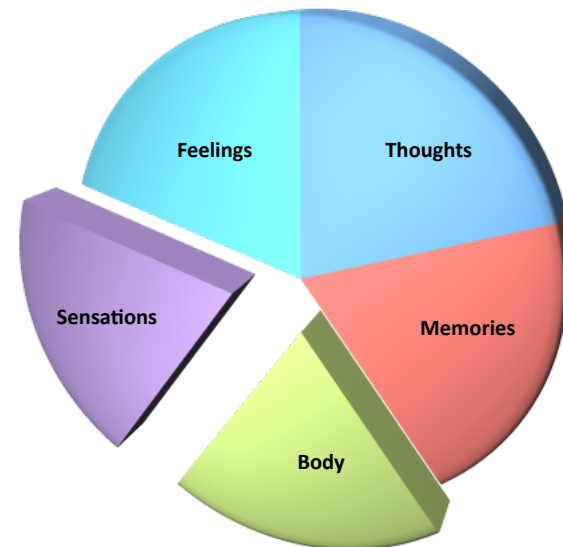
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300° SELF



7

267° SELF



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ARE YOU IN YOUR SKIN?

9

HINTS FROM YOUR SOUL THAT YOU ARE IN TROUBLE

- Feeling stuck
- Feeling soul sick, numbed
- Feeling like you have lost the meaning in life
- Feeling like a fake, an imposter
- Divided against yourself
- Hiding who you are with others or in the world
- Burned out; toasted; exhausted

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THE WRONG WALL

Sometimes we climb the ladder all the way to the top, only to discover that we have placed it against the wrong wall.

—Joseph Campbell

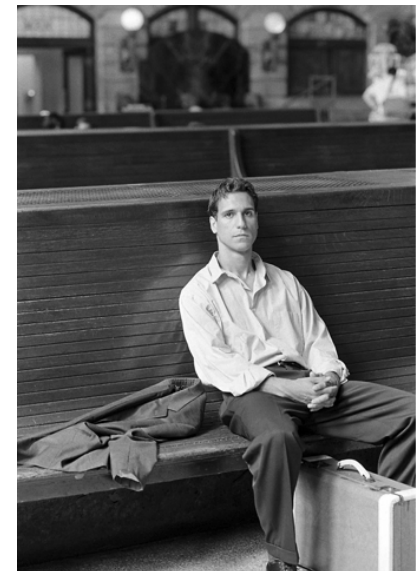


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THE WRONG STATION

If your train is on the wrong track, every station you come to is the wrong station.

—Bernard Malamud



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DAKOTA SAYING

**When you discover
you are riding a dead
horse, the best
strategy is to
dismount.**

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THE GOOD NEWS

**Your soul is very
patient and will wait for
years for you to show
up again or reclaim
your missing pieces
and vitality.**

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AS I WAS SLEEPING (MACHADO)

**Last night, as I was sleeping, I dreamt –
marvelous error – that a spring was breaking our
here in my heart.**

**I said, along which secret aqueduct, oh water,
are you coming to me? Water of a new life that I
have never drunk?**

**Last night, as I was sleeping, I dreamt –
marvelous error – that I had a beehive here
inside my heart and the golden bees were
making sweet honey from my old failures.**

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AS I WAS SLEEPING (MACHADO)

**Last night, as I was sleeping, I dreamt –
marvelous error – that a fiery sun was giving
light inside my heart.**

**It was fiery because I felt warmth as from a
hearth, and sun because it gave light and
brought tears to my eyes.**

**Last night, as I was sleeping, I dreamt –
marvelous error – that it was God I had here
inside my heart.**

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AS I WAS SLEEPING

(MACHADO)

Is my soul asleep? Have those beehives that labor at night stopped?

And the water wheel, is it dry, the cups empty, wheeling, carrying only shadows?

No, my soul is not asleep. It is awake, wide awake.

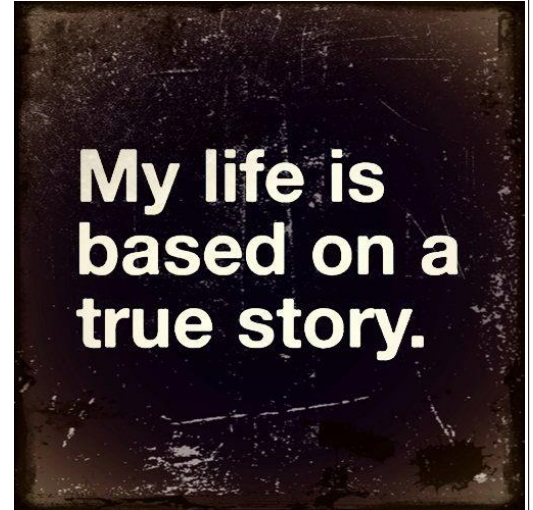
It neither sleeps nor dreams, but watches, its clear eyes open, far-off things, and listens at the shores of the great silence.

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THE BAD NEWS

Your soul will not wait forever and if you wait too long, you are setting yourself up for a crisis or breakdown.

If you live an inauthentic version of yourself for too long or get too alienated from your self, your soul and the world will conspire to retrieve you.



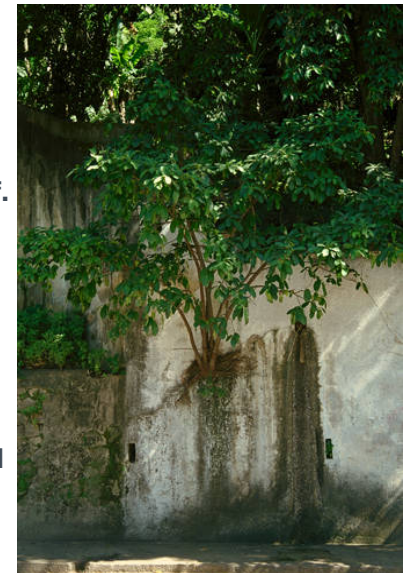
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THE SOUL WILL CREATE OR SEIZE ON A CRISIS

The unconscious always tries to produce an impossible situation in order to force the individual to bring out his very best. Otherwise one stops short of one's best, one is not complete, one does not realize oneself.

What is needed is an impossible situation where one has to renounce one's own will and one's own wit and do nothing but wait and trust to the impersonal power of growth and development.

When you are up against a wall, be still and put down roots like a tree, until clarity comes from deeper sources to see over that wall. –Carl Jung



20

Listen.
Are you breathing
just a little and
calling it a life?
–Mary Oliver

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WHAT STALK PEOPLE WHEN THEY ARE SOUL SICK AND OFF COURSE

- **The soul:** Through deadening or disturbance
- **The body:** Through health crises or frightening sensations
- **The world:** Through crisis or change in others and the environment

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HOW TO HAVE A GOOD BREAKDOWN

23

THE CALL

- **Eric Hoffer:** “To dispose a soul to action, we must upset its equilibrium.”
- **M.C. Richards:** Before we can move into a new ar-rangement, we must first go through a period of de-rangement.

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THE MAN WATCHING (RILKE)

I can tell by the way that the trees beat, after so many dull days, on my worried windowpanes that a storm is coming,

and I hear the far-off fields say things I can't bear without a friend,

I can't love without a sister.

The storm, the shifter of shapes, drives on across the woods and across time

and the world looks as if it had no age:

the landscape, like a line in the psalm book, is seriousness and weight and eternity.

24

THE MAN WATCHING

(RILKE)

What we choose to fight is so tiny! What fights with us is so great!

If only we would let ourselves be dominated, as animals are, by a huge storm, we would become strong too.

When we win it's with small things and the triumph itself makes us small. What is extraordinary and eternal does not want to be bent by us.

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THE MAN WATCHING

(RILKE)

I mean the Angel who appeared to the wrestlers of the Old Testament:

when the wrestlers' sinews grew long like metal strings, he felt them under his fingers like chords of deep music.

Whoever was beaten by this Angel (who often simply declined to fight) went away proud and strengthened

and great from that harsh hand that kneaded him as if to change his shape.

Winning does not tempt that man.

This is how he grows: by being defeated decisively by constantly greater beings.

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GOOD BREAKDOWN PRINCIPLE 1

- **Tell the truth:** Stop fooling yourself
- **Tell the truth:** Stop fooling others and hiding who you really are

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GOOD BREAKDOWN PRINCIPLE 2

Wake up: Pay attention; be amazed; be grateful; face reality

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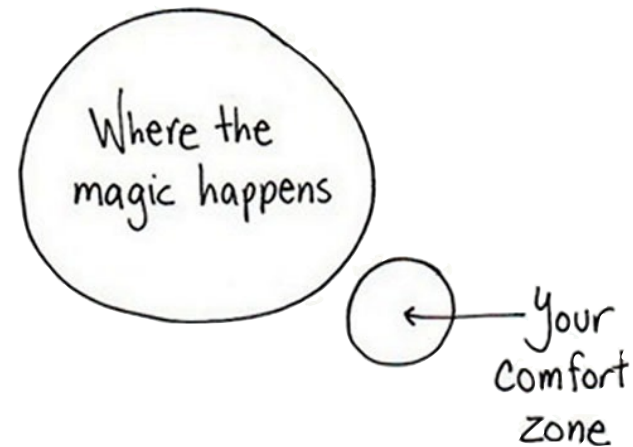
GOOD BREAKDOWN PRINCIPLE 3

Face your fears: Figure out what fears have been running the show in your life and limiting you and face them

Change your patterns: Step out of your comfort zone; challenge your unexamined and automatic premises

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STEPPING OUT OF FEAR AND THE COMFORT ZONE



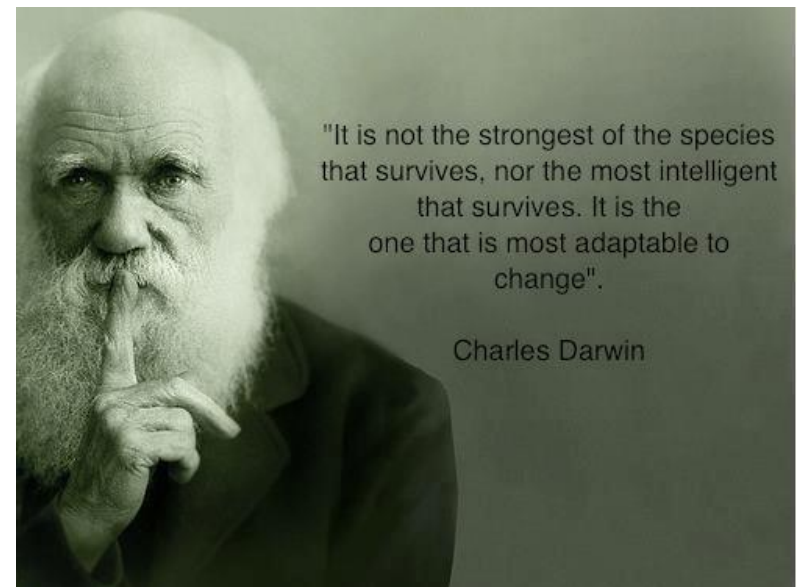
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CHALLENGE AUTOMATIC PREMISES



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CHANGE PATTERNS



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CHANGE PATTERNS

Patterns of **doing**, **viewing** and **context**

Doing: Actions, interactions, language

Viewing: Attention, meanings, premises, beliefs, interpretations

Context: Social and physical environments

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GOOD BREAKDOWN PRINCIPLE 4

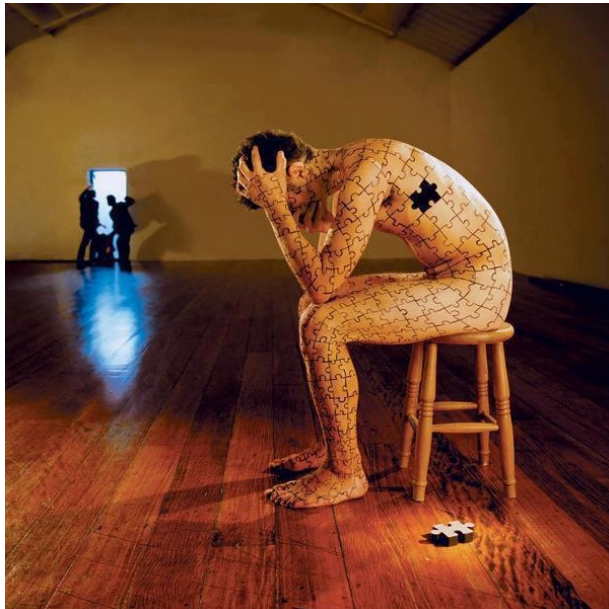
Reclaim missing pieces: Allow and embrace shameful, split off aspects of self

Develop self-compassion: Soften towards aspects of self that have been judged harshly

Include contradictions and complexity: People often have opposite feelings and aspects; encourage them to allow them to co-exist

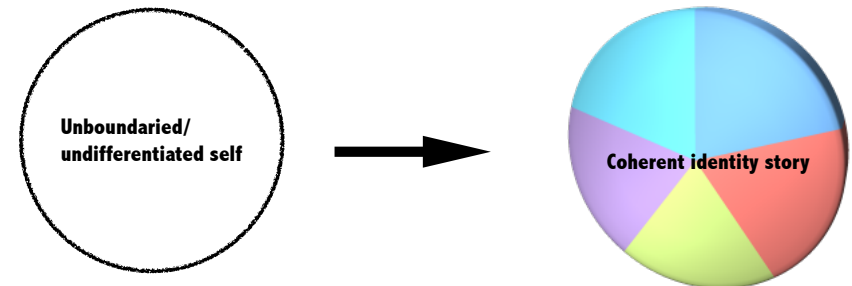
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RECLAIM MISSING PIECES



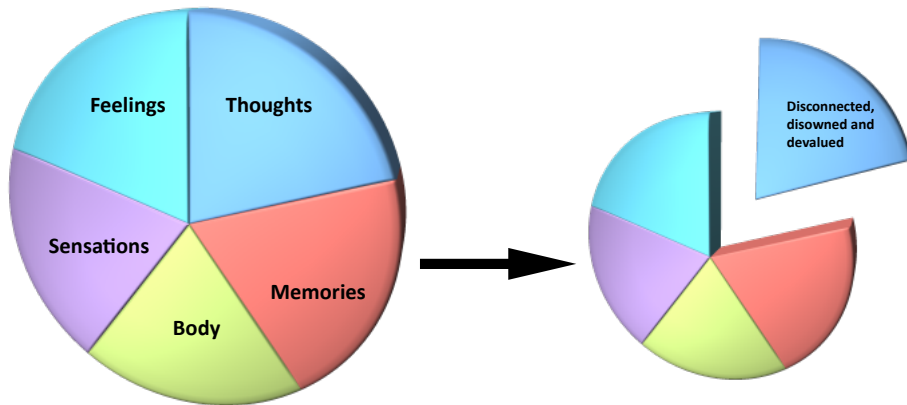
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TYPICAL DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS



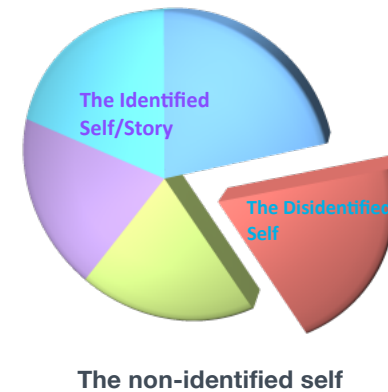
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THE 3-D PROCESS



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THE INCLUSIVE SELF



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THE INCLUSIVE SELF



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INCLUSION

Permission: To and Not to Have To

Including Opposites: Opposite feelings or aspects of self held simultaneously; use AND

Exceptions: That's the way it is, except when it's not

40

BITCH (BROOKS)

I hate the world today, You're so good to me, I know but I can't change;
Tried to tell you but you look at me like maybe I'm an angel underneath; Innocent and sweet
Yesterday I cried, You must have been relieved to see the softer side
I can understand how you'd be so confused, I don't envy you
I'm a little bit of everything all rolled into one
I'm a bitch, I'm a lover; I'm a child, I'm a mother
I'm a sinner, I'm a saint; I do not feel ashamed
I'm your Hell, I'm your dream; I'm nothin' in between
You know you wouldn't want it any other way
So take me as I am; This may mean you have to be a stronger man
Rest assured that when I start to make you nervous and I'm going to extremes
Tomorrow I will change and today won't mean a thing
Just when you think you got me figured out, the season's already changin'
I think it's cool you do what you do and don't try to save me
I'm a bitch, I'm a tease, I'm a goddess on my knees
When you hurt, when you suffer, I'm your angel undercover
I've been numbed, I'm revived – can't say I'm not alive
You know, I wouldn't want it any other way

41

SELF-COMPASSION

Soften toward yourself

De-shame

Normalize: You are part of the human race, tradition and story

Distinction: Your being is okay; some of your actions and views don't work or serve you or others

43

A MAN IN HIS LIFE (AMICHAÏ)

I don't have time to have time for everything.

I don't have seasons enough to have a season for every purpose.
Ecclesiastes was wrong about that.

I need to love and to hate at the same moment, to laugh and cry with the same eyes, with the same hands to cast away stones and to gather them, to make love in war and war in love. And to hate and forgive and remember and forget, to set in order and confuse, to eat and to digest what history takes years and years to do.

I don't have time. When I lose I seek, when I find I forget, what I forget I love, when I love I begin to forget.

And my soul is experienced. My soul is very professional.

Only a body remains forever an amateur. It tries and it misses, drunk and blind in its pleasures and its pain.

I will die as figs die in autumn, shriveled and full of ourselves and sweet, the leaves growing dry on the ground, the bare branches already pointing to the place where there's time for everything.

42

THE GUEST HOUSE (RUMI)

This being human is a guest-house
Every morning a new arrival

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house empty of its furniture,
Still, treat each guest honorably,
He may be clearing you out for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
for each has been sent as a guide from beyond.

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GOOD BREAKDOWN PRINCIPLE 5

Connect with the soul's energy:
Find the fuel that drives your life
Transform “negative” energies into
life purpose and direction: The
four energies

45

FIND YOUR ENERGY

Don't ask yourself
what the world needs.
Ask yourself what
makes you come
alive, and go do that,
because what the
world needs is people
who have come alive.

—Howard Thurman



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THE FOUR ENERGIES

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THE FOUR ENERGIES 1 BLISSED

48

BLISSED



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POETRY (NERUDA)

And it was at that age poetry arrived in search of me.
I don't know, I don't know where it came from;
From winter or a river. I don't know how or when.
No, there were not voices. There were not words. Nor silence.
But from a street I was summoned from the branches of night
Abruptly from the others returning alone.
There I was without a face and it touched me.
I didn't know what to say, my mouth had no way with words
my eyes were blind and something started in my soul,
fever or forgotten wings

51

BLISSED



Hope Davis

50

POETRY (NERUDA)

and for the first time I went my own way, deciphering that
burning fire
and I wrote the first faint line, bare, without substance,
pure nonsense, pure wisdom of someone who knows nothing,
and suddenly I saw the heavens unfastened and open
planets, palpitating plantations
shadow perforated, riddled with arrows, fire and flowers
The winding night, the universe.
And I, infinitesimal being,
drunk with the great starry void, lightness,
Image of mystery, felt myself a pure part of the abyss.
I wheeled with the stars. My heart broke loose on the wind.

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THE FOUR ENERGIES 2 BLESSED

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BLESSED

**People who believed in or
encouraged you**

**Being in the right place at the right
time**

Natural abilities

55

BLESSED



54

BLESSED

**Ricky
Boone**



56

BLESSED



**Marat Kogut; NBA
referee**



and his father Leon

57

THE FOUR ENERGIES 3 DISSED

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DISSED

**When either you or someone you
cared about were disrespected or
treated badly**

**Some area or aspect of yourself in
which you were wounded, hurt,
shamed, cursed or denigrated**

59

DISSED



**J.A.
Jance**

60

FOLLOW YOUR WOUND

We all leave childhood with wounds. In time we may transform our liabilities into gifts. The faults that pockmark the psyche may become the source of a man or a woman's beauty. The injuries we have suffered invite us to assume the most human of all vocations—to heal ourselves and others.

—Sam Keen

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FOLLOW YOUR WOUND

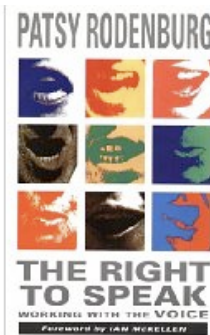
There's a crack in everything.
That's how the light gets in.

—Leonard Cohen



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DISSED



Patsy
Rodenberg

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THE FOUR ENERGIES 4 PISSSED

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PISSED

Righteous indignation

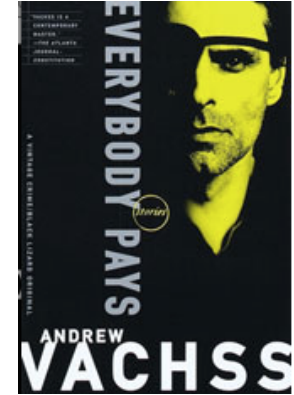
What you want to fix or correct in the world that bothers you

65

PISSED

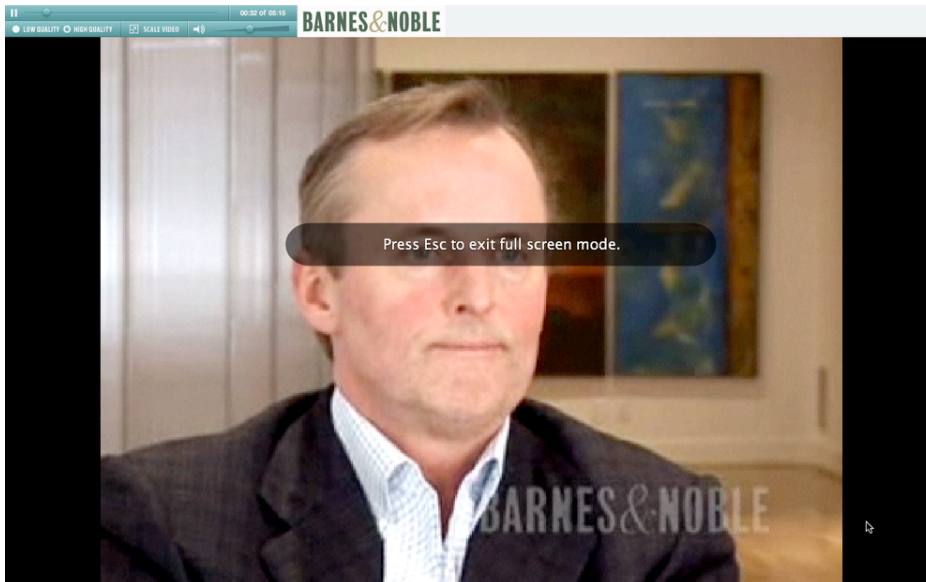


Andrew
Vachhs



66

PISSED



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THE KEY TO TRANSFORMING “NEGATIVE” ENERGY

Use the negative energy to find meaning and life direction and to contribute to others and the world

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TRANSFORMING “NEGATIVE” ENERGY



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FUTURE PULL: FINDING A MISSION THAT MATTERS

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WHAT IS WANTED AND NEEDED IN THE WORLD?

Something that derives from the energy and meaning from your bliss, your blessings, what pisses you off, or what has wounded you. Something that needs to be done and you have the capacity to do. Even if it's a stretch and frightens you.

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YOUR MISSION

Something that will make a difference, scares the hell out of you and at the same time, something in you knows that is exactly what you are meant to do.

72

YOUR MISSION

**It's not about you
AND
It's all about you**

73

THE JOURNEY (OLIVER)

One day you finally knew what you had to do, and began, though the voices around you kept shouting their bad advice—

though the whole house began to tremble and you felt the old tug at your ankles.

“Mend my life!” each voice cried. But you didn’t stop.

You knew what you had to do, though the wind pried with its stiff fingers at the very foundations—

though their melancholy was terrible.

It was already late enough and a wild night and the road full of fallen branches and stones.

But little by little, as you left their voices behind, the stars began to burn through the sheets of clouds, and there was a new voice, which you slowly recognized as your own, that kept you company as you strode deeper and deeper into the world, determined to do the only thing you could do, determined to save the only life you could save.

75

YOUR MISSION

This is the true joy in life, the being used up for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community, and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake.

Life is no “brief candle” to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for a moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations. -From *Man and Superman: Act III, Don Juan in Hell*, George Bernard Shaw

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TAKE A LEAP OF FAITH

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LESSONS FROM INDIANA JONES AND KIERKEGAARD



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HOW TO HAVE A GOOD BREAKDOWN (O'HANLON)

Something has entered my nose and I get the sense of it as dangerous opportunity.

I've learned to follow that terrible scent gladly

knowing that if I am on the path, I can come to no harm.

If I wander off into the wild, they will find me as bleached bones and gnawed carcass some time later.

But if I meet some beast on the road, I will only end with a wound that will bleed light into the world.

Are you in your skin?

It takes immense effort to live so small.

No wonder you come home from work exhausted each night and you have to eat so much.

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AND THE FOOL ON THE HILL



**Pay attention
and let the
world be your
guru**

78

HOW TO HAVE A GOOD BREAKDOWN (O'HANLON)

Your soul is stalking you; the world is longing for you.

Together they will conspire against you, for years if necessary.

They will find you and break you down.

And you will thank them, finally,

on your knees, with tears spilling love from your heart

and light coming from your wound,

pouring from you into the welcoming world.

Trust me, then you'll know where to go!

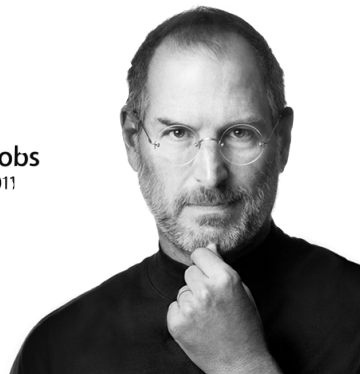
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DON'T SETTLE

You've got to find what you love. And that is true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know it when you find it.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone's life. Don't be trapped by dogma—which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.

Steve Jobs
1955 2011



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STAYING SMALL

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?' Actually, who are you NOT to be? You are a child of God. Your 'playing small' does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people don't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us. It is in everyone. As you let your light shine, you unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As you are liberated from your own fears, your presence automatically liberates others.

—Marianne Williamson

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YOUR MISSION

“Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?”

—Mary Oliver

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YOUR MISSION

“Here is a test to find out whether your mission on earth is finished.

If you're alive, it isn't.”

—Richard Bach

From Illusions: Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah

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