

TRANSCENDING THE NAP



17. An Unenlightened Ignoramus

Following my comprehension that I was an ignoramus living in an unenlightened state, it became clear to me that my original plans, to be invulnerable and secure, had backfired terribly. I was confused, insecure, unhappy, unloved, unloving, alienated, frustrated, and lonely. I was flying blind with an automatic pilot programmed to keep me lost.

No wonder I was miserable! My self-awareness, personal power, and wisdom were in their infancies. Blaming others, "life," or God for my way of being would no longer cut it. This was a mess of my own making, and I was the only one with the authority and obligation to clean it up.

Clearly, my NAP was dangerous to me and to others. Only I could take on the challenge of sorting out and disconnecting its circuitry so I could recover from Spiritual Amnesia.

Because of the Prime Directive, I had not been aware I was caught in the NAP. This guaranteed I could not complete my purposes of liberating my Self from my NAP, recovering from Spiritual Amnesia, and making use of my Unique Blessings.

I seemed doomed to confusion and frustration.

It was as if I had been offered a brand new Corvette convertible. I get in, start the engine, put the shift lever in first gear, and let out the clutch. Yet every time I do this, the car stalls. I am unaware that the parking brake (NAP, in this instance) has not been released. Worse, the brake handle and release button are invisible, and I have been hypnotized (Prime Directive) into forgetting that such a thing as a parking brake even exists!

So, I keep restarting the car and "trying" to drive forward. Of course, the car stalls. To all appearances, the 'Vette is in perfect mechanical condition. I pause for reflection and reach a conclusion. *"There's obviously nothing wrong with this car."* However, this is untrue.

More precisely, there is nothing obviously wrong with this car. Quite a liberating distinction!

I might further erroneously reason, *"As there is nothing wrong with the car, there must be something wrong with the way I am driving it."* Now, I have reached another false conclusion. I may then wonder, *"Well, what's wrong with me?"*

The Prime Directive ensures that I forget I have a NAP. Worse, the NAP ensures I have Spiritual Amnesia about the essential nature of who I am.

If I were to be suddenly un-hypnotized and became aware that such things as parking brakes and release buttons exist, I would know what to do. I would take hold of the control handle, depress the release button, disengage the brake, depress the clutch, drop it into first gear, let out the clutch, resume driving as I know so well how to do, and get on with my journey.

18. Accountability

If you go outside and find a dent in the side of your car, you may experience some stress and have your NAP take over. "That dent shouldn't be there!"

You need not understand how or why your car was bumped or whether a Volvo or a Ford caused the dent. Body shops do not require reasons and justifications for dents, nor do they use different tools to repair dents in Toyotas and Chevys made by Volvos or Fords.

Sometimes we just don't notice the dents in our cars, or in our lives, although it is so easy to see all the dents in someone else's car, and even the really tiny imperfections in someone else's life.

Fine. So there ARE some dents in your life. Only you can be proactive and accountable for fixing them. And only you are qualified to take on this challenge!

We all have Negative Automatic Programs, and they tend to run our minds and our lives most of the time. Accept the notion that the NAP inhibits our awareness, restricts our ways of being, and limits our vital capacities for growth.

Acceptance does not mean approval, or liking things as they are. Acceptance is simply an acknowledgment of the truth -- simply, that this is the way it is right now. Surprisingly, things should not be different than they are, for now.

Lenny Bruce, humorist and social critic, had a strong viewpoint on "shoulds." He said, "The truth is what is, not what-should-be. What-should-be is a dirty lie! Yet people keep trying to live UP to what-should-be." All growth and change starts with the truth, the way it is, for now. Dump your "shoulds."

The people at the body shop cannot fix dents that "shouldn't be there." That dent in your fender will be there until you accept the fact that it IS there. Only when you responsively accept that there is a dent, like it or not, can you do something proactively accountable, like getting it fixed.

And the same reality applies with our own what-should-be's, what-shouldn't-be's, and other "dirty lies." We must begin with the facts, the truth, and just the way it is. If we resist the truth, it will simply continue to be the truth, anyhow -- just like a dent in the side of a car, or one of those dents in your life . . . or mine.

Accept it the way it is, for now. Acceptance does not mean liking the way it is. And acceptance certainly does not mean approval. Acceptance just means, "Okay, I acknowledge that this is the truth right now.

The truth doesn't mean anything. The truth is just the way it is, *for now*. It just is."

Trying ends up in our having invested time, effort, self-esteem, and money in a delusional venture resulting in non-completion and guaranteed failure. Hope is not helpful, either! It is merely more personally economical because we need not invest any energy, effort, or money; we just waste a bit of time in a passive anticipatory state of mild rapture. Hope or try, the results are nil.

To get results, one commits one's self to do whatever it takes to get the results. This will usually require great patience, and may include sampling a variety of methods and techniques. These successive steps are necessary parts of the process of being proactive and accountable as we

focus on determining and declaring who we are; and effectively and persistently achieving our carefully chosen and well-articulated goals.

19. Energy

We have too often settled for activity instead of achievement, staying busy instead of becoming proactive, accountable, and productive. We so easily entangle ourselves with the apparently urgent, rather than the essentially important. The results are fatigue and frustration, yet without progress, results, or satisfaction in work well done.

We all have lots of incomplete goals and obligations (to ourselves and others) that we have not finalized or released. Each of us could make lists of unfinished business and personal incompletes in many categories: Agreements, car maintenance and repairs, cleaning, communications, donations, dreams, education, family, fitness, gifts, goals, home maintenance and repairs, personal growth, repayments and returns, self expression and creativity, service, travel, and many more. (I challenge you to pause your reading and make some detailed lists!)

These open loops create a subtle and steady drain on our daily energy level, our moods, and our personal power. If we were to write detailed lists of all our open loops, it is quite likely we will come up with at least half-a-dozen items in each category. With twenty categories, this would result in a total of 120 items.

Imagine that each of these incompletes and open loops draws just a tiny bit of energy from us; let's say one tenth of one percent of an individual's daily energy per item. In this instance, a person would lose 12% ($120 \times .001$) of his or her potential daily energy. Two hundred items might diminish one's potential daily energy by 20%.

Of course, certain items on our lists would drain us more than others.

Having less personal daily energy makes it more difficult to transcend the NAP, recover from Spiritual Amnesia, and make full use of our Unique Blessings.

Energy loss is both a contributor to and a by-product of the NAP.

20. A Thousand Years of Yuk

One of my students, Angie, complained that "Everything is wrong with my life." She described herself as feeling angry, depressed, confused, frustrated, and unfulfilled. So, we brainstormed a bunch of "categories of suffering." Then I asked her to make a list for each category, and then write down everything that had gone "wrong" over the course of her entire life.

Angie called two nights later to report to me that she had listed 46 categories and recorded a total of 347 items, overall. I complimented her on her progress. Then I suggested she go back over her lists and note how much time she had spent suffering over each individual experience.

Next, I asked her to add up the cumulative days, weeks, months, and years to find a total amount of time suffered.

She gave me some examples she remembered: Her mother making her wear an embarrassingly ugly dress to a party when she was 12 years old (Ugly dress - 25 years & 4 months); her live-in boyfriend saying something insensitive two weeks ago (Rude boyfriend - 2 weeks); and not getting a raise she had been promised in her last job (No raise - 2 years & 6 months).

A few days later she mailed a long computer printout (fourteen feet) to me. She telephoned the night after it arrived. She had come up with a total of 910 years and one month of suffering! 910

years! A 34-year-old woman had been carrying around 347 variously sized and aged bundles of suffering in her feelings, thoughts, body, and spirit. Almost a thousand years of Yuk.

She remarked, "My life seems a bit out of balance."

Of course, Angie had accumulated that trainload of suffering automatically. No one would ever consciously choose to acquire so much heavy emotional baggage. Carrying that weight around day after week after month after year, drained an awesome amount of her personal daily energy. And every one of us has carried around a bunch of old, outdated, and sometimes ancient yuk that unnecessarily limits our vitality in the present moment.

What if, as with open loops, each old item we carry around tires us to the tiny extent of one-tenth of one-percent of our daily energy? Angie's loss would be 34.7% ($347 \times .001$). Angie would have been "down" over a third of her personal energy upon waking at the beginning of each day!

Angie's NAP had been acquiring and storing 347 old sufferings, resulting in a possible loss of 34.7% of her energy. She also had plenty of open loops. Let's assume that she had 153 items on her open loops list, resulting in an energy loss of 15.3%. Adding 34.7% and 15.3% would result in a combined total of 50%, or half of her available daily energy!

She would begin each day only half-charged, and perhaps half-confident, half-purposeful, half-aware, half-enthusiastic, half-optimistic, and perhaps even half-happy. 'Maybe just half-sort-of-kind-of-content. She could easily be at risk for being only half-self-aware, half-creative, half-proactive, and half-accountable. She would be SUCH an easy mark for Spiritual Amnesia, the Prime Directive and her NAP!

Generally, we all remain pretty much unaware of these great energy diminishment. They slowly increase over time and, because we wake up with them each day, we accept them as our usual, average, normal (not natural) daily energy.

Imagine for a moment how much self-actualizing energy and vitality we could discover and make available to ourselves if we were to release all those old sufferings and complete all of those old open loops! Then we would be positively energized to be creative, proactive, and accountable in liberating ourselves from our NAPs, recovering from Spiritual Amnesia, and make full use of our Unique Blessings.

21. What Doesn't Work

The following sequence shows a success-proof method of "trying" to use NAP logic to solve problems, most or all of which originated through the NAP.

1. Identify the essential issue of discontent.
2. Analyze the problem. Make sure we understand why it happened.
3. Figure out an apparently logical solution.
4. Trust the NAP, and hope for the best.
5. Invest time, energy, and money as seem appropriate.
6. If we do not get noticeable results quickly, try harder. Invest more time, energy, and money.
7. As we begin to see any progress, we may begin to feel relieved and encouraged.
8. We now feel confident, relaxed, and less focused on my commitment.
9. Then, we allow any progress to slow to a halt.
10. Next, we can easily let the situation deteriorate and backslide to our old point of view and automatic behaviors. We have now allowed ourselves to revert to "normal."
11. Disappointed, we keep our feelings of confusion, frustration, and suffering to ourselves.

12. If anyone notices our ongoing failed attempts, we him or her that we tried . . . after all, that's what we've been telling ourselves.

To make it easy for us to abdicate accountability, our NAPs will provide us with one or both of the following pseudo-logical positions:

The problem was simply unsolvable. In this case, I can blame the situation and any of my NAPs usual suspects or other acceptable victims as a scapegoat.

After all, it's not my fault!

I am not capable of solving this problem. I am powerless, at fault, and unworthy of achievement, success, and fulfillment. What's wrong with me, anyhow?

Having this situation resolved, the NAP will now provide us with rational justifications to defend the two delusions listed above. In time, we may come to believe them.

I didn't really understand the original problem.

Oh, well! It really wasn't that important to me, after all.

Finally, the NAP has us do some or all of the following:

Give up, resign myself to being a failure, and feel disempowered.

Resist acknowledging failure. Again commit myself to the original false premise. Try more, better, and harder!

22. Trying is Lying

Ultimately, one gets results; or, one has a trying experience.

Trying experiences provide us with frustration, diminished self-esteem, and reasons and excuses why we have no results or fulfillment. Trying disempowers us.

Maybe, like me, you went to summer camp. Once each session, the counselors would get all the younger campers excited about the Big Snipe Hunt! They'd give us flashlights and pillow cases and lead us into the darkness to quietly sneak up on and capture non-existent little creatures with bad attitudes, sharp teeth, and vile defensive sprays that would both impress and gag a skunk.

Trying to improve one's Self" is a spiritual snipe hunt.

"Trying" is lying. Trying allows us to falsely believe that we are committed to achieving a purpose, with the proviso that we are not to be held accountable when we fail. There is nothing wrong with trying; it just doesn't get results. We get results only when we are not trying.

23. Doing Whatever It Takes

We say, "I tried!" when we don't get the results to which we had aspired. (I try to never end a sentence a preposition with.) Trying actually means that either the goal has not been achieved, or that it will never be achieved. This makes sense if we acknowledge that actually there is no such endeavor as "trying."

"Trying" is simply a euphemism we abuse for abdicating accountability, sleazing out of commitments, and excusing ourselves when we did not really intend to fulfill what we promised to ourselves or others to do in the first place.

We sometimes apologize for letting others and ourselves down by saying, "I tried!" We do so even though this excuse is generally unacceptable to us, even from small children. As adults we are more sophisticated; and we'll somehow insert "try" into our plans and promises so that we can

have an advance foundation laid for our privately anticipated, luke-warm commitment, lack of follow-through, and non-achievement.

For instance, you invite a friend to your dinner party next Saturday. He says, "I'll try to make it." This gives you ample notice not to set that extra plate. Then you ask another friend, who responds, "Great! What time? Can I bring anything?" You can look forward to seeing that friend.

Imagine you have gone hiking in a mountain forest. Walking alone, you slip off a mossy trail and over the edge of a cliff. You find yourself hanging from a root, a hundred feet above jagged rocks and a raging river teeming with voracious crocodiles. As you scream for help, you notice that your strength is slowly ebbing.

Suddenly, you are delighted to see a ranger leaning over the precipice. He says, "Hold on there, sister! I'll try and help you."

You respond, "Try? Try, my ass! Absolutely not! This is the most important moment in my life! **Don't TRY!** I want your full attention and total commitment! **Do whatever it takes!** Pull me up to solid ground and save my life!"

Your being rescued from falling to your death can only happen if the ranger is well trained and confident about doing whatever it takes to respond quickly and effectively in this emergency.

Your best chance of rescuing yourself from your NAP and recovering from Spiritual Amnesia necessitates that you recognize and accept them, and then be proactive and accountable in doing whatever it takes to liberate your Self. As with becoming a skilled rescue ranger, extensive training is desirable.

The Negative Automatic Program and Spiritual Amnesia will occasionally put a person's physical life at risk. Consideration of suicide is founded on the errant notion that one must end one's life in order to end one's suffering. (Not so!) And the quality of your life is always at stake!

Doing "whatever it takes" is like sailing. One cannot anticipate the vagaries of currents and tides, or shifts in the wind; nor predict and control a direct and straight sailing route from here to there.

The art of sailing requires of us to generate and maintain a state of being in which we simply and consistently pay attention to changes in the sea and wind, following which, we deliberately respond quickly and appropriately, again and ever again.

"Trying to sail" is an unpopular pastime, that will increase your likelihood of getting lost, running aground, capsizing, and/or sinking. Likewise, "trying to improve your Self" will only lead you on an intellectual wild goose chase doomed to failure.

Doing whatever it takes almost always requires much more courage, patience, wisdom, and perseverance that we can ever foresee!

Playing the game of life With A Full Deck
Copyright © 2015 by Thomas James Vanderbeck

No part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Author, Thomas James Vanderbeck

Attribution - No Derivative Works.



ALL RIGHTS RESERVED under the United States, Pan American, and International Copyright Conventions.

L113 - 150418 / ISBN#

TVELM@Cox.net