

SELF ACTUALIZATION



42. The Truth Will Set Us Free

Simply being aware of the NAP is the key to liberation from it. The truth actually can set us free. Ultimately, it became clear to me that although I had little control over the influential people, powerful forces, and strange events that had helped shape my NAP early in my life, three factors were evident:

- A. There is no positive result to be enjoyed from blaming those who may have screwed me up, or over.
- B. It seems much more sensible to accept both my remembrances of my personal history and the current ways of being in my life; not as they should-have-been or should-be-now; but simply as they seem to be in the present moment. This chosen acceptance does not signify my active or tacit approval; but is simply an acknowledgment of the truth as it is, for now.
- C. I, alone, am now accountable for my Free Will. I can choose to either continue surrender of my life and vitality to NAP and Spiritual Amnesia, or commit to being proactive and accountable for my own liberation and for celebrating my Unique Blessings.

43. It Had to Be the Way It Was, Until Now . . .

It is time to have some compassion for that gentle soul that's been struggling for so long, trying to play the game of life with an overly full deck. The two jokers, the NAP and Spiritual Amnesia, have been invisible obstructions and saboteur dynamics for too long.

As this became clear to me, I realized that I need no longer blame myself for feeling helpless, unworthy, and unlovable. I realized that without awareness of the Negative Automatic Program, Spiritual Amnesia, and the Prime Directive, I didn't stand a chance to use my Unique Blessings in discovering and fulfilling my many and extraordinary potentials. Finally, I understood that, given the reality of the situation, my life could not have been at all different than it was . . . until now!

Now that I am aware of the two extra cards, the jokers, I can no longer deny accountability for my own liberation, recovery, and proactive empowerment. For starters, I can forgive myself for the way it has been until now, and release myself from blame, shame, rebellion, and guilt.

Forgiving myself is a very nice gift to everyone else in my life.

44. Forging Others

Once I get that it had to be the way it was (until now) for me, I can accept it had to be the way it was for everyone else, too. All of us have been NAPping Spiritual Amnesiacs. This includes those people I have blamed, resented, guilted, hated, and have never been able to forgive. NO ONE was given a basic full deck of 52! Each of us grew up unaware of the two jokers we'd been dealt.

Forgiving someone else is simply a whopping big gift to my Self! I can now lighten my own load of old, heavy Yuk and free up some positive energy for simply being alive now. I may choose to communicate with that person I forgive, or not. He or she may no longer be available to me, or even alive. The point of the exercise is to liberate my Self from the past so that I can focus on the present.

And if I do let someone know I forgive him or her, I am doing so to serve my Self. That person may appreciate being forgiven, or possibly resent it. In any case, my forgiveness is without terms or strings or conditions. I will not demand or expect that person to make amends or apologize or forgive me in return. Forgiving others only works if it is simultaneously a purely self-serving, altruistic, and generous act of spirit.

Forgiving ourselves, and others, allows us to complete our past, close open loops, and transform 1,000 years of Yuk into simple history. Time does not heal all wounds, but after a time, choosing to forgive ourselves and others allows us to purposefully heal our own wounds.

45. Wave Good-Bye to Your NAP

Imagine you are participating in an important meeting or just getting acquainted on a very special first date. What if, suddenly, your left hand shot up in the air and started to rapidly wave back and forth? You would quickly send one of those little mental instructions through your nervous system telling your hand to cut it out and get back down and under control.

If your hand did not respond and continued to wave around, you would become concerned and go to a doctor. "Doc, my hand won't stop waving back and forth! It's been going on for over two hours now, and I'm getting tired and really scared."

The doc says, "I've never seen anything like it! Drastic measures may be required."

"Anything you say, Doc! Do whatever it takes to get my arm back under my control."

In this instance, it is appropriate to be concerned about part of one's body being completely out of control and non-responsive to efforts to regain direction over appropriate functioning.

Yet our NAPs run us through all kinds of confusion, frustration, and suffering; and we accept THAT as normal! How about getting our NAPs under control? Why isn't freeing ourselves from the self-limiting domination of our NAPs a high priority? Why do we seem to have so much difficulty "getting our acts together?"

We do so because the Prime Directive, the default sub-program of the Negative Automatic Program, dictates that the NAP be protected and perpetuated at all costs! Not being able to break free from habitual NAP thoughts, emotions, and behaviors is much like sending out one of those little mental commands to have your arm stop waving around; and having that message be ignored!

Becoming liberated from Spiritual Amnesia, the NAP, and its Prime Directive requires that I commit to being creative, proactive, deliberate, and accountable for my Self.

When you "change your mind," who is it that really chooses and directs the changing of awareness, attitude, commitment, and behavior? Notice your true Self, stepping up to the plate.

46. Sitting on a Stone Wall

A boy of ten sat in silence on the wall of the old monastery. Deep in thought, and with an intensely serious expression on his face, he looked out at the mountains. After watching him for a time, his teacher approached and asked, "Grasshopper, may I inquire what concern weighs upon you so heavily?"

With a sigh, the boy replied, "Master, I am trying to find my Self."

"Ah, it must be very difficult to find one's Self! One could get lost, wandering through life without one's Self! When did you first notice that it was missing?"

"I don't know, Master. I have been seeking my Self for a long time. I have been meditating, reading, visualizing, and writing affirmations. I believe I understand myself. But it seems that the harder I search for myself, the more lost I become! Finding my Self is beginning to seem impossible."

"My young friend, this seeking to discover and to befriend your Self is a very noble endeavor! Would you please tell me who is doing the looking?"

When we focus inside ourselves, deep in our heart of hearts, who is it that speaks and listens? Who is the awareness beyond which there is no one else, only God?

47. Strolling Along the Path

The student, now an adolescent, was engaged in a walking meditation along a rapidly flowing stream in a sunny mountain meadow. His Master approached him from a convergent path and greeted him where the trails joined and forked. "Ah, young master Grasshopper, it seems that you are walking without meditating. Your solemn visage suggests to me that you are pondering something perhaps profound and important. Is this so?"

"Yes, Venerable Master. I seek to understand the meaning of life. Can you give me any wise counsel?"

"Certainly, my friend! First determine and declare the meaning of *you*. The meaning of life will in time become clear to you without any seeking or effort. Now, go sit on a sun-warmed rock with your feet in that cold clear stream, and resume your meditation."

48. A Samurai Attitude

The ancient Samurai Warriors of feudal Japan had an attitude well suited to our purpose of liberating ourselves from Spiritual Amnesia and the NAP:

"Expect nothing. Be ready for anything. Pay attention and respond."

As you may well imagine, to declare oneself as a warrior requires commitment, courage, long practice, perseverance, humor, and great faith!

Waking our Selves from our NAPs is akin to working in a stable. We're always between two piles of manure, the one from which we are shoveling . . . and the one which we are building up.

Perhaps this book has provided you with some perspectives on shoveling.

49. Live Simply and Celebrate

Once more, the boy, now a young man, met his Master at the stone wall overlooking that same mountain meadow.

"Master, I finally now know my Self and I have attained Enlightenment. Yet there still seems to be something else to do."

"I am delighted to hear of your Self realization! You now have the rare opportunity and privilege to make of your life a mission, and a wonderful challenging adventure; and to pass on your gifts of insight, liberation, and wisdom to others. I am confident you will do so and live a happy and fulfilling life, my young friend."

Upon hearing this, the young master smiled and nodded in acceptance.

"Know this, my son, only a small number of people will be sincerely interested, and fewer committed to learning, what you have worked so hard to realize. As you now know, Spiritual Amnesia and the NAP are powerful forces that we must accept, for now, if we are to discover our individual ways of transcending them and so free our Selves to celebrate and share our Unique Blessings.

"As well as you can, live simply, as one who knows of our Divine Origin and Natural Power, and that we are One with the Each Other, with the Earth, and with God."

We are fully equipped to recover from Spiritual Amnesia. We are designed to be free, proactive, creative, powerful, accountable, and wise.

We are obligated to ourselves to do whatever it takes to recover from the NAP. To paraphrase Bob Dylan: "Someone who is not busy being born . . . is busy dying."

Stopping briefly to smell the roses is a fine notion. And those pauses imply that we are usually in motion, making the most of our Unique Blessings, and fully engaged in a process of ongoing proactive self leadership.

50. What Will You Do with It?

Once again, Grasshopper was out in the meadow. Now a man, he had become a Master. He quietly walked up to the side of his young student, not wanting to disturb his meditation. Soon, the boy looked up and smiled.

"I have found my Self, Master!"

"That is certainly happy news, my Friend. Now, what will you *DO* with it?"

"I will grow in awareness, compassion, power, spirit, and wisdom. And I will delight in paying all of these forward, as I have the opportunities."

51. Farewell

We have addressed two challenges to enlightened self leadership -- Spiritual Amnesia and the NAP. Hopefully, I have presented a clear and compelling message that we are not just humans having an occasional spiritual experience; but rather, we are spiritual beings having amazing human experiences. The way forward, and the path toward celebrating our Unique Blessings, is through persistent, compassionate, and personally accountable self leadership and generous, humanistic service to others.

52. Two Wonderful Jokers



**Who's on first!
I'm not asking you.
I'm telling you.
Play your game of life
with a Full Deck!**

About the Author



Thomas Vanderbeck offers a wealth of experience and wisdom, earned during a career as an activist, artist, author, consultant, crisis interventionist, curriculum designer, inventor, mentor, researcher, social servant, teacher, trainer, writer, and youth advocate.

United States clients include Bose Stereo, California Peer Counseling Association, Hewlett-Packard Printer Design, LearnSoft Technology, North Carolina School for the Deaf, Orange County Outdoor Science School, Parke-Davis Pharmaceutical Sales, San Diego Job Corps, SPECWAR Group One, TRW Avionics, University of California San Diego - Executive Leadership Programs for Scientists and Engineers (EPSE), and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Service (DHS). International clients benefit from the Matrix in Argentina, Brazil, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Turkey.

Vanderbeck originated and taught 100 courses in business and educational leadership at the University of California (Berkeley, Irvine, San Diego, and Santa Cruz), San Diego State University, California State University (Hayward, San Marcos, and Stanislaus); the Universities of Georgia, Northern Kentucky, and North Carolina; Saint Mary's College; Trenton State Teachers College; and the University of Massachusetts. He has led trainings of trainers for the National Child Welfare Leadership Center and the Alabama, Kentucky, and Southeast Conferences for Drug and Alcohol Studies.

Tom created PEP, the Personal Empowerment Project, which provided crisis intervention; rescues from abuse, molest, neglect, and rape; professionally guided peer counseling; training in self leadership, life skills, and resilience; academic coaching; substance abuse prevention, intervention, and recovery; and discrete referrals to children's services, medical care, mental health, and law enforcement agencies for 2,500 adolescents in three middle and five high schools, and 200 teenage male felons in a maximum security prison. He established a rape prevention and support team of social workers, nurses, and police officers that provided recovery counseling and court companionship for scores of girls and women; and has facilitated more than 100 successful suicide interventions.

Vanderbeck, a credentialed teacher, holds 16 professional qualifications in counseling, social work, mental health administration, substance abuse education and counseling, and D.U.I. training; and an FBI Security Clearance. Tom is a Blanchard Certified Trainer-of-Trainers in Situational Leadership® II and Situational Self Leadership®; and serves as a Research Fellow, writing curricula for Student Self Leadership with the Blanchard Institute.

Acknowledgments



I have been blessed with the friendship and guidance of several generous mentors: Sid Simon (values clarification), Ken Blanchard (organizational leadership), and Bob Newell (Humanistic Buddhism). Later on, I discovered that my own service as a mentor is an equally enriching privilege and learning experience.

These personal guides and more than a hundred friends, colleagues, and students have read evolving iterations of 'Full Deck' and provided constructive feedback, criticism, plenty of kidding, suggestions, and encouragement. I am especially grateful for the insights of Lynn Bergman, Joyce Berry, Ken Blanchard, Sadhaka Byrns, Dave Carroll, David Clark, Donna and Dave DeSousa, Laurie Hawkins, Olivier Hendriks, Gary Lee, Rich Manuccia, Ron Peters, Dixie Sharman, Butch Spaulding, Ann Sullivan, Larry Whitlock; and the students of *Explorations* at the ReNewell Center in Gualala, CA; and the *Personal Empowerment Project* (PEP) at Freedom and Hibriten High Schools in Burke County, NC.

Playing the game of life With A Full Deck

Copyright © 2014 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.

L112 - 150416 / ISBN#

TVELM@Cox.net