



1. The Book of Truth

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To Start Your Journey

Herein is contained a user manual for the human experience. Wherein we explore the most basic motivators that drive us, in an attempt to gain an understanding of ourselves that allows us to live a happy, purposeful, and meaningful life.

The challenge to you is the most fundamental of our existence: To gain wisdom and an understanding of yourself beyond the superficial. Then transform yourself into the epitome of what you can become.

This challenge is daunting. We will be compelled at many points along this path to think that we have “achieved” our goal. But the path is much like climbing a mountain of shale. As soon as you stop climbing, you begin sliding back.

But do not become distressed. For each step achieved has the opportunity to improve our lives immensely.

So trudge on. Rest when needed and don't despair. A better life than you know is waiting for you and could be only a step away.

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Basic Human Needs

Those basic needs are:

1. We need to struggle against something.
2. We need to make sense of/Understand the things we perceive, and we need to have a sense of control over the things in our lives.
3. We need a social structure that we belong to.
4. We need to have a goal to work towards.
5. We need to have a sense of reciprocity in our actions.
6. We Need to Maintain a Set of Actions That Affords Growth in Each of the Three Major Areas of our Human Existence. Mental, Physical and Spiritual.
7. We need to strive for balance in action, thought and emotion.
8. We need to have a job that benefits us and the society we live in.

How To Make a Life Full of Meaning and Purpose

Having a life that is full of meaning and purpose isn't something that "just happens". It comes about by our actions in fulfilling some of our basic needs, not from forces external.

But what needs do we focus on? Herein lies the problem. Unless we identify what our most basic needs are, we won't be able to address them. So let's take a look at some of the most basic needs we have:

We Need To Struggle Against Something

If we take a look at our lives, we find that it is permeated with the struggle against various things. Our parents, the law, societal norms, our present position in our social circles to name just a few.

There are many, many more examples, but if we take an honest look at it, we find that even when our life is going well, we take deep pleasure in working to overcome something. We see this in work, in the struggle to overcome a challenge. In sports, in the struggle for our team to overcome the other. We see this in shopping, in the search for the lowest price for the product we want.

In the realization of this manifestation in ourselves, we may be tempted to revel in unbridled acts of rebellion. But if we do, we find that the misguided acts of rebellion lead not to meaning and purpose, but only to alienating us from some of our other basic needs. Thereby destroying any purpose and meaning we are trying to create in our lives.

It is only through wisely guiding this basic need into useful and constructive endeavors when we have a chance to generate purposeful and meaningful lives.

Some may find an outlet in our jobs, by overcoming projects presented to us. Some may find an outlet in playing sports, or in creating art, or in helping others.

As long as we find a useful and constructive outlet for our need to strive against something, it will not build inside us until it lashes out at the most inappropriate times and ways.

210 I see this as the natural progression from some very basic and, slightly, later evolved circumstances.

211 First, biological evolution. The need to accumulate resources to survive. It is the biological motivator
212 that can lead to greed when out of balance. From single celled organisms forming the first Markov
213 Blankets, to the formation of the first multi-celled organisms, to the evolution of human kind, to the
214 formation of tribes, cities and eventually nations. Everything we experience in life has shown us that
215 our survival depends on, and our life gets better with learning to work together rather than being
216 concerned with ourselves above all else. That is to say, with the evolution of our thinking away from
217 biological selfishness into societal unselfishness.

218 This change cannot progress quickly. To try and switch too fast from our present society which teaches
219 and rewards selfish thinking and actions, to a society that teaches and rewards societal unselfishness, is
220 the best way to make sure it will fail. Personal selfishness is ingrained into our society and people.
221 Without slowly changing the mindset of each and every person in the society, the selfish will overrun,
222 take advantage of, and destroy the society we are trying to build.

223 Second, the extension of this need to accumulate resources into our evolved societies. The name of the
224 game when we started evolving was simply to gain enough resources to survive.

225 As our societies got more and more advanced, it allowed the specialization of individuals to
226 which allowed for every increasingly more complex items and tools in our lives. Cars, phones, satellite
227 communication... all of this is only achievable through large enough societies allowing people to
228 specialize in what they know.

229 This specialization of individuals comes with a down side. I don't know how to hunt for food,
230 build my house, build my car, build my phone and the network it runs on, build a power plant to power
231 my home or build a sewage system to enable the "modern" amenities I enjoy.

232 For these reasons, society has become just as important as finding resources to survive.
233 Therefore, our relation to society is reflected in our biology just as strongly as our need for food. When
234 our need for food is not met, our physical and mental health is effected. When our relation to our
235 society is out of "optimal grip", our physical and mental health is effected. Getting food and keeping
236 our relation to our society are of equal importance. Fortunately, larger societies make getting food a lot
237 easier than if we were on our own.

238 Third, the need to conserve resources. As we evolved, our existence was a balance between expending
239 resources to find more resources, and conserving enough resources to survive long enough to gain more
240 resources. As an example, we hunted for food, but we needed food to have the energy to hunt for food.
241 When our resources got low, we hunted for more food.

242 As we evolved, it was uncertain where our next meal was coming from. The larger our societies got, we
243 had to worry less and less about it. We just went to the grocery store, as long as our usefulness to the
244 society was great enough to enable us to earn enough money to buy the food.

245 So, our whole existence has shown us two things, whether we realize it or not:

246 One. We need to struggle to survive. We evolved in an adversarial environment. It only makes sense
247 that this struggle would be part of our makeup. The key is to wisely guide this basic need into useful
248 and constructive endeavors so we have a chance to generate purposeful and meaningful lives.

249

250 Two. We need to work together. This is a difficult one to incorporate into our thoughts and actions,
251 simply because it seemingly goes against the first thing we were taught. Struggle to survive. But our
252 struggle needs to evolve with our societal growth. As we once learned the personal responsibilities of

253 keeping ourselves alive and healthy, we need to now learn the societal responsibilities to keep our
254 societies alive and healthy.

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258 **We Need to Make Sense of/Understand the Things We Perceive**
259 **And We Need to To Have a sense of Control Over the Things in Our**
260 **Lives**

261 We mow our lawns. We fold our clothes and put them away. We tidy up the house. We organize
262 our things. We make plans. We draw conclusions about why people did something. We form ideas
263 about what causes things that we encounter. We seek to fill our gaps in knowledge with stories or
264 suppositions that we are satisfied with at least most of the time, if not given too much thought.

265

266 The simple fact is that we need to have a sense of control over and understanding of the things
267 in our lives. It is one of the reasons we like the scientific method so much. It explains things in a way
268 that we can understand and leads us to a points where we can form ideas on how to control what we
269 think we understand.

270 If we search our lives, we can find innumerable examples of these two needs. But the question
271 is “How do I channel these needs in constructive ways?”

272 Albert Camus said “...they deify what crushes them and find reason to hope in what
273 impoverishes them “

274 In our gaps of knowledge and control, our need manifests as our best educated guess.
275 Sometimes good. Sometimes not so much. And the wider the gap in our understanding and control to
276 what we experience, the more exaggerated and incomprehensible our explanations tend to be. The
277 question that needs answered then becomes “How do I channel these needs in constructive ways and
278 avoid the pitfalls of adhering to outlandish ideas or concepts?”

279 Fortunately, there is one very simple way that will give benefits far beyond just these two needs.

280 LEARN

281 Learn everything you can. Find one thing in your life that you are interested in and learn all you
282 can about it. When you get to the point where you think you have learned all there is to know about it,
283 then you know that you have just begun your journey. Because only a fool thinks he knows everything.

284 Learn everything you can. Read everything you can. Talk to your friends about the things you
285 have learned. Enjoy it. Revel in it. The more you learn, the better your life can be.

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288 **We Need a Social Structure That We Belong To**

289 Like it or not, we are social creatures. Whether we embrace it and join every club we stumble
290 across, or we strive against it and take pride in standing as the social outcast. We need a social structure
291 that we belong to, no matter what role we play. Constructive or destructive.

292 The key to fulfilling this need of ours constructively is find a social group that we can get along

293 with. A chess club, a band, the local car club, a book club... knitting, bike riding, movies, comics, role
294 playing games, card games. There are endless opportunities to meet, face to face, with others that share
295 the same interests. The key is to meet in person. To see another person's face and interact in a manner
296 that allows for reading of facial cues, body language. Online or over the phone just won't cut it for long.
297 And the whole purpose is to help generate purpose and meaning in our lives. Only prolonged, in person
298 friendships accomplishes this. Everything else falls short to varying degrees.

299 One of the best ways to fill this need is to find a Convocationism group in your area. Meet with
300 them. Go to their weekly services. Discuss the meditations laid out in the Convocational Bible. There
301 you will meet people with the same goal in mind as you.

302

303

304 **We Need to Have a Goal to Work Towards**

305 If we take a look at our lives, we find that we are happiest when we are working towards a goal
306 that we feel will be useful. Not in achieving a goal, but in working towards a goal. Think about it. The
307 first thing we do when we achieve something is choose another goal to work on. Achieving a goal gives
308 us joy, but it is in the working towards a goal that gives us happiness. Joy is fleeting, happiness lasts.

309 Even if fulfilling this need of ours seems daunting, it turns out to be pretty simple. Pick
310 something that interests you and work toward it. Painting. Politics. Helping others. Starting a business.
311 Planting a garden. Reading a book. Writing a book. Organizing a local social event. Going to see a
312 movie that will come out soon.

313 The point is that it can be anything you want to do, or have to do, but make it a goal. Make it
314 something that you have planned and are going to attend to. Put some time into planning it. Put some
315 effort into it. A goal is something you are going to accomplish. As adults, most of the time it is going to
316 be something you have to do, but sometimes it is going to be something you want to do. It doesn't
317 matter which. It only matters that you make it a goal and put some effort into making sure it turns out
318 the best it can.

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321 **We Need to Have a Sense of Reciprocity in Our Interactions**

322 How many of us know that one guy who only takes? The person you are always doing things
323 for but they never do, or almost never do anything in return?

324 We need a sense of give and take in our dealings with other people. More so, we need to feel
325 that we get in return enough to justify the effort we put into something. Work. Friendships. Our
326 vehicles. Anything we devote our time to needs to give us a sense of "It is worth it."

327 Nothing in life is going to be a 50/50 split. But continually putting effort into things that don't
328 give us a sense of reciprocity is one of the quickest ways to foster resentment and discontent in our
329 lives.

330 Give where you can, but learn when to cut things off.

331

332 We Need to Maintain a Set of Actions That Affords Growth in Each of the Three Major Areas of our
333 Human Existence. Mental, Physical and Spiritual.

At different times in our life we focus on, or see the importance in, the different aspects of our existence. At times we focus on our health, physical or mental. At times we focus on the more existential, or spiritual. Though most of the time, for most of the people, they focus on none.

If we do not have a set of practices that is focused on each part of what we need, then it will not be fulfilled. And a need unfulfilled is ample breeding ground for discontent. The internal discontent that drives us, usually subconsciously, to do or say things that cause turmoil in our lives.

But, if we develop a set of actions that addresses each of these areas, and stick to those actions, then we have a chance of living a life that is much better than if we don't.

Mental - Read. Play games where you can use your mind. Contemplate on and discuss the Convocational meditations with your friends. Make constructive goals in your life. Think. There should be very few times in an adults life when they are not thinking about something.

Physical - The human body likes to move. Unfortunately, as we get older we become more sedentary. We get tired. We have aches and pains. We don't feel like it. There are a million reasons we can come up with to not move. But the fact of the matter is that the more we don't move, the worse it feels. The human body is meant to move. It improves so many aspects of our functionality and also improves our mental health. So go for a walk. Do some push-ups. Do leg lifts in your chair. Anything you can, just move. Your body, your mind and your outlook on life will thank you for it.

We Need to Strive for Balance in Action, Thought and Emotion

In life, there are many things which push us from balance. The other cars on the road that cut us off. The flat tire. The kids being difficult. The in-laws causing a ruckus. The neighbors playing their music too loud. The person at work that eats your lunch. Or the day that was supposed to be bright and shining that turns out to be cold and rainy.

Everything that happens in our lives pushes us to differing degrees of extremes. Some small deviations from balance, others much more. But as we notice our thoughts, actions or emotions going to extremes, we need to reel them back in.

And Balance does not mean a median point. Each person has a natural tendency, so the balance can be in a different spot depending on the person. Some of us are more in touch with our emotions. Our balance point will be different than others. But our goal should be not to let it get to an extreme. Some of us are more intellectual than others. Our balance point may not match others, but our goal should be to not let ourselves be overcome by a sense of superiority towards others. Some of us are more physical than others. Our balance point may not match others, but our goal should be to not let our physical prowess cause us to look down on others who haven't worked for that end.

This is not to say that we cannot have times of great joy. My balance point for eating a peanut butter sandwich is not going to be the same as when my team wins the championships. Enjoy the good times. Endure the bad times. Just don't let yourself get unjustifiably too far from balance.

The key for everyone, even though our balance points will differ, is to watch out for extremes in our thoughts, actions and emotions. When we see ourselves going to unjustified extremes, we need to reel ourselves back in.

We Need to Have a Job That Benefits Us and the Society we Live in

The Hidden Questions

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395

396 There are quite a few questions we ask in this life, a few being:

397 What does it all mean?

398 What happens after death? Is this life all there is?

399 How can I be happier in my life?

400 ...or for a great many of us there is a persistent sense of something being wrong, something we are
401 missing, deep in our gut that drives us to do more, achieve more, be more.

402 Let's take a look at each of these...

403 "What is the Meaning of Life?"

404 Here is where most people will launch into some articulation of what a belief system taught them early
405 in life. Some sort of "Be the best person you can be." Or "Learn to love more." Or maybe even "Learn
406 to let go."

407 No matter what people say, they will know deep inside that that the real answer is that they don't know.
408 To a man, from fifteen to a hundred and fifteen, no one knows for sure. Each of them spends their time
409 running about with one goal or another in mind. All find out that what they have chased over the years
410 has come up wanting. Leaving them with the same question: "Is this all there is?"

411 The simple answer is "No. There is more." Many people can find various comforting thoughts near the
412 end of their life. They look back at their lives and feel consoled that they have "Had a good life." or
413 "Have loved and been loved in return." Both in romance and family. While these are good things, it
414 does not change the fact that they have spent their lives trying to figure it out. Trying to navigate
415 through life with no real idea of if they are doing things right.

416 The fact of the matter is that each of us is trying to figure out how to live a happy, purposeful and
417 fulfilling life. But this life does not come with a users manual. There is nothing that gives us a hint at
418 how to achieve what all of us crave. Worse, some people have figured out part of the equation and
419 pronounce their accomplishment as if it is all you need.

420 We are thrown into this world knowing nothing. We are then taught by people who have no idea about
421 what they are doing. Then we are let loose to find out own way. All the while, we have others yelling
422 from the rooftops that they have the answer, but we find out the hard way that their way leaves us
423 wanting more.

424 What is the solution then? How do we live a life that is full of meaning and purpose and which gives us
425 the best chance of having more happy times than bad ones?

426 The answer is easier than you might think. As humans there are some basic needs that we all have, and
427 which affect almost every aspect of our lives. When we address those needs, everything else can then
428 turn out better.

429 Those basic needs are:

430 9. We need to struggle against something.

431 10. We need to make sense of/Understand the things we perceive, and we need to have a sense of
432 control over the things in our lives.

433 11. We need a social structure that we belong to.

434 12. We need to have a goal to work towards.

435 13. We need to have a sense of reciprocity in our actions.

436 14. We Need to Maintain a Set of Actions That Affords Growth in Each of the Three Major Areas of
437 our Human Existence. Mental, Physical and Spiritual.

438 15. We need to strive for balance in action, thought and emotion.

439 16. We need to have a job that benefits us and the society we live in.

440 When we learn to address these needs in everything we do, then we find that by simply
441 addressing these basic human needs, our lives transform into a life that is full of happiness, purpose and
442 meaning.

443 It sounds easy, but these are only the most basic needs we all have as humans. There is a lot
444 more to life than just this, but these are the things we should keep in mind always and learn to apply
445 them wisely, without hurting others in the process.

446

447

448 **What Happens After Death?/Is This All There Is?**

449 Simple answer? No one knows.

450 Many will tell you they know. Many will offer up, or insist, that you should believe one thing or
451 another. Usually with the unstated stipulation that you have no power and everything will be fine if you
452 just (blindly) follow what they offer.

453 Some people will believe that this life is all there is. While others will believe that there is some
454 part of them which carries on after their body dies.

455 I have listened to a multitude of differing ideas and beliefs, and more arguments for either one
456 than I care to admit.

457 The one thing I have come to realize is that no one knows, no matter how profusely they tell
458 you otherwise.

459 I don't think it matters though. I need to believe that my soul carries on after I die, so I do. With
460 all the other dichotomies of belief and thought that make up my psyche, willfully holding this "leap of
461 faith" to satiate a need inside me is not going to bring down this house of cards I have built. The only
462 thing that may cause a problem is when I start looking for someone to "save" me. When I transition
463 from a perspective of continual growth (which has no limit), to a perspective of looking for something
464 more powerful than I am to "save" me, then I inevitably go against the basic needs I have as a human.
465 And that is a path that leads to a life that is not full of happiness, purpose and meaning.

466 Is slavery not slavery because the slave is taken good care of? In the light of our most basic
467 needs listed earlier, then I would say yes it is still slavery. Because it goes against the most basic needs
468 inside myself that I need to address.

469 If you want to know my beliefs, read the story portion at the end of this book. If you find it
470 helps you, feel free to adopt it.

471 Basically, believe what you need to believe, and understand why you need to believe it. Then go
472 about your life with that belief as long as you are not hurting yourself or others. And always keep in
473 mind that you can change your belief at any time as you learn and understand more. No belief should
474 be set in stone, denying the light of better understanding.

How Can I Be Happier In Life?

With the myriad of self help programs and gurus in the world, you would think that there would be more happiness. The fact of the matter is that there are a bunch of people that have figured out part of what goes into you making your life happy, meaningful and purposeful. But no one has the full answer.

Part of that is because everyone's life is different. We have different temperaments, experiences, upbringings, values and expectations upon us to list a few things. The answer though, is to see the threads that are common to all humans and which affect every aspect of all of our lives, no matter how different those aspects may be.

Those basic needs are:

We need to struggle against something.

We need to make sense of/Understand the things we perceive, and we need to have a sense of control over the things in our lives.

We need a social structure that we belong to.

We need to have a goal to work towards.

We need to have a sense of reciprocity in our actions.

We Need to Maintain a Set of Actions That Affords Growth in Each of the Three Major Areas of our Human Existence. Mental, Physical and Spiritual.

We need to strive for balance in action, thought and emotion.

We need to have a job that benefits us and the society we live in.

Learn to address these in everything we do, and you will be able to make a life that is happier and full of purpose and meaning.

We Must Awaken from Our Slumber

Conscious Thought

What is it that we possess that differentiates man as the pinnacle of evolution that we all like to think we are? Is it simply the possession of an opposable thumb? Our standing upright? Our ability to use tools? Or is it the possession of some imperceptible quality that only uses this body as a tool to interact with this world but carries on after this body dies? An energy, a soul, that adheres to the first law of thermodynamics as an energy that cannot be destroyed.

Let's think about it for a bit...

Take a look at our actions, at what we do. Not in the sense of what we decide to spend our time

on, but in the multitude of subconscious and unconscious actions our body and minds take. Lift your arm out in front of you. Now, did you do that? Was it your conscious mind that raised your arm? Most would answer yes, but that is not the case. If it was then you could state exactly which muscles you decided to activate and at what percentage of muscles fibers, to start, maintain and stop the movement of the arm. If it was your conscious self, then you could state the exact saline levels you decided were needed in each cell along the nerve pathways needed to convey the signal to each muscle fiber you used to raise your arm. You would also be able to state the exact voltage levels of those signals and the time between the initiation of the thought and the activation of the separate muscle fibers.

No. It is not your conscious mind that moved your arm, it is your conscious mind that initiated the movement. Like a general on a battle field your conscious mind “gave the order” to raise your arm. Then the lieutenants went about carrying out that order. Who or what are the lieutenants? Those are the subconscious and unconscious processes in your mind. Those lieutenants then inform the enlisted on what to do. The enlisted are the cells that do the actual work.

Why is it done this way? To conserve resources. Our bodies evolved in an environment in which the uncertainty of when and from where our next meal would come was prevalent. So, those organisms that did not optimize resource conservation did not survive. What was our method of resource conservation? It was through the use of unconscious and subconscious processes in the mind, because our greatest asset is also a resource hog. An estimated twenty to twenty five percent of the resources our bodies use during the day is by the brain. So utilizing as little as we can get away with is a huge way to conserve resources. These subconscious and unconscious processes analyse fewer variables than does our conscious thought, so, fewer resources.

But, the down side is that we may miss the sensory inputs that could potentially save our lives. Take the example of walking to the well to get water. We do it day after day. Time and time again. Our bodies are always looking to conserve resources, so, as soon as our senses start receiving common inputs for actions we are doing, our bodies initiate the chemical responses that we feel as “boredom.” This feeling is a catalyst for our mind to not spend so many resources on an action. To conserve that which is vital to our survival. Our conscious mind then “wanders” or waits. (like driving home and realizing you don’t remember most of your journey.) In our example of getting water from the well, the act of walking to the well has become subconscious due to the repetitive sensory inputs. Our conscious mind goes into standby mode or moves on to another topic and we fail to see the lion hiding in the bushes as we walk by. The lion jumps out at us. The sensory input is no longer repetitive and our conscious mind kicks into full gear. Raising our adrenaline levels to be able to respond to a threat. Widening our eyes to be able to perceive the threat. Increasing the utilization of more of our physical mind, and time seems to slow down as we scan our senses for the threat. Our subconscious processes receive the signal of increased adrenaline and take defensive measures. We stop walking. We jump back. Our muscles tighten up, ready for fight or flight. As soon as the threat is identified, our subconscious processes get to work, fight or flight depending on the individual and the situation. As this is happening, our conscious mind is busy processing the inputs from our senses and from the subconscious and unconscious processes to find a way to improve our situation and survive the threat of the lion jumping out at us.

It is all a well oiled machine. Our conscious mind is the general. Our subconscious and unconscious processes are the lieutenants and our cells and organs are the infantry men. Nothing else is really needed.

But, what about our soul? What about the belief that there is something ineffable about being human that carries on after the body dies? That is not so easily explained. That requires the compilation of desperate “facts” we have observed about the world. The kind of facts that don’t lend themselves readily to scientific scrutiny. Like the hair raising on the back of your neck when you sense and unseen

559 danger. The times when you feel so connected to someone that you can sense what they are thinking.
560 The times you see something out of the corner of your eye. The near death experiences. The spiritual
561 experiences reported by so many. Remote viewing. Mind reading. Ghosts. Magic.

562 There are far too many things that have been experienced and we cannot fully explain to just
563 dismiss them out of hand. But, there isn't a logical sequence of known events to be able to explain
564 them scientifically. Unless we close our minds to certain possibilities. And a closed mind is like
565 walking to get water from the well with a subconscious process. We may miss the lion waiting in the
566 bushes.

567

568

569 **We are beings of habit**

570 Take a look at the things you do in your life. The things most of us gravitate toward as we get
571 older. Almost without fail, our lives become consumed by habit. We develop a certain set of actions
572 that we "like" to do. And we do them repetitively. Playing computer games. Reading. Working in our
573 gardens or yards. Driving RC cars. Golfing. Boating. Working. Projects that we take on. People we
574 interact with. The things we do tend to become repetitive. This is not just coincidence, it is by design. It
575 is a natural progression of the influence of our subconscious and unconscious processes influencing us
576 through "feelings" to desire the "comfortable", known, safe and resource conserving actions in our life.
577 These feelings lull us into not engaging our conscious mind, to not give it much thought.

578 This lack of conscious thought in our actions throughout the day may be good at conserving
579 resources, but it does have a down side. A lion waiting in the bushes. We can all relate to doing
580 something without really thinking, only to find that the action puts us in conflict with those around us.
581 Speeding a bit as we drive because we are wrapped up in our thoughts of being late for work, or what
582 we are going to the store for, or what we have planned later in the day. Wrapped up in ourselves, we are
583 not aware of the way our actions are affecting those around us as we dart in and out of traffic to
584 accomplish our goals in a time frame that seems shorter. Or the myriad of other times in our lives when
585 we are concerned only with what we desire and don't give much thought to those around us, or how our
586 actions will affect them. If we are honest with ourselves, we can come up with a huge list of examples
587 over our lifetime.

588 Then, one day, we realize that we need a bit more "excitement" in our lives. Because one of our
589 basic needs as humans is to strive against something. A quality a repetitive, calm, peaceful life does not
590 provide. How did we get here? What was it that caused this malady, this deviation from normalcy, this
591 deviation from homeostasis?

592 It was a lack of conscious thought and an unbalanced reliance on subconscious and unconscious
593 action. That is why the idioms of "being mindful in our lives" or "mindfulness" are concepts that catch
594 our attention. Because they relate to our unconscious realization of being out of balance in thought and
595 action. Or, because they are saying that are so vague and seemingly just outside our present
596 comprehension that we attribute a quality of "profoundness" to them.

597 To any extent, we allow our balance between unconscious thought, subconscious thought and
598 conscious thought to falter, and we experience a deviation from homeostasis (a feeling, need or
599 yearning) and are driven to make a change. Though, without conscious thought, there is a good chance
600 that change will not be in our best interest and will only temporarily satiate what caused the need in the

first place. We have all seen people that make “bad” decisions in their lives. We sit back and wonder how some people can be so “stupid”. Yet, we fail to see that every one of us does the exact same thing to different extents and in different parts of our lives. We are all beings that have developed “tools” to deal with life according to what we have been taught, what we experience, our social influences and what we have gleaned from our own examinations. These “tools” are the way we think we should act. They are what we value. They are the way we feel and the way we deal with those feelings. They have become so ingrained in us, so much a subconscious or unconscious process, that when we see others not adhering to them we think “That person doesn’t have much common sense.” When what we should see is “That person has not had the experiences or teachings to be able to develop the tools I have been able to develop.” We are beings of habit, the extent of which few rarely see and fewer remember once they see it.

Free Will

What does all of this say about free will? Reading all of this about subconscious and unconscious processes in our mind being all that we tend to use throughout the majority of our day probably has you thinking pretty negatively about the existence of free will. A notion that usually is so revolting to us to be disbelieved out of hand.

But if we take a look at the idea of free will, we find that there are almost as many definitions of free will as there are people who think they have it.

There is the idea that we can do anything we want. There is the idea that we can choose anything we want. There is the idea that we can choose something other than what we would normally do. And there are a myriad of deviations from these, but pertaining to the same “basic” idea. The idea that we are not bound and can choose any path that is possible.

Yet, is that the case? We are so deeply and vehemently opposed to the idea of not having free will, yet, when we get past our instinctual rejection of the idea and start to examine it, we find that we are at the whim of so many influences in thought and action as to make the possibility of free will a fallacy.

Those influences, I think, are the key to what free will is. In the context of what we have previously discussed and the subtle, unconscious influences that affect everything we do, my definition of free will is formed. I define free will as being able to see the things that influence our thoughts, feelings and actions and being able to choose something different than the direction those influences are guiding us. The dictionary definition of free will is “The power of acting without the constraint of necessity or fate; the ability to act at one’s own discretion.”

The key here is “being able to see the things that influence us.” Without that we are acting in a manner no better than the instinctual reactions usually attributed to animals. And, if we are truthful, humans spend a great deal of time acting in a manner that is no better than the instinctual animal. Every time we fail to give conscious thought, every time we fail to figure out all of the things that are influencing our actions, and just “go with our gut”, we are acting instinctively. Without the use of our greatest strength which has allowed us to evolve to the point we have.

This behavior worked well for us over history. But our civilizations have grown to a point where it is no longer an asset, it is a hindrance. Take a look around you. How much turmoil can you

643 find in your society that is caused by “the seven deadly sins” laid out by so many religions in various
644 ways. All of them describe not only people thinking of only themselves, but people acting off of
645 subconscious and unconscious processes. People failing to use their conscious mind to figure out all of
646 the things that are motivating their actions. People running off of instinct.

647 Now, I agree. That is an exaggeration. People do think. We think all the time. The point I am
648 making is that the thought put into something is not only the minimal we deem needed to come up with
649 a course of action that we are satisfied with most of the time. But also that the ideas we come up with
650 lack much insight into the full range of things motivating us in a direction. That is why stereotypes are
651 so effective. “Types” of people act in “certain” ways according to their “common motivations”. They
652 do that repeatedly because they don’t understand or know the things motivating them. So they just keep
653 doing the same things again and again. Hence, stereotypes are good indicators for a person’s actions in
654 a lot of cases.

655

656

657 **So, How do We Awaken from Our Slumber?**

658 How to break free from this cycle of subconscious and unconscious influences is the question.
659 How do we escape the cycle of instinctual, animalistic thought and action to claim the power that has
660 facilitated our large societal growth? How do we harness the power that has improved our lives so
661 much?

662 Time and practice.

663 It is that simple. Though, it is not easy. We have to develop the habit of honest self reflection on
664 the things that motivate what we think, what we feel and what we do. We have to develop the habit of
665 consideration before we take an action. We have to develop a habit of learning everything we can so we
666 can increase the options we have when deciding what actions to take. And we have to develop the habit
667 of listening to others in an attempt to gain new perspectives, new ways of thinking about the things and
668 situations we experience in life.

669 These are not things that can achieved in days, weeks, or even years. These are things that
670 cannot be achieved at all. Though, they can be developed. These skills will never be foolproof. They
671 will never work perfectly. There are too many variables, too many differences in each situation. Too
672 many ways to look at a situation and too many differences in people to be able to find a “perfect”
673 solution to what we should do, think or say.

674 But we are not trying to outline a path to being perfect are we? We are trying to outline a path to
675 achieving a happy, fulfilling, purposeful and meaningful life. We are trying to express what actions we
676 need to take to sidestep some of the most common pitfalls. We are trying to teach you how to awaken
677 from your slumber and live a life that is better than anything you have imagined before.

678 Practice. Learn. Think. Question everything. We may not achieve perfection, but our lives will
679 become so good that you will think you have.

680

681

682

683 A Persistent Sense of Something Being Wrong, Something We are Missing, Deep in Our Gut That
684 Drives Us To Do More, Achieve More, be More.

685
686 There is an unease in your gut because you are not living life correctly.

687 It is that simple.

688 What exactly is causing it? Only you can answer that. But to do so, you need to foster a practice
689 of honestly taking a look inside you to find out what is motivating you. If you lie to yourself, then you
690 have no chance of correcting it, because you will never know what it is.

691 This is not always an easy task, but it is a skill. Any skill can be learned. And the more you do it,
692 the easier it becomes.

693 How do you admit those things inside you that you fear, or shy away from? You do it. You put
694 your feelings aside long enough to get it done. What choice do you have? Unfortunately, the only
695 options are to face the things inside of you and change your actions and thoughts to address the issue,
696 or live your life not only suffering from that which intimidates you but also with the fear of facing it.

697 This is not easy. It is often only accomplished after the prerequisite period of denial and kicking
698 and screaming. But the more we do it, the easier it becomes. And we invariably find that the rewards
699 are always worth the process.

700

701

702 Ecology of Practices

703

704 Understanding does not just materialize out of thin air. Take a look at your life and the things
705 you understand. How did you come to understand them? Honest evaluation will show that no matter
706 what it is that you are thinking of, you came to that understanding a learning process. Be it school,
707 personal experience, or from your social group. In any case, you learned it by doing something and
708 analyzing the results.

709 It is the same with anything we want to understand. That understanding only comes about by
710 doing something. Some things are easy, like when your parents told you not to put your hand on a hot
711 stove. Some, take much more time and effort. Like those who put years into school to understand
712 particle physics.

713 Here, we are concerned with what practices should we adopt and cultivate in our lives that will
714 lead to a better understanding of ourselves. Which will allow us to create an unshakable foundation of
715 self which will carry us through rough times.

716 To this end, we have identified a few areas in which we need to focus our efforts:

717 Fostering Social Needs.

718 Fostering Physical Needs.

719 Fostering Mental Needs.

720 Fostering Spiritual Needs.

721 Morality.

722 As in all things, we need to approach each of the areas listed above with balance. Not midpoint,

723 balance. A balance unique to each individual and each situation.

724 For instance, if I were a scientist, my balance would lean more toward Mental growth. If I
725 were a preschool teacher, my balance would lean more toward Social growth. And if I were an artist,
726 my balance would lean more toward Emotional growth. (Each instance may not be entirely accurate,
727 but you get the idea.)

728 If I strive for equal amounts of everything in my life then I miss the point. I will then be
729 ignoring factors such as What I am good at. What I want to work on next in my life. What is actually
730 needed in my life. We can't effectively work on everything at once, so we do our best to address all
731 these areas, but focus more effort on one or two.

732

733 **Fostering Social Needs**

734 We are social creatures. That is part of the human condition. We can embrace it by finding some friends
735 that we can relate to, or by being part of a social organization. The ways we meet our social needs can
736 vary, but the fact that we need a social group is indisputable. We can let our need to strive against
737 something impede upon this aspect of our lives, but doing so is only to our detriment.

738 To this end, there are a few things that we need to focus on:

739 In Person Social Contact.

740 Reciprocity.

741 Balancing our innate selfishness with the societal need for unselfishness.

742

743 **First, let's look at In person social contact**

744 There is a difference between in person social contact, and not in person social contact.

745 When we meet someone in person, there are a myriad of social cues that we can't get any other
746 way. Body language, voice inflection, facial expressions, familiarity with physical features, to name a
747 few. All of these combine to help create a social bond fills a need inside us as humans.

748 This is why we gather at least once a week with other Convocationists. There is no substitute for
749 regular, in person contact with a social group with which you have something in common. On line or
750 any other means of contact does not fill this human need in the long run.

751 Isolation is a punishment in prison. Isolation is a huge concern for astronauts. Isolation is a
752 concern in big cities and rural communities and isolation rears its ugly head when we get older. In
753 every aspect of life it is apparent that, as a human, we need human contact. And that contact needs to be
754 in person.

755

756

757 **Next, let's look at Reciprocity**

758 We need to strive for reciprocity for us AND the people we interact with.

759 Watch children playing. If a larger child always wins over a smaller child, the smaller child will end up
760 stopping playing with the larger child. But if the larger child lets the smaller child win sometimes, then
761 everyone will be happy. We need to do our best, but in everyday affairs, people need to win sometimes.
762 In organized competitions, the best needs to win. Balance in everyday affairs, Excel when appropriate.

763 So what does reciprocity look like in life? How do we find a balance?

764 Give more than you take, but don't always give much more than you get. If your coworkers buy snacks
765 and allow anyone to partake, then make sure and add a little more than what you take. If you are
766 playing a game with a friend, then don't always leave them with no hope of winning. If someone stops
767 to help you on the side of the road with a flat tire, make sure and compensate them for their time and
768 effort, even if all you can do is express gratitude for their effort.

769 Let people know how much you value what they give, and give back, at the very least, as much as you
770 get.

771 Moderation. Always giving much more than you get leads to being discontent. Sometimes is fine, but
772 don't make it a habit. Likewise, don't allow others to always give to you much more than you give to
773 them. Whether giving or receiving, there needs to be a sense of reciprocity, of being close to balanced.

774 **Next, let's look at Balancing our innate selfishness with the societal need** 775 **for unselfishness:**

776 What is selfishness? ...it is looking out for ourselves. More importantly, it only becomes a
777 problem when we do this more than we put our society above ourselves.

778 At this point a person's hackles raise and their minds are flooded with thoughts defending the
779 need to look out for ourselves. People are trained by almost every aspect of our society to look out for
780 ourselves. "Because no one else is going to." And to a large extent, this is true in our society presently.
781 That is what we need to change.

782 Look around you. I challenge you to find one thing in your life that is not a product of being
783 part of a large society. Look at the chair you sit in. The clothes you wear. The medium you are reading
784 this on. The electricity that lights your days and nights. The roads you drive on. The buildings you
785 frequent. The car you drive. And on, and on and on.

786 Being part of a society gives you so much. What is it that you give back? Countless people over
787 the ages have worked to make the society you live in better for you. What responsibility do you have
788 because you want to reap the rewards? What social responsibilities do you have? What personal
789 responsibilities do you have? Have you ever given this any thought?

790 Selfishness is what helped life evolve. But everything about our existence since that point has
791 shown us that working together has more benefits than not. Cells are a society of parts working together.
792 Organs are a society of cells working together. Animals, and humans, are a society of organs working
793 together. Tribes are a society of people working together. Towns are a larger society of people working
794 together. Cities are even larger societies of people working together. Nations are even larger societies of
795 people working together. In all instances we are shown that when we work together, our existence is
796 better off. Our lives are better. Bacteria have very few options. Single celled organism have greater
797 options. Multi-celled organisms have even greater options. Town, cities, states and countries give us
798 ever increasing options and opportunities as more and more people work together. Again, I ask you to
799 look around and find one thing that is not available to you because of being part of a large society.

But a large society is nothing more than a bunch of individual people working together. Each with their own concerns and needs and desires. The key to societies success is learning to work together. When we are alone, we do what we want, when we want. There are no other concerns besides ourselves. When we are part of a society, we need to take into account the concerns and desires of others. Then we need employ that all important reciprocity we spoke about earlier. We need to not only think of ourselves, our desires and needs, we need to take into consideration the desires and needs of others. We need to value the desires and needs of others at least as much as we value our own.

For society to work well, we need to not be so self-centered in thought and action.

This is not a rallying cry for you to abandon all self concern and think only of what you can give to your society. That is a recipe for disaster. Some people will take that opportunity to take everything they can with no regard for the repercussions. With no regard for how it affects others or the society they live in. We need to start changing our behaviors to be less selfish, but we need to find a balance that will not allow others to take without reciprocity. We need to make slow and deliberate changes in our actions to help recenter us, and the society we live in, away from selfish thought and action, and more towards unselfish thought and action. There is a balance. If we work at it, we can find it.

Fostering Physical Needs

The human body is a tool. A very complex tool, like your car. And like your car, the human body likes to move. We jump in our car every day without thought. Baring any major break downs, a car will just run. Day in and day out, with minor maintenance, our car stays reliable. But, if you let a car sit for long periods of time, it will become unreliable. If you try and jump in a car that has been sitting for years and drive off, you are quickly going to break down, if it starts at all. It is the same with the human body.

When we are children we are always moving around, and our bodies are growing and regenerating faster than at any time in our lives. And our bodies work at its best efficiency. It is a brand new tool. Compared to the rest of our lives, our bodies need the least amount of maintenance during this period. We can put our bodies through an awful lot of abuse and it still works well.

Then we transition into mid life. Our body does not work as well, it is not as resilient. If we continue to do the things we did as a child, our tool will break down. We also become much more sedentary as compared to our childhood. We stop moving as much. We find a job, and our movement is curtailed. Extremely so if we have some kind of desk job. Our body, our tool, sits for longer and longer periods of time.

As we transition into later years, this behavior is pronounced. The habitual lack of movement results in a drastic loss of muscle mass, which exacerbates the problem of our bodies not working as well as in our youth. Our tool is breaking down.

There is also the problem that the more you use a tool, the more wear and tear it accumulates. Making it not work as well as when it was new.

So, the more we use our body, the more it breaks down, but if we don't use it, it breaks down. The key is to, as in everything, find a balance. The older we get, the more important it is to adopt an exercise routine. Yes, there are aches and pains associated with our bodies being older, but keeping up the exercise in spite of that makes our lives better by helping to maintain our body. Exercise helps us keep our muscle mass and flexibility as we age. It helps our body, our tool, work better.

There is also the consideration that our body and our outlook are linked. The healthier we are, the better our outlook on our lives. Conversely, the more our bodies have problems, the more difficult it is to maintain a positive outlook on life.

So we have a choice. As we get older we can adopt an exercise routine that helps us maintain our muscle mass and vitality. Or we can become increasingly sedentary and end up with more aches, pains and illnesses then we would have if we had maintained our bodies with exercise.

Staying active is definitely more difficult and more painful as we get older, but in doing so we end up with less pain and illnesses than if we didn't stay active. Always pay attention to your body. Pay attention to how it feels and how it heals. It is like paying attention to how your car sounds and runs. When problems arise, we can often catch it early just by paying attention. Like when your brakes begin to squeal before the pads are totally worn down. If you ignore the squealing, the pads wear down totally and begin grinding down the rotors. Then you have a bigger problem than just routine maintenance.

Fostering Mental Needs

When we start talking about taking care of our mental needs, we open a wide and diverse subject that has more things to talk about than there are humans with those needs. The subject is combinatorially explosive. With just a few major topics to cover, there are a multitude of ways they play out in our psyche. Psychiatrists and Psychologists spend lifetimes exploring these different combinations and still don't cover the full breadth of what is possible. So trying to do so here, without the benefit of that continued, specialized training would be folly.

So here we are going to focus on just a few basics, the few things that drastically affect every aspect of our lives. These basics are going to address the fact that our minds are like a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger it becomes. And the fact that developing your mind is like climbing a mountain of shale. If you stop climbing, you start sliding back. There is no point at which the mind just stays as good as it is, just like the muscles in your body.

Just like your muscles, it takes focused, dedicated work to improve your mind. It is a jarring, uncomfortable process, but the results are well worth the effort. The question is, "How do we train our minds?" Or, more precisely, "What actions do we need to take to improve our minds?"

Reading.

Exploring different concepts from different points of view.

Training focus through different forms of meditation.

Talking with others about what we think, and trying to understand a point of view that differs from ours. Not just to debunk, or dismiss it, but to try and fully understand it and how it is valid.

Learn new things.

The mind is our most powerful tool. But, as we get older, we get into habits that progressively close our mind until we end up almost not using it at all. Like and unused muscle which atrophies and dies.

We need to practice a these things often if we want to keep our mind healthy. Daily if possible,

885 weekly at least. The more you train your mind, the easier it becomes. At first, practicing these things
886 will be a real chore. As these practices become habits, they become easier. Both in making the time to
887 do them and in the ease with which we do them.

888 You will find that the benefits of sustaining these actions affect every aspect of our lives.
889 Making our lives better, more fulfilled and meaningful.

890

891

892 **Fostering Spiritual Needs**

893

894 There is a basic human need to make sense of and have a sense of control over the things that
895 we experience in life. And I think that is a perfect light to use when exploring what the hell we mean by
896 our spiritual needs.

897 I think our spiritual needs are the ideas and beliefs that bridge the gap between when we know,
898 or can prove through observation and logic, and what we don't know.

899 Think about what comes to mind when we think about spiritual needs. We probably conjure up
900 fleeting images of church, god, monks meditating, our soul (or what happens to us after our bodies die.),
901 chi, magic, witches, or perhaps just a concept of "feeling peace."

902 Almost without fail, when we think about spiritual needs, it is concepts that bridge the gap
903 between what is known and what is not known. That sheds some light on what practices we may need
904 to develop to make sure we are addressing this need.

905 For most people, when they are compelled to address this need, they fall back on the idea of
906 church, or religion. People flock to these practices and receive a number of benefits. They get part of
907 their social needs met. Part of their Mental needs met in learning about the religion. And part of their
908 spiritual needs met in the introduction and adoption of a set of beliefs that bridge that gap between what
909 is known and what is not. Religions have done the human race a great service. Though, man has
910 corrupted this message as happens with everything we touch.

911 Some people flock to self-help forums for their spiritual needs. Delving into books and seminars.
912 Finding benefit in the personal growth which touches many different aspects of our basic human needs.
913 Though, without a deep insight into what our basic human needs are, the results from these self-help
914 programs, as with religion, are varied.

915 Then we have the less widespread attempts to satiate our spiritual needs in people joining cults,
916 clubs, practicing religious holidays and reciting different pieces of knowledge that they hear from
917 various "enlightened" sources. (Usually without giving it much thought.)

918 All of these are attempts satiate the basic human needs to make sense of and have a sense of
919 control over the things we experience in life. All of these actions fill the gap between what is known
920 and what is not known to varying degrees.

921 In this light, we now have a basic path to satiating these needs. We need to take a look at, give
922 thought to, those things we encounter in our lives that cause us discomfort in our lack of knowledge
923 and understanding about them. We need to find an answer to those questions that we are satisfied with,
924 at least most of the time.

925 What happens when we die? Is there a god? What is this yearning I feel that draws me to
926 consider a religion? What is it that I believe, and why do I believe it?

927 These questions, these yearnings, arise out of our basic human need to make sense of and have a
928 sense of control over the things we experience. As we explore what is causing these desires to manifest
929 in us, it helps to understand why, to understand what causes these desires to manifest. Because if we
930 don't understand what the problem is, then anything we do to fix it won't work. Because it won't be
931 addressing the cause.

932 Give thought to the things beyond our current understanding. Develop a concept that you are
933 happy with. Religion, self help, science, cults, witchcraft, clubs, and even just accumulating different
934 tidbits of "wisdom" from those we perceive as enlightened can all have pieces of truth in them.
935 Accumulate the pieces that fit well with you and assemble a belief that sufficiently bridges that gap
936 between what is known and what is not known. Then keep it flexible enough to incorporate a better
937 concept when it presents itself. We are all trying to bridge that gap in knowledge. We are all trying to
938 satiate the basic human needs to make sense of and have a sense of control over the things we
939 experience. Religion, works for some, self help for others. But when we know what is causing the
940 desires and yearnings within us, then we have a chance to develop something that actually works.

941

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944

Morality

945 What is morality? How does it manifest? Do we need to have our morality dictated by a higher
946 being, or can we dictate our own? What is it that we consider moral and why? Is there a common
947 thread to what we consider moral? How does our existence as humans affect our decisions on what is
948 moral? How does our society affect what we consider moral? How does our situation affect our
949 morality? All valid questions, and all goes to show the depth and breadth of the idea of morality.

950 We all have a basic sense of what is moral and not. And most of us have encountered situations
951 in dealing with others where we feel that they have not acted according to what we find moral. And
952 every human, if they are honest, has done something in their past that has caused turmoil with other
953 people. Situations where our actions conflicted with the morality of others.

954 Why is this? How can a seemingly simple concept such as what is moral be different in so many
955 people?

956 That is because what is moral is not standard or static in any person or group. There are many
957 factors that go into deciding what is moral and what is not. And those factors change over time and
958 situation.

959 What we find moral is affected by our species, our situation, our social group, our level of
960 selfishness or selflessness, our environment and our experiences. If we think about it, what is
961 considered moral is different if we are alone verses when we are in a group.

962 Morality is an agreed upon set of actions that help society to not rip itself apart. Whether that
963 society is two people or two trillion, it does not matter. If you are the only being in existence, then there
964 is no morality. You just do what you want because there is no one else to consider.

965 And that last thought gives us a clue as to how we should go about deciding what we consider
966 moral and not moral. Truly, it gives us insight into what morality is.

967 With the definition of morality being "An agreed upon set of actions that help society to not rip
968 itself apart" we gain the understanding that morality is a compromise. A compromise between the
969 members of the society on what actions are acceptable and what are not. Compromise can be defined as

970 “An agreement to which neither party involved is happy with, but can live with.”

971 Some things we consider moral are common to almost all people simply because we are human.
972 Take cannibalism for example. The aversion to cannibalism probably due to an evolutionary fact that
973 eating members of your species repeatedly increases the transmission of different types of diseases. Not
974 to mention encroaching on our basic human need for security. But the act of cannibalism is so
975 commonly revolted in humans that we consider it to be known by all.

976 Other items of morality are not so common. Tossing trash onto the ground for example. Most of
977 us have seen examples of people picking up trash they walk by and through it into a trash receptacle.
978 And most of us see trash that has been thrown on the ground by someone. Even though it is illegal, at
979 least in most places?

980 Differences in morality are differences in what we find acceptable and are factors of our species,
981 our situation, our social group, our level of selfishness or selflessness, our environment and our
982 experiences.

983 I think the main thing to consider when contemplating morality is to ask the question “What
984 type of person do I want to be?” Do you want to be the kind of person that causes turmoil in your
985 society, or do you want to be the kind of person that helps your society get along? Ultimately, the
986 largest question is “How selfish or unselfish do I want to be?” As in everything, balance is key. It is not
987 healthy to be totally selfish just as it is not healthy to be totally unselfish. A balance needs to be
988 maintained for each individual. And balance is not a middle point. In understanding this balance, we
989 find it easier to cope with the perceived transgressions of others.

990

991

992 **So how does all of this pertain to an Ecology of Practices?**

993

994 Everything we have mentioned so far increases our understanding. It helps us realize that
995 human and societal psychology is far too varied to be able to lay out a list of things to do to cover every
996 situation. It is just too complex. We can however, put forth a list of things to do to help each individual
997 grow. So, as we encounter the myriad of situations in our life, we will have a strong base from which
998 we can make intelligent, socially conscious decisions.

999 To that end, here are some of the things we should work on depending on what role you want to
1000 fulfil in your life:

1001

1002 Actions to put into practice

1003 Actions for every person to practice:

1004 Question everything. Especially when told to just accept or believe.

1005 Continual growth in mind, body and spirit.

1006 Learn all that you can.

1007 Actions for followers to practice:

1008 All previous actions.

1009 Daily reading.

1010 Daily meditation.
1011 Daily exercise.
1012 Study the development of belief systems and how they evolved.
1013 Continually develop a rigorous and honest evaluation skill of yourself and what motivates each thought,
1014 emotion and action.
1015 Actions for Priests to practice:
1016 All previous actions.
1017 Development of skills for helping people.
1018 Development of in depth knowledge of Convocationism.
1019
1020 There are many different things to consider in life if you want a chance at having a happy,
1021 fulfilling and purposeful life. This list of basic actions, if practiced, will help keep you on a path that
1022 accomplishes all of those.

1023

1024

1025

1026

1027 **Finding Solidarity in the Search for Purpose**

1028 Some people need religion, some need logic. The one thing everyone needs is a sense of
1029 purpose in their lives.

1030 Our gatherings are a celebration of difference. Never let our gatherings become nothing but the like
1031 minded. We need to challenge our beliefs and ideas or they become toxic.

1032

1033 How do we learn?

1034

1035 What is our path?

1036

1037 People need different things at different points on their path. Some need more sacred, some need more
1038 analytical. Most need a balance of both.

1039 Growth comes from opening our minds to different ideas and beliefs. It is a way to bring about growth
1040 and change without all the pain and destruction that comes from trying to hold on to static beliefs.

1041 Static thoughts and beliefs, unchallenged by opposing intellectual and spiritual ideas and beliefs
1042 becomes stagnant and toxic.

1043 The more we understand and accept difference, the more we are alive.

1044

1045

Balancing Our Innate Selfishness with the Societal Need for Unselfishness

The human nature is a dichotomy. On the one hand, we are born into a world that is inherently adversarial. Eat or be eaten. Kill or be killed. The strong survive, the weak die. It is apparent throughout our world and our society has evolved to represent that which we see in nature.

The way our society is designed teaches us to look out for ourselves. Work for money, which is an abstraction of power. Pay homage to those who are unselfish, but revere those who accumulate beyond reason the abstraction, regardless of the detriment to others. The winners. The people setting the world on fire. They achieve. They dominate. They win in their constructed situations designed to set themselves up to gain more and more power. More people want to be like Warren Buffet than want to be like Gandhi.

We live our lives surrounded by a structure that teaches us to look out for ourselves first, and, if we can, help others after that.

The second part of our dichotomy is that everything we have is a product of our working together. Look around you. Try and find one thing in your life that is not a product of having a large society.

From the first Markov blankets, to single celled organisms affording specialization of structures within themselves, to multi-organ systems, everything in life shows that the more we work together, the stronger we are. And the more likely we are to survive. Life shows us that it is better to have a larger society that we are a part of.

We are in transition. Where we are moving away from our biological self-centeredness and learning to become more societally centered. On the one hand, it is our diversity in individuals that can make us stronger. On the other hand, we need to learn to keep ahold of that while working effectively in a society.

We need to learn to balance our selfishness and our societal responsibility.

We have achieved the technological expertise to alleviate the need for human work in our society. Robotics has advanced to a point where almost any manual labor on the part of humans is not needed to produce everything each person in society needs to abundance. The problem with doing that, logistics aside, is two fold.

First, humans are too selfish. At present, if we eliminated the need for a person to work, most people would simply do nothing. Without the need to make money to buy food, people would opt to do nothing, taking from society without giving anything in return.

Second is a fact that most people don't realize. One of the things humans need to make a life full of purpose and meaning is to have a job that benefits them and the society they live in. How many people do you know take pride in the fact that their job helps society run? That what they do helps the society they are in run smoothly and is therefore of great benefit? How many of us drive by the people working on the road and think: "There is a person working his fingers to the bone, in the blazing heat, so that I can have a road to get where I need to go. That person deserves a lot of respect." If we are honest with ourselves, almost no one among us.

1088

1089 No, we are not ready for the next step in development until we can address those things inside
1090 us, and inside our society, which perpetuate and cultivate the narrow minded selfishness we evolved
1091 with.

1092 The question though, is “What do we do to help facilitate the changes needed?”. Followed
1093 quickly by “Is this a direction we want to grow?”

1094

1095 The answer to the latter is a moral question. One each of us needs to answer for ourselves.

1096 The answer to the former is a simple one. Stop being so self-centered without being a pushover.

1097

1098 If we spend all of our time thinking of, and making concessions for, others, then people are just
1099 going to take advantage of you at every turn and leave you with nothing. If we forego our personal
1100 aspirations, then we give up one of the most historically effective ways to affect societal progress. What
1101 we need to do is start making a change to our thinking and our actions. Each of us, in our daily lives,
1102 needs to find a balance between what we need and what our society needs. We need to start thinking
1103 not only about our needs, but about what we can add to our society on a daily basis. We need to think
1104 not only about what do we get out of a situation, but what we can add to a situation.

1105 We need to stop thinking only of ourselves and what we get, but also think about what we can
1106 add to others lives. We need to work toward becoming more societally minded.

1107 It might help to ask ourselves each day and in each situation: “What can I do today to improve
1108 my life? And what can I do today to help improve my society?”

1109

1110

1111 **Society**

1112 How to define a good society?

1113 “A society is good that fosters the full development of human potentials, to the fullest degree of
1114 humanness.”

1115 I do believe that statement is far too inclusive. Understanding that “the line between good and evil runs
1116 down the center of every human heart”, to achieve the full development of human potentials would be
1117 to develop in the people of the society the full depth of human evil. Not something that is beneficial the
1118 society, the individual or the race as a whole.

1119 Perhaps we should amend that statement as follows:

1120 “A society is good that fosters the full development of human potentials in alignment with a moral
1121 structure that benefits the individual and the society, to the fullest degree of humanness.”

1122 The above statement is much more acceptable to me even though it still has a degree of ambiguity. But
1123 that ambiguity is of design, not ignorance. As humans grow and evolve, so should their moral set. To
1124 facilitate the applicability of the statement over time, a bit of ambiguity is needed.

1125 This ambiguity also serves the necessity for thought. Simply being told what to do is of very little use.
1126 ("Give a man a fish and he eats for a day.") But a person who thinks and reasons about various topics
1127 gains much more than just knowledge about what he is thinking over. ("Teach a man to fish and he eats
1128 for a lifetime.")

1129 The revised statement facilitates the need for each individual to not only figure out for themselves what
1130 moral actions constitute “good” and “bad”, but also envision what could be “better” or “worse.” Not
1131 only for us, but for our society (from which we gain so much), and for future generations.

1132 We must always remember that we gain so much from our society, and that society is only here because
1133 previous generations worked hard to make it for us. I challenge you to find one thing in your life that is
1134 not facilitated by being in a large society, and compare that to the number of things in your life that
1135 only possible because of being part of a large society. In such a light, we should keep asking ourselves
1136 “How can I make society better for this and future generations?”

1137

The Purpose of the Meditations

Meditations are personal thought exercises and conversational topics used as essential tools to enable the continual growth of our mind and spirit in a way that breaks us free of our subjectivity and adds meaningful value to our lives.

Meditation is a tool to help us to learn to focus. Focus is a tool to help us get an optimal grip on our past, present and future. Optimal grip is a tool to help us move from one point on our path to a better point.

Meditation is not just the existential examination of something. It includes the conscious analysis of our experiences to achieve a better understanding of ourselves, our values and our thought processes, to understand where we are on our path and help us identify where we want to go from there.

The following meditative thoughts are concepts proposed to facilitate the growth of our understanding. To be fully realized we need to not only examine each from our point of view at this particular point on our path, but also try to examine them from a variety of points of view that differ from our own. Then discuss them with others that focus on growth.

These meditations are not just for solitary exploration in a meditative state, but are to be discussed with others and in groups to achieve an exhaustive exploration of their meanings and how they apply to us at this point on our path.

How to Meditate

There are many different forms of meditation. When starting, we should focus on training our mind to focus, a skill that should be continually developed. Focusing on our breathing is a popular exercise to develop and maintain this extremely important skill.

Once we develop this skill, we then use that skill to examine different ideas, concepts and perspectives in the pursuit of expanding our mind and understanding. Explore many different types of meditations, these skills will benefit you more than you can imagine.

Once you are ready, focus your abilities on the meditative concepts found in this book. Explore them in your meditations and discuss them with others. Both solitary exploration and discussion with others is essential.

Core Meditations

Considering the evolution of biological systems.

Biological systems started off as single celled organisms. Over millions of years, they evolved into more and more complex systems working together to maintain an organism as diverse as humans.

Acknowledging that the evolution of individual cells to work cooperatively as a unified whole was to create a system that is better at adapting to adverse conditions to allow a greater chance of survival for each individual cell.

Then, from this example, what should we view as the optimal progression of our societal evolution?

As individuals, should we focus on only what we get for ourselves or should we focus more on societal betterment and reap the rewards of a better societal system that offers us more diversity and therefore more options?

The Line between good and evil

The line between good and evil runs down the center of every human heart, to conquer evil, one must first conquer themselves.

We must recognize what is within us and admit it truthfully, humbly, for it is the same in everyone. The only difference is the amount of stimulus needed to invoke it.

When Considering Paradise

When considering paradise, do we realize that paradise would not be having everything we wanted, but in having the needs that threaten our existence met while still having difficult things to strive for?

Here we need to take an honest look at our lives and what brings us happiness versus joy. We can sit on a beach and experience joy in the sun, but that joy is not lasting. That joy does not persist for long in

1203 our lives. Contrary to that, happiness is cultivated through successful management of responsibility.
1204 Happiness that persists throughout our lives, and a sense of purpose and meaning, comes from having
1205 something to do which benefits us and the society we live in.

1206 Can you identify things in your life that bring you happiness and things in your life that bring you joy?

1207

1208

1209 **What Would Make Our Journey Worth While**

1210

1211 What would make this journey worth while?

1212 To understand that, do we realize that true happiness comes from accomplishing something that pushes
1213 the boundaries of our comfortability? Not in having something, but in the remembrance of overcoming
1214 something that was difficult and the confidence that develops?

1215 Do we realize that having anything is only important in that it shows our strength to overcome
1216 adversity?

1217 Understanding that sheds light on what will make our journey, our life, worth while. Our life is not
1218 worth while because of what we have, but because we constantly keep our focus and actions on
1219 something difficult to attain. Not material gains, but emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual
1220 growth.

1221 The question then becomes, what do I want to achieve in this life and what do I want to achieve for
1222 existence after this life?

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1226 **When Dealing With Others**

1227

1228 When dealing with yourself and others. Love the sinner, but hate the sin.

1229 Who among us has not faltered? Who among us has not fallen short of what we would like to be as we
1230 have grown and learned?

1231 Can we see that the trespasses of others, and ourselves, is due to personal turmoil or lack of growth?

1232 When dealing with others, the question then becomes “Should I help this person, or scorn them?”

1233

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1236 **What Do I Fill My Life With**

1237

1238 Can you see how much your recent experiences, situations and items you surround yourself with, affect
1239 your perception of happiness and the feeling of fulfillment in your life?

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1243 **On The Topic Of Our Default Mindset**

1244

1245 Do you understand that some of our most important actions during the day are to Learn, Participate and
1246 see things from other's Perspective. Are you content to be lost on the sea, at the mercy of the influences
1247 of what you encounter during the day? Or will you bask in the glory of striving to better yourself a little
1248 bit each day, and reap the rewards of continued growth?

1249

1250 **On The Subject Of Relationships**

1251

1252 Every relationship we are in, no matter how short, has a reason. The reason we are in that relationship
1253 is the motivation for the way we act in that relationship.

1254 Does that person, or group make us happy? Does it make our lives more full? Is it a person we just
1255 happened across and we don't really like them? Or is it a person that conjures in us a romantic notion?

1256 Understanding why we are in a relationship, past the superficial reasons and down to the emotional
1257 motivations within us, can help us identify our role in that relationship. More importantly, it can help us
1258 decide what we can add to the relationship and what our boundaries should be.

1259 Healthy boundaries and focusing on what you can add to a relationship, not just what you get out of it,
1260 are difficult things to balance. But understanding our motivations for being in a relationship can help.

1261

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1263 **Sometimes We Learn From Others, Sometimes We Learn On Our Own**

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1265 Not all wisdom comes from a perspectival type of knowing. In much the same way as we stand on the
1266 shoulders of those that came before us to achieve great scientific heights, we should stand on the

1267 shoulders of those that came before us to achieve great moral, spiritual and intellectual heights.
1268 In this spirit, what are three things that you were taught and how did the gift of that knowledge improve
1269 your life?
1270 Secondly, who in your life is significantly older than you, and therefore has more experience than you,
1271 that you can you spend time with, in the hope of uncovering more knowledge and understanding as you
1272 develop a friendship?
1273 Younger people need a relationship with elders to have a chance to gain knowledge and thereby
1274 live a happier life. Elders need a relationship with the youth to help give meaning in their lives through
1275 passing down knowledge they have learned.

1276

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1278 **Learn To Question Everything**

1279

1280 Have you learned to never take what others say is truth about spiritual matters on faith alone?
1281 Spiritual knowledge from others should always be accompanied by your own exploration, not limited
1282 by preconceptions.
1283 If I tell you there is an elephant in a pitch black room, and you have no concept of what an elephant is,
1284 and you enter trying to feel around for an elephant, whatever you find that you are unfamiliar with will
1285 then be an elephant because you were told it was an elephant.
1286 When the person who taught you has a faulty determination, you will be biased towards that
1287 determination. Unless you can break free from that paradigm by opening yourself up to different points
1288 of view and explore on your own.
1289 As you explore spiritual matters, always remember, "It's not an elephant."

1290

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1292 **A Thought on Knowledge**

1293 Knowledge is that which we have found to be true, from our perspective. But how many times in our
1294 lives has our perspective changed?

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1299 **A Challenge We Face In Life**

1300

1301 As I travel my path and grow, do I realize that what I held as "important" or as "truth" has changed as
1302 my perspective has developed?

1303 And as I grow, do I realize that there are often morsels of truth embedded in even the worst of things?

1304 My challenge is to see the morsels of truth even when they are obscured, by seeing things from as
1305 many different perspectives as I can.

1306

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1309 **Considering The Meaning Of Free Will**

1310

1311 Free will is not the ability to do anything you want, whenever you want.

1312 Free will is the ability to grow beyond your current limitations by developing better tools and concepts
1313 for dealing with life, to facilitate your achieving what you previously thought was impossible.

1314 Free will is being able to identify the motivators to our actions and, if need be, to choose to do
1315 something different.

1316

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1319 **Freeing Our Soul**

1320

1321 A free soul, that has a practice of developing their consciousness through a variety of activities, is more
1322 powerful than any number of enslaved souls.

1323 The concept of God should not be one of enslavement.

1324 We have the power to choose our path of growth, were we can reap the benefits and learn from the
1325 consequences.

1326 We have the power to exceed any limitations or expectations.

1327 There is no limit to what we can become, and to limit ourselves with a concept of "perfection" would
1328 be a great injustice.

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1332 **Being Still**

1333

1334 In meditation, being still in body and mind are similar, yet are implemented in different ways.

1335 Being still in body is simply not moving. Yet the longer I am still, the more tempted I am to move
1336 because of all sorts of things. Aches, pains, itches, a wandering bee that has taken an interest in me.

1337 Being still in the mind, once understood, is also simply not letting your mind dwell on the stray
1338 thoughts that pop up. Yet as I spend more time in meditation, the more thoughts pop into my mind and I
1339 find myself mentally traveling down that abstract path.

1340 The key to being still in mind and body is the same. Training. Becoming distracted is not the problem.
1341 Staying distracted is. The way to train yourself not to be distracted is, when you realize you have
1342 become distracted, refocus yourself. Again and again. Over time you will find that you become less and
1343 less distracted.

1344

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1348 **Balance**

1349

1350 In meditation I find that there is greater benefit from the balance of searching and listening.

1351 Some of my time in meditation is spent searching. Exploring the depths of a topic, idea, feeling,
1352 concept or state.

1353 But a lot of my time in meditation is spent listening. Listening to the energies of the world and of
1354 myself.

1355 I have found that my life has far less turmoil when I can identify and correct imbalances as far as they
1356 are under my control.

1357

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1360 **On Awareness**

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1362 Awareness is naturally drawn outwards. Balance comes from practicing turning our attention inwards.

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1366 **On Discipline**

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1372 **Do Not Follow Blindly**

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1374 Do not follow blindly, for it is too easy to be lead a stray. Rather, experience and think for yourself
1375 accompanied with guidance.

1376 Meditation is an irreplaceable skill that will help facilitate your growth and open your eyes.

1377 But always keep in mind, while in this physical existence we are like blind men describing an elephant.
1378 If you find the tail you describe it like a rope. If you find the trunk you describe it like a large hose. If
1379 you find the side you describe it like a great wall.

1380 Each perspective is wrong only in the fact that there is more to discover.

1381 Never abandon your soul, or it's power, to another. Keep searching with an open mind and learn the real
1382 truth.

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1386 **Never Limit Your Growth**

1387

1388 We should stitch together the truths that have been planted as seeds in the essence of the soul, no matter
1389 where those sprouts happen to grow. Even the worst of souls can contain nuggets of truth which should
1390 not be disregarded.

1391 We strive to live fully. We strive to learn fully. We strive to understand fully. We strive to experience
1392 fully. In doing so, we surpass what was previously understood as the pinnacle of existence, into the
1393 understanding that we can always become better than any ideal conceived.

1394 Each day try to become a little better than yesterday. Accumulated growth over a period of time

1395 becomes immeasurable.

1396

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1398 **On Wisdom**

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1400 One is not wise by intellect alone. Wisdom only comes when intellect is coupled with experience and
1401 put into practice.

1402

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1404 **On Leadership**

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1406 Learn from the those that are enlightened. Do not follow them, learn from them.

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1412 **On Truth**

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1414 Come together under the banner of truth, no matter it's origin.

1415 Do not let the closed mind deter us from integrating truth in our being.

1416 Let us not overlook the flowers of wisdom because they reside in a field of ugliness and devastation.

1417

1418

1419 **On Limitations**

1420

1421 This realm is a place to come to the realization that, as long as we don't abandon our soul or it's power
1422 to another, we can learn and grow from each situation.

1423 The heights we can achieve upon this path will far surpass anything we can imagine.
1424 We can surpass anything our minds and hearts can dream up, even a perceived perfect state of being.
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1426

1427 **Correcting Our Frame Of Thought**

1428
1429 Learn from many, never just one or two people or points of view.
1430
1431

1432 **Fostering Correct Thinking**

1433
1434 Learn all that you can. Keep learning for eternity. For complacency breeds ignorance and ignorance is
1435 our greatest hurdle.
1436 Try becoming just a little better each day. Continual growth, over extended periods, amounts to
1437 immeasurable growth.
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1450 **The Correct Perspective On Growth**

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1452 There are many who claim to be able to show you the path to enlightenment. And there are some that

1453 can. But understand that everyone can only see what they have found through their lens of belief.
1454 Truly awakened are those that see through many lenses, and are thus able to see more of the whole.
1455 Never abandon knowledge. Rather, gather as much as you can, for each piece will help you identify the
1456 whole.

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1460 **The Need for fellowship**

1461

1462 After this world, the only truth, the only reality, is belief.

1463 Belief is the light in which we live, it is the idea which can set us free, it is the chains that bind us and it
1464 is the fire in which we burn.

1465 No matter the diligence, belief can be swayed. Therefore, it is imperative that we gather often and
1466 rejoice in the freedom provided by our faith.

1467

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1470 **On Freedom**

1471

1472 Many claim the path to heaven, a place of eternal happiness and joy.

1473 But I ask, what happiness or joy can be attained through slavery, no matter how loving?

1474 The opportunity to cast off your chains and achieve eternal freedom, eternal salvation, is presented for
1475 all willing to work for it.

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1479 **On Awakening**

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1481 Awakening is not a single destination, it is a correction of our course as we continually grow, to align
1482 our course to get us where we want to go.

1483 Our destination will change as we grow, so must our path, and we must change to achieve the desired

1484 destination.

1485

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1488 **On Dogma**

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1490 There are only two truths intrinsic to each and every Convocationist.

1491

1492 1) We have the power to create our own heaven.

1493 2) Together we can achieve eternal Salvation.

1494

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1497 **A Very Important Thing**

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1499 One of the most important things we can do is use meditation as a tool to train our minds to focus. It is
1500 where we should start, and a practice we should never neglect.

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1502

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1504 **Gathering The Truth**

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1506 Pieces of truth can be found everywhere. Do not let your bias of the source stop you from seeing the
1507 truth, or acquiring the tools you can use to live a more fulfilling life.

1508

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1511 **On Potential**

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1513 Never underestimate the power of your soul. Through growth we continually realize that what we
1514 thought was beyond our power is simply unrealized potential.

1515

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1518 **On Inspiration**

1519

1520 Existence is about growing, learning to become better than what you are, by a little bit every day.

1521 The Spirit of Our Faith is there to help when things seem overwhelming.

1522

1523

1524

1525

1526 **On Understanding**

1527

1528 "It requires a leap of faith."

1529

1530 This excuse has been used for millennium to bridge the gap between what the converter can argue,
1531 politely or not so much, and what the potential convert will believe.

1532 It is the mechanism used to get a soul to stop questioning and start buying into a certain frame of
1533 reference. For once you can get a soul to stop questioning, all opposition fades away.

1534 By trying different things and questioning everything, we can separate the wheat from the chaff.

1535

1536

1537

1538 **Tools Of The Soul**

1539

1540 In this world your mind is a tool for your soul. Improve your mind each day and reap the rewards.

1541

1542

1543 **Structuring Our Lives**

1544

1545 Have you realized that when you fill your life with things that have a positive value to you, your life
1546 feels better, fuller, easier and happier.

1547 Conversely, when you fill your life with things that have a negative value for you, your life feels more
1548 empty, difficult and futile. Everything becomes a chore.

1549 Practice balance in all things.

1550

1551

1552

1553 **Religious Paths**

1554

1555 To perceive the path to enlightenment as narrow or a single path that must be followed, is a true
1556 indication of our own inadequacy.

1557 But to know that each soul has different things to learn at different times on their path and therefore
1558 must walk its own path is true understanding.

1559

1560

1561

1562

1563

1564

1565 **Intellectual Discussion**

1566

1567 When a man argues a concept to be correct, he is wrong before he even starts.

1568 But when a man discusses a concept to explain his point of view and to understand another point of
1569 view, without condemnation, he has a chance at enlightenment.

1570

1571

1572

1573 **On Correct Mental Orientation**

1574

1575 Can you see that the terms "unknown" and "unknowable" are not statements of fact, but rather are
1576 statements of perspective from a certain point on a path of growth?

1577 If you were to bring a gun back in time to the stone age and a stone age native was to see you shoot
1578 someone, from their perspective you are able to point at someone and kill them. An ability that is so far
1579 beyond their current understanding that, from their point of view, if you are able to do that, you are able
1580 to do anything. To them, it is unknown and unknowable.

1581 Focus on growth each day, not on proclamations of impossibilities.

1582

1583

1584

1585 **On Understanding**

1586

1587 I am perfection. I am everything. I am everywhere and in every thing. I am all knowing, all powerful. I
1588 am perfect love, understanding and forgiveness.

1589

1590 Can you see how each of these are subjective?

1591

1592 For every Soul and every consciousness, both understanding and perception are like our eyesight. What
1593 we focus on is clear, while everything else is fuzzy.

1594 What is not focused on does not disappear and may leave a sense of clarity, but honest evaluation
1595 reveals the truth, that it is not perfect.

1596

1597

1598

1599 **On Knowing**

1600

1601 What are two things I "know" or learned from seeing another person go through a situation?

1602 What are two things I "know" or understand from going through a situation?
1603 How much better do I "know" or understand the dynamics of a situation by experiencing a situation for
1604 myself?

1605

1606

1607

1608 **On Perspective**

1609

1610 Do I see how much better my life has become by developing the skill of being able to step outside my
1611 perspective, my point of view, and see multiple points of view for any situation?

1612 Do I see the benefit that ability has been to my inner peace, my happiness and how meaningful my life
1613 seems?

1614

1615

1616

1617 **The Fluidity Of Thought**

1618

1619 Do you understand that truth and perfection are not singular concepts, ideals or states of being? As with
1620 most everything, they are subjective and fluid, shaped by our experiences and aspirations.

1621

1622

1623

1624 **Recognizing Our Bias**

1625

1626 Do we see that every thought, every conclusion, every sense of applied worth is subjective due to the
1627 experiential bias of the person evaluating the situation?

1628 So any situation, emotion, action, thought or direction chosen is influenced by a perceived value that is
1629 heavily influenced by experience.

1630

1631

1632

1633 **Checking Our Focus**

1634

1635 We need to be diligent about our growth through meditation and service to others, and we should never
1636 forget to be present as life unfolds around us.

1637

1638

1639

1640 **On Slavery**

1641

1642 Slavery by controlling a person's thoughts and beliefs is the only slavery that is eternal.

1643 Eternal Salvation, and thus liberation from slavery, comes from personal growth, in all it's forms, and
1644 in fellowship with those on an open minded path.

1645

1646

1647

1648 **On Wisdom**

1649

1650 Wisdom is more than knowledge.

1651 Wisdom is knowledge by experience that is put into practice, coupled with the meaningful insight
1652 provided through retrospective analysis that has been discussed with others and with people that
1653 possess wisdom.

1654

1655

1656 **On How To Learn And Grow**

1657

1658 What the child is to the adult, the adult is to the elder.

1659 Wisdom is only cultivated by:

1660

1661 First, realizing that growth is needed in an area.

1662

1663 Second, experiencing the situation.

1664

1665 Third, analyzing the situation in retrospect and drawing meaningful insight that can be used to improve
1666 our response to that and similar situations.

1667

1668 Fourth: by applying those meaningful insights to our lives to facilitate growth that improves our lives
1669 and the lives of those around us.

1670

1671

1672 **On Rationality**

1673

1674 Rationality is the ability to overcome self deception in a reliable manner.

1675

1676

1677

1678 **On Correct Orientation Of The Heart**

1679

1680 Right heart

1681 Compassion over callousness

1682 Concern over indifference

1683 Love over apathy

1684

1685 Honesty with compassion. Harsh words and actions are almost never the correct first choice.

1686

1687 Plant the seeds of love and compassion through your words and actions, even in the face of adversity,
1688 and enjoy a life filled with what you sow.

1689

1690

1691 **On Correct Orientation Of The Mind**

1692

1693 Right mind

1694 Proceed with honesty. Honesty with yourself and your motivations.

1695

1696 How would you like people to treat you?

1697 If you don't want people to treat you a certain way, then you should not treat people that way.

1698

1699

1700

1701 **How To Walk Our Path**

1702

1703 Proceed with the right mind,

1704 Proceed with the right heart,

1705 For the path has many branches that leads you astray.

1706

1707 Understand that it is not about what you deserve, it is about how much better you can become.

1708

1709 Remember that the only reliable way of thwarting self deception is through discussion with others.

1710

1711

1712

1713 **How do I Structure My Life?**

1714 In any given moment, do I ask myself "What can this time best be used for?"

1715 If I find myself filling my time with things or activities that do not help me grow and move closer to
1716 where and who I want to be, what can I do to correct that?

1717

1718

1719 What type of person do I want to be?

1720 That should be the guiding principle as I evaluate my actions and motivations.

1721 Heroes, Parental figures, Mentors, Teachers, Friends, they all influence our thinking and therefore
1722 guide our lives in a direction.

1723 Do I spend the time needed evaluating my actions and motivations to see when I get off course of
1724 achieving my goal of who I want to be? Or do I not have goals to work towards and spend no time in
1725 honest self evaluation and therefore are at the mercy of the influences in my life?

1726

1727

1728 **The Point of Religion**

1729 The point of religion is to give a person hope of attaining something better than what they have, and
1730 to teach them how to live a life that cultivates meaning.

1731 That hope comes in some basic forms. For some, it comes in the form is a savior. A figure that will step
1732 in and remove everything from your existence that is disagreeable to you. "Give a man a fish"

1733 Another form is growth. A path to follow that leads to better understanding and therefore the
1734 knowledge of how to live a better existence and therefore avoid and alleviate the things in your
1735 existence that are disagreeable to you. "Teach a man to fish."

1736 The former leaves you in a state of dependence upon another, the latter puts you in a state of
1737 independence. The former leads to eternal slavery, the latter to eternal freedom.

1738 Which do I need in my life at present? Which do I want to strive for?

1739

1740

1741 **What Type of Person Do I Want to Be?**

1742 What is the type of person I want to be? This should be my guiding principle when evaluating my
1743 actions and motivations.

1744

1745

1746 **Sacredness**

1747 Something that is sacred should be held above everything else in our lives. The things that we consider
1748 as sacred should be those things that continually generate meaning in our lives.

1749 What is it that you consider sacred and why? What things are in your life are sacred, but you are
1750 not treating them as such?

1751

1752

1753 **A Thought on the Meditations**

1754 We are seeking a transformative experience which will break our frame of thought and action so we can
1755 rebuild another frame of reference that serves us better. Discussion with others helps with both frame
1756 breaking and frame making.

1757

1758

1759 **The Self**

1760

1761 The Self is not a static notion of personal being. The Self is the current level of growth achieved.

1762 Your self can either improve or regress as you travel your path, dependent upon the sustained effort you
1763 put in to your growth and the path you follow.

1764

1765

1766

1767 **Avoiding Self-Deception**

1768

1769 Reasoning works dramatically better when in dialogue with others.

1770

1771

1772 **On Personal Goals**

1773

1774 Do you see the need for balance between the Human, the Lion and the Monster in yourself?
1775 (Thinking/Reasoning, Social/Cultural motivations and Personal Impulse)

1776

1777

1778 **Why Is There Evil In This World**

1779

1780 Can you see how the notion of evil is dependent on our particular moral set?

1781 Can you see how the deviation of a person's or nation's moral set from the accepted norm, is a product
1782 of personal strife and a lack of tutelage, to be able to develop the necessary tools to be able to deal with
1783 situations in life in an acceptable manner?

1784 Can you see how the continued growth of our own moral and intellectual state is the only true deterrent
1785 to what is considered evil.

1786

1787

1788 **Quality Of Life**

1789

1790 What is it that actually increases the quality of my life? Not the external things that bring joy to my life
1791 for a short time, but the actions I do that generate a long term sense of happiness and fulfillment in my
1792 life?

1793

1794

1795 **Raising Our Vibration**

1796

1797 Do you see the need in being able to listen to another point of view and trying to understand that point
1798 of view? Not trying to be right or prove them wrong, just in being able to understand their point of view.

1799

1800

1801 **Our Strength Is In The Way We Come Together**

1802

1803 Do you understand why discussion of moral values with others is needed? Do you understand the need
1804 for this discussion not only with people who have the same values as you, but also with people that
1805 have different values than you?

1806

1807

1808 **Learn To Listen**

1809

1810 Do you understand the need to improve your ability to listen to others? Do you see how that is a skill

1811 that needs to be developed with practice? Do you understand the difference between hearing what
1812 someone has said and listening to them?

1813

1814

1815 **Teaching Moral Values**

1816

1817 Do you understand that one of the best ways to teach moral values is through discussion. If you have
1818 developed your listening skills enough, you may find that you are the one that learns.

1819

1820

1821 **Finding Our Moral Set**

1822

1823 What morals and behaviors do we value most in ourselves and others?

1824

1825

1826 You Reap What You Sow

1827

1828 You manifest what you are...

1829 The world is a manifestation of self. If life is less than what you want it to be, change yourself first.

1830

1831 You can't manifest what you want, you manifest who you are. You manifest what you are...

1832 The world is a manifestation of self. If life is less than what you want it to be, change yourself first.

1833

1834 You can't manifest what you want, you manifest who you are.

1835

1836

1837 **Happiness and Joy**

1838

1839 Happiness is not something that can be bestowed upon you. Happiness can only come from personal
1840 growth and having a purpose that benefits you and the people around you.

1841 Joy can be bestowed, but joy is fleeting.

1842

1843

1844 **Perceived Powerlessness**

1845

1846 Do I understand that if I continue my growth, there are no limits to what I can achieve? In time,
1847 I can surpass anything, even what was once unthinkable.

1848

1849

1850 **What Should I Become**

1851

1852 What is the type of person I want to be? This should be my guiding principle when evaluating my
1853 actions and motivations.

1854

1855

1856 **On Wisdom**

1857

1858 Do I understand that wisdom comes not only from intellect, but from experience and how the two are
1859 applied to my life? The application of which takes time. So look to and respect your elders, for there
1860 can be much to learn if you get to know them.

1861

1862

1863 **Following My Path**

1864

1865 Do not follow the people in service of the congregation, learn from them. Your path is just that, your
1866 path. Sometimes a leap of faith is needed, but most of the time, blind faith will lead you astray.

1867

1868

1869 **Truth**

1870

1871 Do I understand that I can make no real progress unless I can accurately identify what I need to work
1872 on.

1873 Truth with ourselves can often be obscured by many things, so we need to be vigilant.

1874 Do I understand that truth with myself and with others needs to be my highest focus as I travel my path
1875 and practice the other actions of Convocationism.

1876

1877

1878 **The Good Life**

1879

1880 What does it mean to me to “Live a good life”?

1881

1882

1883

1884 **The Banner Of Truth**

1885

1886

1887 Come together under the banner of truth, no matter it's origin.

1888 Do not let the closed minded deter you from integrating truth in your being.

1889 Let us not overlook the flowers of wisdom because they reside in a field of ugliness and devastation.

1890

1891

1892 **How To Improve Our Lives**

1893

1894 Do I see how I can only improve my life by countering the destructive elements of myself?

1895

1896

1897 **Always Having A Goal**

1898

1899 Write down what it is that you want out of life.

1900 Now what do you need to learn, or do, to make that happen?

1901

1902

1903 **Always Having Personal Goals**

1904

1905 Write down what type of person you want to be.

1906 Now what do you need to learn, or do, to make that happen?

1907

1908

1909 **Looking Beyond Ourselves**

1910

1911 What do I think my responsibility is in helping build a better future for future generations?

1912

1913

1914 **Weighing The Benefits**

1915

1916 When making decisions, when do I find it acceptable to disregard or sacrifice long term benefits for
1917 short term gains?

1918

1919

1920 **Becoming A Well Rounded Person**

1921

1922 What qualities and actions do I think make up a well rounded, balanced person and what changes can I
1923 make in myself to achieve that?

1924

1925

1926 **The Right Footing**

1927

1928 How can I both aspire to be more than I am and be grounded in where I came from? And what does that
1929 even mean?

1930

1931

1932 **In Finding True Happiness And Freedom**

1933

1934 Everyone has blinders on for something. We all have things that we accept without much thought, or
1935 trauma from our past that guides our actions without us realizing the true cause. The question is: Are
1936 you going to let these unperceived forces control you, or are you going to develop a habit of honest and
1937 deep self-reflection to find and change that in yourself to which you are presently blind? True freedom
1938 and happiness comes from knowing yourself and working to improve yourself.

1939

1940

1941

Rituals Of Convocationism

There are actions we do that give us purpose and meaning in our lives, even if we don't realize it at the time. These actions should be adhered to diligently, so they can bear the fruit of purpose and meaning in our lives.

In that light, there are Convocational Rituals that should be adhered to so that we may gain their benefit.

We gather together often in celebration.

At least once a week we gather together in celebration. In this gathering, the Pastor should present a short description of the Meditative thought for the following week. Then the rest of the time should be spent in companionship with each other. Our strength is in our companionship.

Meditation

We need to spend a little time each day in contemplation of a meditation. Either one that is laid out in this book, or one that interests the Congregation.

We also need to spend time talking with others in our Congregation about those meditations.

1965 In search of our personal enlightenment, there are those that need a God in their lives to lead
1966 and watch over them. Just as there are those that do not. Each person's path is their own, and each
1967 person needs different things at different points on their path.
1968 In that light, the following lays out the moral set of Convocationism in story form for examination and
1969 interpretation.

1970

1971
1972

Genesis

1973

The Beginning

1974

1975

1976 In the beginning there was an existence much unlike the one we are familiar with today. Try to
1977 imagine freedom from the constraints of our physical form, not constrained by our physical bodies, our
1978 five senses.

1979 If we tried to imagine that existence from our perspective here on earth, we would be like a
1980 mass of energy able to move about the earth. As this ball of energy we would not need to interact with
1981 the world through touch, but simply by thought. Our energy connected with the energy that is in every
1982 atom of every thing, living and not, in this world and manipulating that energy to cause action. Instead
1983 of reaching out, grabbing the doorknob and turning it to open a door, we would simply will the
1984 doorknob to turn. Simply for the purpose of reaching a point of understanding, we could think of it,
1985 very loosely, like a person with telekinetic powers, though it is much, much different.

1986 In this spiritual existence, from the perspective we are familiar with here on earth, we would
1987 move around as this ball of energy, interacting with the world not by touching it, but by thinking about
1988 what we wanted it to do and willing it to happen.

1989 That is the basis of a spiritual existence, rather than a physical one. Even though this example is
1990 in the most rudimentary of conceptions, it serves to give us a tiny glimpse of what it is like.

1991

1992 In our spiritual existence, not constrained by this physical world, what we see, what surrounds
1993 us, is all about our beliefs, about what we think.

1994 Take that thought, that idea about spiritual existence one step further. In the realm of the
1995 spiritual there is no physical, only spiritual. So the example of opening the door to get outside would
1996 mean that you wanted to be in a house and then wanted to go outside. Your beliefs lead you to go to the
1997 door and open it. Something we do here in the physical realm every day. In the spiritual realm there is
1998 only a house because you believed there is one. To get outside you could walk over to the door and
1999 open it, or you could simply think that you are outside and the spiritual realm would change to your
2000 beliefs. You are outside.

2001 In the realm of the spirit, our beliefs shape reality. So what we see, what we experience is all
2002 about our thoughts, our beliefs. It is a realm that adapts itself to us, as we think, or want something, that
2003 is what we make our part of the realm into. That is Heaven. A place where what we see around us, what
2004 we experience, what we interact with is shaped by our thoughts, our beliefs, our desires.

2045 Joseph would meet his friend Danial, but was always envious of his friends ease of growth.
2046 Danial possessed many traits Joseph wished he had, and as they got together and talked about the
2047 things Danial had learned, Joseph grew more and more resentful of Danial's growth.

2048 Joseph, in his shame and resentment, began to withdraw from the guidance of the Spirit and the
2049 fellowship of his friends, which lead to his growth slowing even more.

2050

2051 One day, as Joseph and Danial were talking, Joseph, feeling overwhelmed with his lack of
2052 growth compared to his friend Danial, began to lash out. Downplaying his friends growth because
2053 Danial had to rely on the guidance of the Spirit, where Joseph was growing without the need for help.
2054 He belittled his friend Danial for not being strong enough to stand on his own two feet, and asserted
2055 that his own growth was better than Danial's because he attained it on his own. Even though Joseph's
2056 growth was far less than Danial's.

2057 Each time Joseph and Danial got together, Joseph would repeatedly downplay his friend's
2058 achievements and brag that his own achievements were more fulfilling because he achieved it on his
2059 own. As time went by, Joseph's animosity grew and Danial's curiosity grew. Danial wondered if maybe
2060 his friend Joseph knew something he didn't. Over time, the belief set in Danial that Joseph may have
2061 found a better way.

2062 The next time Joseph and Danial met, Danial was full of questions about how Joseph went
2063 about his growth. Joseph, full of false pride over Danial's interest, explained in great depth all about his
2064 false achievements. The more he embellished his false achievements, the more Danial believed that
2065 Joseph had found something worthwhile. As Danial's beliefs slowly changed from what had been
2066 working for him to the lies his friend Joseph was telling, Joseph was filled with pride and reassurance.
2067 Finally finding a way to not be behind everyone in his personal growth.

2068 As time went by and Joseph and Danial spoke more and more, Joseph realized that as his
2069 friend Danial believed more and more what Joseph wanted him to, Joseph felt a small amount of power
2070 over the spiritual realm that he had not had before. It was no where close to the amount of power he
2071 gained from personal growth, but it was power he had not had none the less.

2072 Emboldened by this relatively easy increase in power, Joseph went about trying to change more
2073 and more of his friends beliefs to the lies he was inventing. And the more he got his friend to believe,
2074 the more power Joseph had over the spiritual realm.

2075

2076

2077

2078 **Corruption of Souls**

2079

2080 Joseph, reveling in his new found power stolen from the structured beliefs of his followers,
2081 realized that the more he controlled his followers, the easier it was to dictate what they believed.
2082 Joseph's followers now numbered in the thousands and his power, wrested from the power of his
2083 followers' souls and beliefs, grew beyond what any single person had achieved, and he reveled in it.

2084 But as Joseph traveled from group to group, displaying his power to them, proclaiming he could
2085 show them the way, he felt the limitations of his new power. As he used it, the pool would diminish and
2086 he could feel the power wain, and it would take time for the pool of power at his disposal to replenish.
2087 Joseph threw himself headlong into the converting of souls to his beliefs to grow his pool of power.

2088 Joseph emphasized the belief that he was the only one who could help them, he also introduced
2089 the idea that without him, his followers could not achieve the salvation he had found on his own.
2090 Joseph went about shaping their beliefs to set himself far above them in power and understanding,
2091 which by default set them in a position of relative powerlessness and loss to do anything about it aside
2092 from Joseph.

2093 Joseph also started shaping his True Believers faith to include the “Saving” of other souls.
2094 Joseph taught his followers to spread their beliefs to every soul they met. To teach these new souls of
2095 the salvation Joseph and the True Believers Faith offered.

2096 Joseph referred to his followers as missionaries and their mission was to “save” as many souls
2097 as they can by teaching them the beliefs that Joseph had taught them.

2098 His missionaries were to head out to all corners of existence and teach as many people as they
2099 can of the True Believers faith. To spread the word of Joseph's power and to exclaim his ability to grant
2100 them salvation. To teach them that he has the power to do whatever was needed to be done to save them
2101 from the difficulties they faced trying to achieve personal growth. Joseph would offer them salvation,
2102 and all they needed to do was to believe in him. He would save their souls and grant them eternal life in
2103 him.

2104 Thus began the mass swaying of souls from personal growth to a position of powerlessness and
2105 loss without one that could save them. Thus began the corruption of the true path to salvation into one
2106 of powerlessness and despair without end unless you were saved.

2107

2108

2109

2110 **A Shifting Paradigm**

2111

2112 Joseph's followers went far and wide. They spread Joseph's word to every soul they could find.
2113 The majority of people disregarded what they had to say, but enough believed that the True Believers
2114 faith grew by leaps and bounds. The more it did, the more Joseph emphasized that it was only through
2115 him that they could find salvation. This concept in itself fueled the greatest growth.

2116 For a person searching for a path, to try and find their way through the unknown, to be offered
2117 salvation where all that is required is belief, it is a tempting offer. Even more so because the ones being
2118 offered are not told that what they will achieve is a very pale shadow of what they could achieve.

2119 But through ignorance and control, Joseph's power grew.

2120

2121 Joseph's initiative did not go unnoticed. The people that met him could not deny his power, and
2122 those that heard the stories of him could not disprove the stories without meeting Joseph. But not all
2123 fell into line with his stories. Some, a very few, saw through the facade and wanted to claim some of
2124 that power for themselves.

2125 Slowly, but steadily, another religion started to grow. Using the same principles that Joseph
2126 employed, but with minor changes in the belief structure. As it grew, Joseph saw the almost endless sea
2127 of souls left to convert, and didn't pay the new belief much attention. There was plenty to go around.

2128

2129 This new religion spread much more easily than Joseph's, for Joseph had already began
2130 instilling in everyone that there may be someone with great power that could save people. So when the
2131 second religion came around, the masses were primed for belief in a savior.

2132

2133 Soon, a third religion entered the scene. Then a fourth and more. The stories of the salvation of
2134 souls, of being saved from whatever adversity they may be facing were abound and people could
2135 hardly turn around without hearing stories of being saved by this higher power or the next.

2136

2137 But through it all, there were the ones who persevered. They stayed true to their own power,
2138 never giving it up, and relied upon the guidance of the Spirit. They would never give their power away
2139 to another and they saw benefits far beyond those that did. They did not need someone to save them,
2140 and their personal growth attested to that fact. In the midst of this maelstrom of lies, half-truths and
2141 misdirection, they, through the guidance of the Spirit and the fellowship of others, never lost their way.

2142

2143

2144

2145 **Corruption of Eternity**

2146

2147 Now Joseph was faced with a different world than he had known before. When he started, the
2148 entire spiritual realm was like a clean slate that he could mold and sculpt to his desires through his
2149 stories and lies.

2150 It was like getting a child to believe in a story you told. He believes you, because he had never
2151 been lied to before and he has no reason to think you would not tell him the truth. Joseph had started
2152 with very small "stretches of truth" to his friend and built upon that. But now the lie had grown to
2153 outrageous proportions and Joseph's was not the only story being told.

2154 Each new religion adopted new, and sometimes extravagant, codes of conduct. The realm of the
2155 spirit was in a time of change, and old ways of personal growth and rewards from that was now giving
2156 way to something easier with far less gains, and in some of the new religions, no gains at all.

2157 Religion after religion sprung up. Each trying to grab a piece of the pie that was the beliefs of
2158 people in an attempt to wrest power from them. All the while the number of souls not aligned with a
2159 religion was diminishing.

2160

2161

2162

2163 **Formation of Convocationism**

2164

2165 Joseph was an intelligent man. He could see that despite the immense growth of his religion and
2166 the growth of other religions, that there were still a large number of people that did not align
2167 themselves to any religion.

2168 These souls stayed true to their own power and relied upon the Spirit for guidance. They would
2169 not give up themselves to the false power of another. Josephs follower's and the followers of other
2170 religions could see the personal growth these souls outside their religions were making and Joseph
2171 realized that this will eventually become a problem. For up until now, if a soul did not want to adopt a
2172 religion they were left alone. There were still plenty of souls that would readily accept the new
2173 religions, there was no need to go after the harder task of converting someone that was steadfast. But
2174 Joseph saw what was on the horizon.

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2176 Joseph needed a way to keep his followers from seeing that the growth these souls that held to
2177 the old ways were making was significantly greater than theirs. So he hatched a plan.

2178 Joseph went to each of the leaders of the other religions and expressed his concerns. He
2179 convinced them to start referring to the people that adhered to the old ways as Convocationists and to
2180 refer to that set of beliefs as Convocationism. The new religions would then begin teaching their
2181 followers that the ways of Convocationism prevented a person from finding salvation. Thus the new
2182 religions started demonizing the ways of Convocationism. Portraying it in a light that made it repulsive
2183 to even think about such ways.

2184 The new strategy worked better than Joseph had hoped. More and more people flocked to the
2185 True Believers Religion and to the other religions that had sprung up after. And the beliefs in all the
2186 new religions was stronger than ever.

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2190 **The Oppressive Landscape**

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2192 Growth in the religions was booming. Each religion taught the need to spread their beliefs and
2193 missionaries of all forms were scouring the world in search of new souls for their religious machine.

2194 And admittance was at an all time high in every religion.

2195 The labeling of Convocationism and its subsequent demonization was a staggering success.
2196 Joseph's followers took to the scorning of Convocationism with zeal and it was a marvelous success at
2197 keeping his followers from seeing the personal gains others were making outside his religion.

2198 The other religions saw the success of this tactic and quickly put it to use. Soon, every religion
2199 instilled the belief that theirs was the only way to salvation and actively scorned the others.

2200 Then the inevitable started happening. As religious affiliation grew, the idea that someone could
2201 not belong to a religion became unbearable to those that followed a religion. Followers of a religion
2202 started referring to anyone not in their religions as heathens. As ones that should be converted and
2203 looked upon as “less than” themselves because they did not adhere to the same beliefs.

2204 Thus, due to the natural progression of ideals, most religions adopted the policy of saving
2205 someones soul by any means necessary. ...and if they could not be saved, then they could not be allowed
2206 to continue their heathenish ways.

2207 The rights of the individuals was being subverted by those of the religions, and those not
2208 affiliated with a religion found the need to isolate themselves from those that were. Thus began the
2209 isolation of the individual.

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2213 **The Loss of Self and Fellowship**

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2215 As the religions become more and more zealous in their attempts to convert souls to their
2216 religious machines, They put more and more pressure on others to join their religions.

2217 An air of superiority of the religions and oppression for those not in their religion settles upon
2218 the world.

2219 The growing religions and their unabashed race for more souls brings with it not the salvation
2220 that they profess, but a loss of the power of the individual and individual growth. It fosters instead the
2221 belief of individual powerlessness and the use of fellowship to propagate that belief.

2222 The concept of personal growth and self improvement are driven to the brink of extinction and
2223 almost all that is remembered or understood is the need for a person to join a religion because they are
2224 powerless and need protection. And all under the guise of “I want to save your soul because I love
2225 you.”

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The Exile

2231 In this time of spiritual strife there was much suffering. The religions were not delivering on
2232 their promise of salvation, instead turning their attention to the collection of souls. All the while
2233 blaming the lack of growth of their flock on the shortcomings of the members of the flock themselves.
2234 It was a vicious cycle of failure because the system is flawed, but blaming not the thing that is flawed
2235 but the people following that system.

2236 The Spirit watched as soul after soul decided to join this religion or that. He knew the
2237 consequences of such a decision, but when he tried to help, his efforts were rejected. So he was forced
2238 to let them make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes. But now the times were changing.
2239 The knowledge of the old ways of personal growth with help from the Spirit had diminished to the
2240 point that most souls did not really have a choice at all. They were all but forced to choose one religion
2241 or another with no real knowledge of how things should be. The Spirit knew that people needed to trust
2242 in the power of their own spirit and in the fellowship of what has come to be known as Convocationism,
2243 but saw that they had no real way of attaining that realization.

2244 Around this time Joseph and his religion The True Believers was quite prosperous. Even though
2245 the other religions warred for souls, his was the oldest and the largest and won almost every time. So
2246 his collection of souls, and therefore his personal power, was growing well.

2247 Joseph was quite pleased, but decided it was time to go after the one thing that has proven most
2248 troublesome for his religion's growth. ...The Spirit of Convocationism. Joseph knew that as long as the
2249 Spirit protected the souls that trusted in him, Convocationism would always win against the false
2250 promises offered by any other religion. Joseph called upon thousands of his most loyal followers,
2251 knowing that having them close would bolster his power, then they set off to sway the Spirit of
2252 Convocationism.

2253 Joseph met with the Spirit and talked. He tried all forms of half-truths, misdirection and lies to
2254 sway even the smallest amount of the Spirit to favor the new religions, and Joseph's True Believers in
2255 particular. But to no avail.

2256 Joseph called upon the power of the souls he brought with him along with his own power to try
2257 and sway the thinking of the Spirit. But all attempts failed because the truth and power of the
2258 Convocational ways was far too great to ever be corrupted.

2259 Joseph sent word to the leaders of the other religions and called upon their combined power to
2260 sway the thinking of the Spirit. Each leader, to a man, arrived with thousands upon thousands of devout
2261 followers, and used their combined power to try and sway the Spirit of Convocationism in the slightest.
2262 Days, then weeks, then months went by as they relentlessly assaulted the Spirit to try and sway his
2263 thinking. But to no avail. For what they did not realize is that the power of one free soul is greater than
2264 billions upon billions of enslaved ones. Their combined power was not nearly enough to sway the
2265 Spirit's thinking.

2266 Upon trying everything they could, and applying the combined power of all the religions, they
2267 realized they had failed. They knew then that no matter how many souls they wrested power from, it
2268 would never be enough to sway even the smallest part of the Spirit and that Convocationism would
2269 endure forever.

2270 The leaders left with all of their followers, empty handed, and threw themselves even more into
2271 converting souls to their religions.

2272

2273 The Spirit of Our Faith knew that he had to do something, or the souls would not have a choice
2274 but to join one religion or another. He knew that every soul needed a place to go and learn to trust in
2275 their own power and the power of the fellowship of Convocationism. To this end he creates a place for
2276 souls to grow and learn where their beliefs will have minimal impact on the spiritual realm.

2277 Earth and the material realm thus comes into being and souls are sent there, without memory of
2278 the religions of the spiritual plane for a lifetime of learning and growth. To give each soul a chance to
2279 learn to trust in the power of their own spirit and in the power of the fellowship of Convocationism.

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2283 **The Shifting Fields of War**

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2285 When the material world was ready, each person, in his own time, was sent there, without
2286 memory of the spiritual realm and its plethora of religions trying to make them believe they are
2287 powerless while stealing some of that power for the self proclaimed “Gods” that started the different
2288 religions. The souls were sent there to live a lifetime and have the chance to learn to trust in their souls
2289 power and the power of the fellowship of Convocationism.

2290 Upon seeing this, Joseph saw great potential. If he could figure out a way to influence the
2291 material world, even in the slightest, then he could possibly start converting people without the ever
2292 present truth of Convocationism pointing out his religion's failings.

2293 Joseph knew he had only one chance, if he failed the Spirit of Convocationism would block him
2294 forever. To this end he called upon the power of every soul he had enslaved. Joseph also called together
2295 every God of every religion of the spiritual realm, who mustered every ounce of power from all their
2296 combined enslaved souls. Joseph used this combined power and pressed with all the might of every
2297 religion and God to effect the material world.

2298 Upon seeing what Joseph and the other Gods were doing the Spirit of Convocationism blocked
2299 them, but the damage had been done. The seed of religion had been planted, ever so slightly onto the
2300 material world.

2301 As the people encountered things they did not understand, or could not explain, they felt that
2302 seed, manifested as need to explain it, and attributed it to a higher power. Thus satisfying the
2303 underlying desire to make sense of the world. To feel safe in the face of adversity and rather than grow
2304 personally, to take an easier route and believe in a power greater than themselves that would take care
2305 of them.

2306 Over time, this need grew into many different religions, both past and present, that served to
2307 condition souls into an existence of powerlessness and servitude. The ideals of growth of personal
2308 power and the fellowship of Convocationism were corrupted in the material realm. Though the ideas of
2309 such still lived on.

2310 Even with the corruption, every soul now had a chance to learn to rely upon their own power
2311 and the power of the fellowship of Convocationism.

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Complacency and the Shift in Power

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2315 In the early days of the material world there sprang up many different religions. Along with the
2316 belief structures of each. As each new religion sprung up, it either fought for its place in the material
2317 realm or was wiped away by the missionaries of the established religions. In this manner many
2318 religions rose and fell in the material realm.

2319 The Spirit of our Convocationism saw the rise and fall of many of the religions, and knew that it
2320 would serve to show the souls that lived in the material realm that giving up of ones own power to
2321 another can only lead to destruction and servitude. But many of the inhabitants persevered through and
2322 learned nothing except blind perseverance in the face of adversity.

2323 As time drew on, and more and more souls spent their time in the material realm, more and
2324 more religions rose, gained power and then gave way to another, just as the different empires rose,
2325 gained power and then fell to another.

2326 The Spirit of Convocationism watched and had faith in the power of each soul to realize the
2327 pattern, but more and more the religions grew and fewer and fewer believed, choosing rather to give up
2328 their own power in place of powerlessness and servitude.

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The Faithful on a Mission

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2334 As the religions again grew to oppressive proportions, the Spirit of Convocationism decided the
2335 time had come to give people a choice again. To this end he sent knowledge of Convocationism to the
2336 material realm. He calls upon his people to stay true to their own power, to experience the power of the
2337 fellowship of Convocationism and to go into the world and let every soul know that they have a choice.

2338 They no longer have to believe that there is no choice but to give up their power and become
2339 powerless. They no longer have to live in servitude only to fuel the greed and power hungry desires of
2340 another. They can follow the guides of Convocationism and grow in their own personal power.

2341 There are those among you that follow the path. Seek them out and enjoy their fellowship.
2342 Spread the word of Convocationism in everything that you do and let others make an informed decision
2343 as to their own path. Your mission is not to convert them, but to let them know that there is something
2344 out there that is better than anything they know.

2345 Convocationism and the Spirit of Our Faith can fulfill the promise that other religions have
2346 failed to deliver. It can set you free from servitude and protect your everlasting salvation.